

April 2009

RC02 economy & society

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

Dear Colleagues,
It is hard to believe, but our 2010 World Congress in Sweden is only fifteen months away. This issue has the full details for each panel and instructions for submission.

In addition to abstracts of our members' recent research, this issue also showcases the work of two of our members. Continuing our series on research in South Africa, Jacqueline Borel-Saladin and her colleague argue that de-industrialization creates more low-skill, middle-income jobs than previously understood. And Georgina Murray informs us of a new research project that she and a colleague have recently embarked on that examines the role of women in Australian coal mining towns.

Many of our members draw on or critique world-systems analysis. Andrew K. Jorgenson has kindly written an article to inform our membership of recent changes in the *Journal of World-Systems Research*. And Salvatore Babones has written a sociologically-informed editorial on the relationship between taxes and social justice in the United States.

As always, send me your thoughts and articles for the newsletter.

Aaron Z. Pitluck

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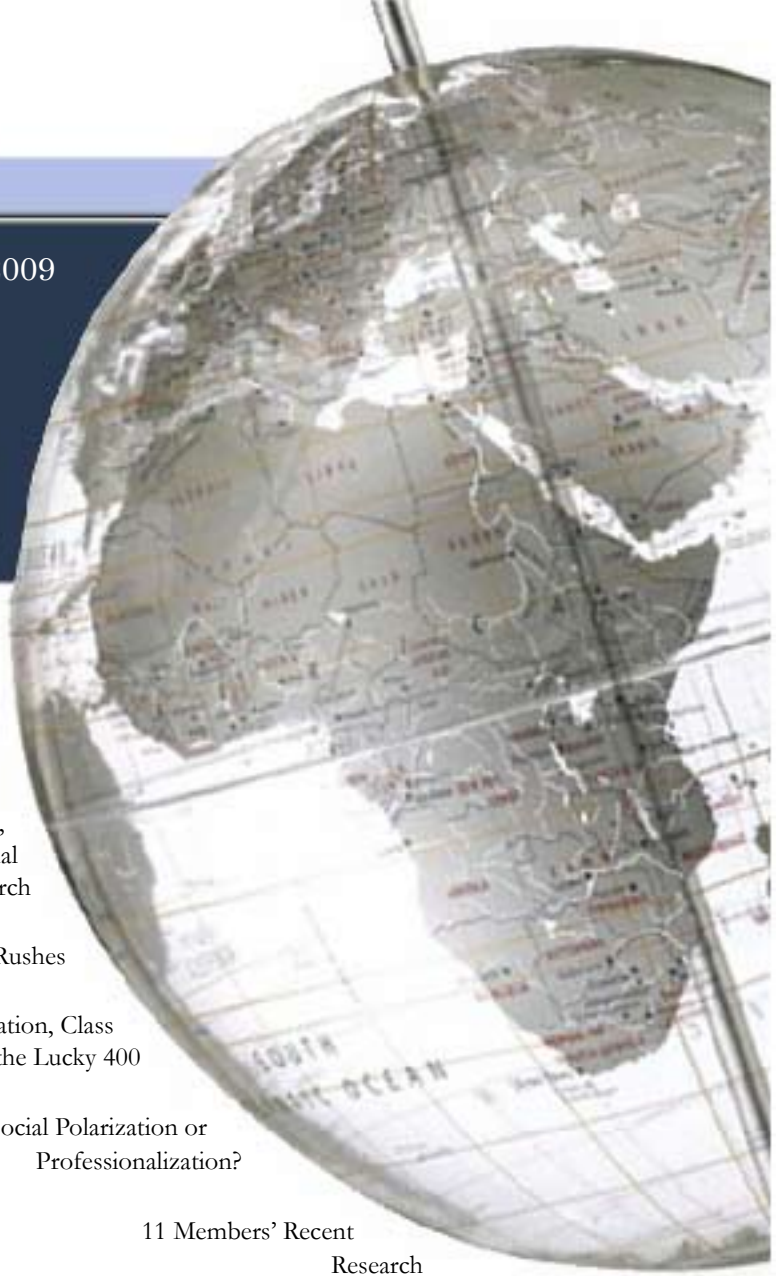
CALL FOR PAPERS:

RC02 Economy and Society Sessions at the International Sociological Association World Congress

In 2010, the International Sociological Association holds its 4-yearly conference in Sweden. We invite proposals for papers for the 16 sessions organized by RC02 Economy and Society at this conference in Gothenburg, 11-17 July 2010.

Please send proposals (with title, abstract, names of authors, their institutions and emails) to the Panel Chairs named below by 1 December 2009. Panel Chairs will let you know whether your paper has been accepted by the end of January 2010.

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CALL FOR PAPERS: RC02 ECONOMY AND SOCIETY SESSIONS AT THE ISA WORLD CONGRESS

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Details of the ISA Conference can be found at: <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>

It is hoped that all papers will be received from members of the ISA and RC02: http://www.isa-sociology.org/memb_i/index.htm

We look forward to discussions in Sweden on the important issues facing economy and society today.

Sylvia Walby

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PANEL ABSTRACTS

NEW APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

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Some recent approaches to understanding economic inequalities are distinguished by their focus on the role that economic conditions play in real peoples' lives rather than on inequalities in income in themselves, important though those are. They include the capabilities approach pioneered by Sen and Nussbaum, the concept of contributive justice introduced by Paul Gomberg, Bourdieu's concepts of capitals and field, and attempts to inter-relate the politics of distribution and recognition initiated by Fraser and Honneth. The purpose of the panel is to assess such approaches critically and explore what economic sociology can contribute to them.

Panels for the 2010 Conference

1. Andrew Sayer: New Approaches to Understanding Economic Inequalities and their Significance
2. Christian Suter and Hanno Scholtz: Recent Dynamics of Global Inequality
3. Heidi Gottfried: Theorizing Gender and Economy
4. Erik Olin Wright: Real Utopias
5. Bob Jessop: Financial Crises
6. Sabine Gensior: Practices of Globalization and the Crises of the Financial Sector: Normal Corruption, Systemic Deficiencies and Black Mail
7. Brigitte Young: Is there a Gender Dimension to the Financial Crisis?
8. Chris Chase-Dunn and Kirk Lawrence: Energy Transitions and the Evolution of Global Governance
9. Jeffrey Kentor and Andrew Jorgenson: Bringing The Military Back In
10. Val Moghadam: Social Rights and Women's Work in an Era of Globalization
11. Karen Shire: Restricting the Commodification of Labor
12. Georgina Murray: The Transnational Capitalist Class and its Relationship to the National Capitalist Class
13. Alexius Pereira: The Emergence of a Transnational Working Class?
14. Darlene Miller: The Remaking of the Southern Africa Region: The Role of Post-Apartheid South African Capital
15. Cristina Puga: Business and Civil Society
16. Aaron Pitluck: Markets and Morality

**RECENT DYNAMICS OF GLOBAL
INEQUALITY**

Christian Suter, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, christian.suter@unine.ch and Hanno Scholtz, University of Zurich, Switzerland, scholtz@soziologie.uzh.ch

The period from 1989 to 2007 was characterized by rising inequalities within most societies, and inequality between societies was impeded from rising only by the Chinese and Indian catch-up processes. The dynamics behind these developments are not yet fully understood, but skill-demanding technologies and re-organizations, globalization, institutional dynamics and changes in household composition have all played a role. Two years after the RC02 midterm conference on “Inequality beyond globalization”, this session asked how these dynamics and their understanding have evolved in recent years, especially since the crisis that ended 2008.

THEORIZING GENDER AND ECONOMY
Heidi Gottfried, Wayne State University, USA. ag0921@wayne.edu

This session will explore feminist political economic theories of gender and economy in different national, supranational and local contexts. Feminist political economic approaches highlight the structuring influence of gender relations within and across households, states and firms, and acknowledge the importance of social reproduction for understanding gender biases built into production regimes. They consider a broad set of social relationships and political accommodations around “productive” and “reproductive” work encompassing both public and private forms of power through the introduction of linking concepts such as gender contracts, reproductive bargains, work-care regimes, and gender regimes.



Gothenburg, Sweden

Substantive foci include, but are not limited to: the quality of employment (especially part-time and temporary employment); mutually reinforcing or contradictory social and economic policies and regulations at different scales; and commodification of care. I invite contributions that will advance comparative analysis in order to develop new perspectives for understanding gender inequality.

REAL UTOPIAS

Erik Olin Wright, University of Wisconsin, USA. wright@ssc.wisc.edu

There was a time, not so long ago, when both critics and defenders of capitalism believed that “another world was possible.” It was generally called “socialism.” Most people in the world today, especially in the economically developed regions of the world, no longer believe in this possibility. Capitalism seems to most people part of the natural order of things, and pessimism has replaced the optimism of the will that Gramsci

once said was essential if the world was to be transformed. This panel will explore a range of ways of organizing economic activity that constitutes alternatives to capitalism. Some of these exist in prefigurative form in the world today; others are theoretical models of alternatives. Potential topics for specific presentations: 1. unconditional basic income; 2. cooperatives; 3. the Quebec social economy; 4. wage earner funds revisited; 5. open source; 6. the creative commons.

FINANCIAL CRISES

Bob Jessop, Lancaster University, UK. r.jessop@lancaster.ac.uk

The panel will examine recent global financial and economic system crises, with a particular interest in the concept of tipping point. The field of economic crises is complex: they have external as well as internal causes and may also influence extra-economic orders, leading to revolutions (Tsarist Russia, Weimar Germany), major reforms (New Deal,

neo-liberal regimes), or important policy adjustments (contemporary Scandinavia). There are contrasting interpretations of any given crisis: it may be interpreted as a crisis within a system (a challenge resolvable through modest reforms) or a crisis of that system (a tipping point requiring radical shifts in economic and political regimes). The panel would focus on current economic crises and their treatment, but could also include earlier examples. The panel will identify the implications of dif-

IS THERE A GENDER DIMENSION TO THE FINANCIAL CRISIS?

Brigitte Young, University of Muenster, Germany. byoung@uni-muenster.de

In the debate on the past and the future of the global financial architecture, questions on how gender relations influence the very structure of how finance is organized and operates globally, and how different regulatory regimes have distinct distributive effects are largely absent. The challenge for feminist political economists/sociolo-

There is a large literature in social science about the importance of the capture of free energy in the evolution of socio-cultural complexity and hierarchy. This panel focuses on the relationships between energy regime transitions (from wood to coal to oil, etc.) and the evolution of institutions of global governance in recent centuries and in the coming decades of the 21st century. The rise and fall of hegemonic core powers and the emergence of international political organizations have been

“Civil society is important as a producer of welfare, participant in governance networks, and a monitor of excessive power planetary damage and inequality, as well as producing new initiatives, ideas and proposals about social organization.”

ferent accounts for economic-political reform. The panel welcomes papers on both the objective causes of crises and semiotic analysis; and the use of a variety of methods.

PRACTICES OF GLOBALIZATION AND THE CRISES OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR: NORMAL CORRUPTION, SYSTEMIC DEFICIENCIES AND BLACK MAIL

Sabine Gensior, Brandenburg Technical University, Germany. sgensior@tu-cottbus.de

The manifest crisis of the financial sector leads us to a demand for a sociology of financial markets and new analyses of the enterprise sector, i.e. the ‘real economy’. This session will invite theoretical and empirical papers analyzing: developments, forms of organization and structures of the financial economy; interactions of the financial system with the real economy; theoretical perspectives on either the systemic character or the action oriented diagnosis of the current crisis of economy and society.

gists is to theorize and make visible the gender assumptions inherent at both epistemological and ontological levels. Epistemologically, we need to ask how knowledge is (re)produced such that it creates the illusion that policy has no choice but to react in favour of the claims of financial capital. At the ontological level, one of the crucial questions is whether the financial actors’ interests are purely economic or also driven by political and ideological factors. The panel intends to analyze whether there is a causal influence of ideas and discourse in the formulation of capital market policies, and by which instruments (formal -procedural and informal - values) is authority in the field of financial markets exercised.

ENERGY TRANSITIONS AND THE EVOLUTION OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Chris Chase-Dunn, chriscd@mail.ucr.edu, and Kirk Lawrence, klawrence101@yahoo.com, University of California-Riverside, USA.

affected by energy regime transitions in the past are likely to be so in the future. This panel will gather together social scientists who are researching the relationships between physical energy and power structures. How will the coming era of “peak oil” affect the possibilities for further political globalization and eventual global state formation?

BRINGING THE MILITARY BACK IN
Jeffrey Kentor, University of Utah, USA, jeffrey.kentor@soc.utah.edu, and Andrew Jorgenson, North Carolina State University, USA. akjorgen@sa.ncsu.edu

We invite submissions for papers that integrate the military into theoretical models and empirical analyses within a broader political-economic context. For example, paper topics could include the impacts of militarization on development, inequality, human well-being, or the environment as well as structural conditions and interrelationships that lead to changes in the structure and

The Past, Present, and Future of the Journal of World-Systems Research

At its January 2008 meeting, the American Sociological Association Council approved a recommendation from the Committee on Publications for formal sponsorship of the Journal of World Systems Research (JWSR) by the ASA Section on Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS). JWSR is the second official section journal approved by the ASA. It is an open-access, online journal, with support from the PEWS section. Beginning in 2009, all articles published by JWSR will be copyrighted by ASA. The journal brings together theoretical and empirical treatments from sociological and interdisciplinary perspectives that are relevant to a globalizing world. JWSR publishes rigorous peer-reviewed articles that address timely issues, including the causes and consequences of globalization, war and militarization, the environment, and long-standing concerns such as inequality and development in their various manifestations.

JWSR was founded by Christopher Chase-Dunn at Johns Hopkins University in 1995 (currently at University of California-Riverside). Walter Goldfrank (University of California-Santa Cruz) joined Chase-Dunn as co-editor in early 2000. For many years, Eric Titolo, Binghamton University, provided invaluable expertise and assistance with production as well as design and maintenance of the journal's web page. Salvatore Babones, University of Sydney, and Susan Manning also provided extensive editorial and production assistance in the journal's earlier years.

Editors

In late 2007, we (the authors of this article) were chosen by a selection committee comprised of PEWS members to become the new co-editors of JWSR for a period of five years. Both of us have already served the journal in various ways and are honored to serve the journal, its authors, and its growing readership in this new capacity. We have a dedicated group of doctoral students at North Carolina State University (NCSU) who serve as managing editors (Laura McKinney, Christopher Dick, and Kelly Austin) as well as assistant editors (Adam Driscoll, Kennon Kuykendall, Christine Mair, Elizabeth Seale, and Stephanie Teixeira). Tom Hall, Depauw University, serves as the new book review editor, and Gregory Fulkerson, State University of New York-Oneonta, is the journal's new technical editor. The editorial board and associate editors are pivotal to JWSR as they reflect the intellectual, methodological, geographical, and cultural diversity of our discipline.

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roles of military institutions in comparative perspective.

SOCIAL RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S WORK IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

*Val Moghadam, Purdue University, U.S.A.
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Economic globalization – and its concomitants of liberalization and privatization – has entailed a steady erosion of labour rights since the 1980s, a situation that will worsen with the global recession. The process has further entailed the demise of the welfare or developmental state, the curtailment of many social benefits and entitlements, and the weakening of trade unions.

The so-called feminization of labour, which was coined to refer to the growth of the female labour force at a time of deteriorating working conditions, has been accompanied by the feminization of poverty. In the global South, public sectors are no longer a source of guaranteed employment for graduates, and the private sector does not necessarily offer benefits to workers, such as paid maternity leaves for women workers. This state of affairs has been decried by trade unions but also by a growing number of non-governmental or civil society organizations, including numerous women's groups and transnational feminist networks. Notions

of “the social rights of citizenship”, “economic citizenship”, and “rights-based development” have been revived by both activist groups and scholars. The panel will examine the prospects for women's social rights and economic citizenship in the paradoxical context of an untoward global environment on the one hand, and the expansion of international conventions and norms of human rights, on the other.

RESTRICTING THE COMMODIFICATION OF LABOR

Karen Shire, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. karen.shire@uni-due.de

Karl Polyani depicts the social history

of the nineteenth century as a double movement, extending market organization to “genuine commodities” while restricting market organization in the case of the fictional commodities, labor, land and money. The focus of this panel is on contemporary developments of the “double movement” in respect to the fictional commodity labor. Many recent developments in the (de-) regulation of employment are better understood as a re-commodification of labor and as the transformation of the “double movement” into a “single movement” of extending market organization from the “genuine” to the “fictional” commodities. Informalization of labor, the expansion of temporary and low-wage work, the increasing salience of social inequalities and declining coverage of social protections and social welfare are all evidence of (re-) commodification. Are we indeed witnessing the “demolition of society” (Polanyi), or is there evidence of the “double movement” anew in regulatory programmes for securing “employability,” “equal treatment,” “equal opportunity,” and “decent work”? The de-commodification of labor in many national industrial market societies was deeply biased toward securing protections for a core male skilled workforce. Are declining livelihoods and working conditions evidence of the commodification of labor, or of a more selective form of de-commodification, exacerbating old, and generating new social divisions? The papers in this session may address the re- and de-commodification of labor in respect to regulatory changes and/or the impact of changes on social inequalities.

THE TRANSNATIONAL CAPITALIST CLASS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATIONAL CAPITALIST CLASS

Georgina Murray, Griffith University, Australia.

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This stream wants to focus on whether there is a transnational capitalist class? If there is, what is the relationship between the transnational capitalist class and your nation state’s capitalist class? Is there hegemony underlying these relations? Or are the two compatible with a division of labour between them? Or are they in conflict? What evidence is there of how they overlap or interlock in business or in shared social and professional organizations? If you have written in this area we would like to see your paper. If you have evidence of countries other than your own and its relationship to the transnational class then that would also be of great interest.

THE EMERGENCE OF A TRANSNATIONAL WORKING CLASS?

Alexius Pereira, National University of Singapore, Singapore. socaap@nus.edu.sg

This panel explores whether economic globalization has led to the emergence of a transnational working class. Two clues into this process include (a) the expansion of transnational corporations has seen workers “incorporated” from abroad; and (b) the systematic migration of labour into developed societies. This panel seeks to have a multi-disciplinary debate on the formation, process and “management” of the emergent transnational working class.

THE REMAKING OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION: THE ROLE OF POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICAN CAPITAL

Darlene Miller, Rhodes University/Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa. D.Miller@ru.ac.za

Public perceptions of South African capital’s post-Apartheid expansion have ranged from positive to positively hostile. South African capital has played a powerful historical role in the uneven

development of Southern Africa, producing a regional geometry of power that placed the South African economy at the region’s centre. South African corporations have been pivotal in regional accumulation processes and the making of post-Apartheid regionalism. This panel will explore the regional and continental implications of South Africa’s post-Apartheid expansion in Africa, focusing on both the theoretical and political-economic implications of this expansion in different sectors. In the context of the New African Partnership for Development (NEPAD) and the global economic crisis, internal capital flows within Africa have a crucial impact at the political, economic and social levels, which this panel hopes to address.

BUSINESS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Cristina Puga, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico. crispunam@yahoo.com.mx

The intersection of civil society and markets is the focus of this panel. Civil society is important as a producer of welfare, participant in governance networks, and a monitor of excessive power, planetary damage and inequality, as well as producing new initiatives, ideas and proposals about social organization. Although civil society is usually considered to be separate from market and power (economy and politics) it may be that markets need civil society to develop and flourish as much as civil society requires the economic relations created by markets in order to carry out its projects. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (sometimes known as Non-Governmental Organizations or NGOs, and sometimes referred to as Third Sector) can have impact as employers and as development promoters. In some places, CSOs are establishing links with private business,

creating an intersecting field where market interests combine with those of community and service, potentially creating benefits for both partners. This may range from dialogue and consultation to institutionalized strategies, including business participation in civil society committees and organizations. Relevant questions include: How successful have CSOs been in their relations with business? How do both spheres relate and what contradictions do they encounter? How does civil society contribute to a re-

shaping of economy? What is the role of philanthropy and/or of ‘corporate social responsibility’? Is business contributing to governance as civil society representatives? Is a civil society/business partnership really possible? How do such alliances depend on encouragement and support by governments and international organizations?

MARKETS AND MORALITY

Aaron Pitluck, Illinois State University, USA. Aaron.Pitluck@ilstu.edu

This panel draws together empirical

research on individuals, organizations, market makers, or regulators in markets acting on explicitly “ethical,” “moral” and other value-oriented goals. What are the implications of such research for public sociology and/or social theory? Particularly welcome are papers that address the World Congress sub-themes of Worlds of Difference, Sustainability, or Religion/Power (for details, see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/priorities.htm>)

Members’ Recent Research:

Women of the Coal Rushes

We, Georgina Murray and David Peetz are currently writing a book- *Women of the Coal Rushes*. This is a book that brings into focus a group that has been socially, economically and politically neglected—the women in the Australian coal fields, specifically Bowen Basin. We travelled around Queensland, collecting stories from 120 women – the women of the coal rushes- and 12 men. Coal has been the black gold of Australia, worth much more to Australia than the fleeting wealth of the gold rush of the 1860s, or even the continuing gold mines of Kalgoorlie and surrounds, has ever been worth. A series of coal rushes have attracted people to regional and rural areas in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. The focus of our travels was nine coal mining towns in the Bowen Basin of central Queensland, along with the area around Ipswich in the south-east, now mined out but where coal mining began in Queensland.

Think coal mining, and most likely you think men. Coal territory is men’s territory, so the popular imagination goes. But the stories of the coal fields are as much women’s as men’s. Women play many parts in the coal town tales. Though some were born there, many came to the mining towns with husbands to seek a more prosperous life. In doing so, they had to deal with the physical and sometimes psychological debris created by mining working conditions, old and new. Some stayed at home and brought up families. Some went in to paid work and brought up families. They became the backbone of community activities. Women are having to be mum and dad because of the new drive-in-drive-out or fly-in-fly-out communities where families live on the coast and dad lives in a donga camp. Women fought and continue to fight long battles to make conditions livable in the coal towns, established women’s auxiliaries, distributed food to strikers and their families, and stood on picket lines. And eventually, they went to work in the mines.

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WOMEN OF THE COAL RUSHES

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Women’s experience, as we show in this book, illustrates several aspects of women’s story in the coal towns: their integration in the community; their movement into the mining workforce; their involvement with unions; and the impact that the tragedies that occur far too often in coal mining towns have upon women.

As you’ll see when reading this book, without the women, the men would not have survived. And now women are in the final patch of man’s land, the coal mines themselves;

whilst the nature of the ground under their feet changes with the financial meltdown hitting the coal fields hard and fast. There have been large numbers of redundancies in the coal fields for the first time in a decade. These hard times are hitting women as well as men and the women are telling us what ‘hard’ means in their new world.

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Progressive Taxation, Class Warfare, and the Lucky 400

On January 30, the US Internal Revenue Service reported that the richest 400 Americans paid an average of 17.2% in federal taxes in 2006, including social security and medicare taxes, of which they paid virtually nothing. Not only are the wealthy keeping most of their money, but they have more to keep: these Lucky 400 earned 1.3% of all US personal income in 2006, up from just 0.5% as recently as 1992. Alone among major developed democracies, the US has a tax system that is, at least at its upper reaches, regressive.

In what was widely considered a serious gaffe, then-candidate and now Vice President Joseph Biden said during the campaign that for America’s rich, “it’s time to be patriotic” by “stepping up to the plate” and paying more in taxes. He was vilified -- and the incoming administration of Barack Obama has been vilified since -- for fomenting “class warfare.” The experience of the Lucky 400, however, raises the question of who’s fighting whom? If we really are in the middle of a class war, clearly it is the rich who are winning.

Of course, no one wants to pay taxes. Everyone agrees that tax burdens should be fairly distributed across populations. But fairness is a slippery concept. Most developed democracies employ a progressive income tax to fund the bulk of government operations. The tax rate goes up as income goes up.

Income taxes in the US, on the other hand, are notoriously un-progressive. In the US, the first US \$8000 of wage income is taxed at 17.65%, while income over US \$358,000 is taxed at just 35%, a difference to be sure but much less a difference than in Europe, Japan, or Australia. Typical middle-income Americans pay a marginal tax rate of 32.64% on wages, nearly as much as the movie stars and corporate CEOs who fall in the top bracket. Moreover, capital gains taxes on investment income max out at a mere 15%. This low capital gains rate (paralleled only in the UK) is the reason why the Lucky 400 pay such low taxes on average.

As a result, Warren Buffet, Bill Gates, and most hedge fund and private equity managers actually pay less (as a percentage of income) in taxes than do minimum wage workers. By any definition of fairness, this seems unfair. Warren Buffet himself has repeatedly said so. It’s impossible to arrive at an objective standard of fairness. It is possible, however, to examine how standards of fairness have changed over time. An interesting comparison is to look back to the America of 50 years ago. No one would characterize the 1950s as a period of “class warfare.”

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In 1958, Eisenhower was in the White House, cars had tail fins, and the Dodgers and the Giants followed America west to the coast. The era of civil rights reform had begun and Vietnam was only a cloud on the distant horizon. And rich Americans paid 91% of their marginal income in taxes.

Now that's what I call patriotism! Yes, most income over US \$200,000 was taxed at a marginal rate of 91%. Ordinary Americans didn't pay this rate: US \$200,000 in 1958 was equivalent to over US \$1.5 million today. Ordinary Americans paid around 30% at the margin, similar to what they pay today. But they paid much less in total taxes, because the first US \$2000 (about \$15,000 today) was taxed at just 4%.

Over the past fifty years, wage taxes on the rich have declined from 91% to 35%, wage taxes on the middle class have risen slightly, and wage taxes on the very poor have risen from around 5% to around 20%. If the tax burden was more or less fairly distributed in 1958, then it is certainly not fairly distributed today. Of course, the reverse is also true. If the tax burden is fairly distributed in America today, 1958 America was, by implication, some kind of social democratic paradise.

The question Americans must ask themselves is: which society would they rather live in, 1958 America or 2008 America? In 1958 America, working class jobs paid decent wages, homeownership was expanding rapidly, and ordinary people could afford to send their children to college. In 2008 America, working class families can't make ends meet, home foreclosures are at an all-time high, and kids have to work full-time to help pay their own tuition. Tax policy is a big part of the difference.

The question Europeans and other must ask themselves is: which society would they rather live in, their own or Ameri-

Social Polarization or Professionalization? Another Look At the Theory and Evidence on De-Industrialization and the Rise of the Service Sector

The changing patterns in the occupational structure of cities are increasingly being understood, at least in part, in terms of the de-industrialisation of urban economies. De-industrialisation has resulted in the decline of manufacturing jobs and the simultaneous growth in service sector employment. There is general agreement among scholars that this shift in the sectoral composition of employment has resulted in an increase in the numbers of managerial and professional jobs. There is less agreement, however, on the impact of de-industrialisation on the growth of unskilled jobs. In a forthcoming article in *Urban Studies* 46(3), Owen Crankshaw and I drew on data from Cape Town, South Africa, to empirically examine this question.

According to the social polarization hypothesis, because the service sector is argued to be more polarized than the manufacturing sector, the growth of service sector employment results in an overall increase in occupational and income polarization. This implies that service sector jobs tend to be predominantly high-skill and high-income, on the one hand, or low-skill and low-income, on the other. By contrast, the manufacturing sector is characterized

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ca's? Increasingly, elite opinion around the world is endorsing a US-style social model. The current crisis has caused no more than a pause in this trend. Nowhere has the shift in favor of the wealthy been as extreme as in the US, but the shift has occurred everywhere. No major developed democracy taxes the wealthy at anywhere near the rates that were typical in the 1950s.

The Lucky 400 Americans (and their European and worldwide counterparts) have taken massive losses in the current economic crisis. They are successfully lobbying governments around the world to bail them out of their investment mistakes. None of the major global stimulus packages has focused on support for the poor and working classes. Neither Barack Obama nor any other democratically-elected leader is offering a return to 1958 standards of fairness. The American electorate and the electorates of every democracy in the world deserve to know why.

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Salvatore Babones is a Board Member of RC02, a Lecturer in Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney, and potentially relevant for this editorial, an American citizen. – Editor.

largely by semi-skilled and middle-income jobs. If the social polarization thesis is to be accepted, low-skill, low-income service sector jobs must necessarily require less skill and provide lower remuneration than blue-collar manufacturing jobs. Correspondingly, high-skill, high-income service sector jobs must require more skill and provide higher remuneration than blue-collar manufacturing sector jobs. Testing the social polarization thesis therefore depends on how one defines these levels of skill and income and their associated occupations.

There is general agreement among scholars about which types of jobs are considered to be highly-skilled and highly-paid. There is less agreement, however, on the definition of low-skilled, low-income jobs. Some scholars have classified certain associate professional and clerical jobs as low-income, low-skill jobs. In effect, these authors classify all non-managerial and non-professional service sector jobs as low-income, low-skilled jobs. Service sector occupations are therefore divided into two groups: high-skilled, high-income professionals and managers, on the one hand, and low-skill, low-income workers on the other. By contrast, skilled (artisanal) and semi-skilled (operative) manual jobs in the manufacturing sector are considered to be middle-income jobs. This conceptualization results in the logic that employment growth in service sector jobs at the expense of manufacturing jobs leads, by definition, to the polarization of the occupational structure.

The flaw in the above logic lies in the assumption that there are no middle-income service sector workers who earn incomes similar to semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers. To adequately test the social polarization thesis, we must distinguish between those non-managerial and non-professional service sector jobs that are less-skilled and lower-paid than the blue-collar, middle-income jobs of the manufacturing sector and those that are not. Only then can we test the social polarization hypothesis by examining data



for the growth in low-income, low-skill service sector jobs.

We argue that ‘service workers and shop sales workers’ and ‘clerical workers’ are incorrectly classified as low-income

Testing the social polarization thesis therefore depends on how one defines these levels of skill and income and their associated occupations.

workers instead of middle-income workers. This has important consequences for how we interpret changes in the occupational class structure. If service workers and shop and sales workers are treated, along with clerks, as middle-income workers instead of low-income workers, then many de-industrialising cities may have experienced employment growth in middle-income service jobs. Such growth can even be high enough to offset the loss of middle-income manufacturing jobs.

We have presented evidence to show that workers in the occupational classes of ‘clerical workers’ and ‘service workers, shop and market sales workers’ have incomes that are similar to those of skilled and semi-skilled manual workers in the manufacturing sector. On this basis, we have conceptualized these clerical, service and sales workers as middle-income service sector workers. Our evidence for Cape Town shows that the growth of service sector employment resulted, not only in the growth of high-income, managerial and professional jobs, on the one hand, and (to a much lesser extent) low-income, unskilled jobs on the other, but also in the growth of employment in these middle-income service sector jobs. So, although it is true that employment growth was greater at the poles of the occupational distribution, the growth of low-income jobs was only marginally greater than the growth in middle-income jobs. Moreover, the growth in high-income jobs was more than twice as much as that of low-income jobs. This study therefore argues that some studies have overestimated the polarizing effects of service sector growth on the occupational structure of cities and underestimated the trend towards professionalization.

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The Past, Present, and Future of the Journal of World-Systems Research

(continued from page 5)

The overall composition of the editorial body reflects our hopeful trajectory for JWSR. For instance, with respect to scholarly manuscripts, we especially invite submissions that advance theory and methodology. Contributions from a range of orientations are encouraged, with the journal's emphasis placed on the accumulation of knowledge through academic contest across multiple perspectives. We are committed to the journal's long-standing pluralistic stance on methodology and theory, and we are firmly dedicated to increasing the journal's visibility and accessibility in the discipline of sociology as a whole. Submission guidelines are available at jwsr.ucr.edu/submissions.php. Over the course of our editorship, we anticipate regular issues consisting of peer-reviewed articles and book reviews as well as multiple thematic special issues (with guest editors). Indeed, topics of past special issues of the journal have included global inequality, global social change and the environment, and transnational social movements, which were and continue to be highly successful. The next special issue of JWSR (guest edited by Jeffrey Kentor, University of Utah, and Timothy Moran, State University of New York-Stony Brook), to be published in 2009, will focus on existing and emerging methodologies for conducting macro-comparative research. Other special issue themes under consideration deal with transnational networks, global civil society organizations, and the role of Southeast Asia in the world-economy.

Future Changes

While the new editorial office for JWSR is located at NCSU, the journal is currently housed on a server at the University of California-Riverside. However, with the assistance of ASA, by the end of 2009 we will transfer the journal to the association's server. This has many long-term advantages for JWSR's current and future readership, authors, and editorial teams. Our technical editor, with the suggestions and feedback of the editorial board and associate editors, is redesigning the journal's web page. Our intention is to design a journal web page that is easily accessible, navigable, and aesthetically pleasing.

If you are unfamiliar with JWSR, we encourage you to visit the journal's web page at jwsr.ucr.edu/index.php and read some of the many sociologically relevant articles within issues going back to its inception in 1995. We invite sociologists and social scientists from related disciplines to submit their work to the journal, and we are always looking for new manuscript reviewers. Any journal-related inquiry should be sent to

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Members' Recent Research

BOREL-SALADIN, JACQUELINE AND CRANKSHAW, OWEN. 2009. 'Social Polarization or Professionalization? Another Look at Theory and Evidence on Deindustrialisation and the Rise of the Service Sector'. *Urban Studies*. 46(3) 645-664.

Abstract: The debate over whether or not the de-industrialisation of cities is accompanied by the occupational and income polarization of their working populations has been characterized by some confusion over the relationship between incomes

and occupations in the service sector. Specifically, many scholars have misunderstood the significance of middle-income service-sector occupations for their interpretations of the post-industrial class structure of cities. Through a comparative study of de-industrialization in Cape Town, evidence is presented to show that the growth of service-sector employment can produce a large middle-income occupational class of clerks, sales and personal services workers. The growth of this class can offset the decline of middle-income jobs caused by the loss

of artisans, machine operators and drivers in the declining manufacturing sector. These results therefore suggest that many studies have overestimated the extent of occupational polarization and underestimated the extent of professionalization.

Please note that this research is showcased in this newsletter.

CURRAN, SARA R., APRIL LINTON, ABIGAIL COOKE, AND ANDREW SCHRANK (Eds.). 2008. The

Global Governance of Food. Routledge.

Abstract: Food provides a particularly exciting, tangible and grounded research site for understanding the mechanisms governing global transactions in the 21st century. While food is intimately and fundamentally related to ecological and human well-being, food products now travel far flung trade routes to reach us. International trade in food has tripled in value and quadrupled in volume since 1960 and tracing the production, movement, transformation, and consumption of food necessitates research that situates localities within global networks and facilitates our capacity to “see the trees and the forest” by zooming from the global to the local and back to the global. In short, our need for food is a constant; how we acquire food is a variable; and the production, commercialization, and consumption of food therefore offers an invaluable window onto the globalization of the world we inhabit. Global food trade is also distinguished by the variety of governance mechanisms shaping how, where and who produces and consumes it. Thus, food provides an ideal site for answering the fundamental questions of governance of central concern to globalization debates. This volume presents recent, well-developed and interdisciplinary scholarship about the variety of mechanisms governing global food systems and their impacts on human and environmental well-being. This book was previously published as a special issue of *Globalizations*.

KARDULIAS, P. NICK AND THOMAS D. HALL. 2008. “Archaeology and

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“The rhetoric of information, imagination, improvisation and play has invaded our daily lives and work spaces. However, little attention has been paid to the sociological relationships among these elements, let alone their impacts as processes driving social change.”

World-Systems Analysis.” *World Archaeology: Debates in World Archaeology*. 40(4) 572-583.

Abstract: Many archaeologists have criticized world-systems analysis (WSA) for being overly economic, ignoring individual actors and importing modern analyses to ancient settings where they are inappropriate. Those criticisms are directed largely at Immanuel Wallerstein’s original formulation that was explicitly developed to explain contemporary global inequalities within and among states. In that sense there is validity to these charges. We argue, however, that most of these critiques of WSA have been misplaced. They seem to be rooted in lack of attention to modifications and extensions of WSA over the last three decades intended to address these issues, and often demonstrate a lack of familiarity with a host of WSA studies since 1974. We further argue this newer comparative WSA is a work in progress, which can be useful to archaeologists in the study of regional interactions and long-term development, and to which archaeologists are the most qualified to contribute in order to further the modification and development of WSA.

KHARLAMOV, NIKITA A. 2008. ‘Rethinking the Role of Economic Sociology in Late Capitalism: ‘Economic Sociology as Critique’ Session at the First ISA Forum of Sociology’ [In Russian: Pereosmyslivaya rol ekonomicheskoy sotsiologii v epokhu pozdnego kapitalisma: Panel «Ekonomicheskaya sotsiologiya kak kritika» na Pervom sotsiologicheskom forume MSA]. *Ekonomicheskaya sotsiologiya [Economic Sociology]*. 9(5) 113-117
Contact author for an electronic copy: nick.kharlamov@gmail.com

MOHANTY, B. B. 2009. ‘Regional Disparity in Agricultural Development of Maharashtra, India’ *Economic and Political Weekly*. 44(6).

Abstract: The process of agricultural development in Maharashtra over the last three decades has been unequal across regions with Western Maharashtra much ahead of other regions in terms of major developmental indicators. The rapid agricultural development in western Maharashtra is attributed to the rise of Maratha-Kunbi peasants as a unified political class, who dominated the state politics through caste and kinship networks during the colonial as well as post-colonial periods. The inability of Marathwada and Vidarbha regions to

compete effectively for a larger share of state’s resources is mainly due to the absence of a well-articulated structure of groups and alliances in these regions.

MOHANTY, B. B. 2009. ‘Power to the Excluded Groups and Panchayati Raj in Coastal Orissa, India’ in B S Baviskar and George Mathew (Eds), *Inclusion and Exclusion in Local Governance Field Studies from Rural India*, London: Sage Publications.

Abstract: The power structure in rural Orissa operates broadly within the caste-based class framework. In order to meet the demands of the new constitutional amendment for inclusion of the members from the hitherto excluded groups in the panchayati institutions, the privileged groups have co-opted either the dominant members of those groups who could protect their caste-class interests or the loyal and faithful members who could act as namesake representatives. The women representatives are proxies for their men and they often act as namesake representatives. Though the inclusion of excluded communities has not posed a serious threat to the upper caste-class and the gender dominance it has generated a kind of awareness among them on



many aspects of local governance and enhanced their participation in the decision making process.

SALES, ARNAUD AND MARCEL FOURNIER (Eds.). 2009. *Knowledge, Communication and Creativity*. SAGE.

Abstract: Knowledge, communication and creativity are obsessions of contemporary modern societies. The rhetoric of information, imagination, improvisation and play has invaded our daily lives and work spaces. However, little attention has been paid to the sociological relationships among these elements, let alone their impacts as processes driving social change. This book offers penetrating explorations into the creative processes that are tied to knowledge production, shedding new light on: 1) the impact of a general increase in knowledge on individuals, lifestyles, institutions and technologies; 2) how new communication and information technologies are transforming social relationships, communities and the international public sphere, and 3) understanding

the ties between creativity, communication and the production of knowledge.

TREMBLAY, DIANE-GABRIELLE. 2008. *Développement Économique et Emploi: Les enjeux et les politiques*. Presses de L'Université du Québec.

Abstract: Le présent ouvrage fait le point sur les défis actuels en matière de développement économique, mais surtout d'emploi et de travail. Après avoir passé en revue la situation économique et mis en évidence la transformation des formes d'emploi et du temps de travail, l'ouvrage traite de la problématique de l'insécurité d'emploi, qui s'est accrue au cours des dernières décennies, dans un contexte caractérisé par le recul des marchés internes du travail et par le développement des carrières nomades, des emplois précaires ainsi que de tentatives de « responsabilisation » des salariés à l'égard de leur carrière et de leur « employabilité » à long terme. L'auteure aborde ensuite l'évolution des politiques d'emploi, traitant des

de formation, d'aménagement et de réduction du temps de travail, l'articulation emploi-famille ainsi que les politiques familiales. L'ensemble de ces politiques, mais aussi les politiques de clusters et de réseautage, sont au nombre de celles qui peuvent être envisagées pour améliorer la situation de l'emploi.

La précarité d'emploi et la flexibilité du travail ne peuvent être vues comme des panacées. Elles sont, au contraire, à la source même de nos problèmes de compétitivité et de productivité, mais aussi de certains problèmes d'articulation entre l'emploi et la vie familiale ou personnelle. Les organisations publiques et privées de l'avenir devront s'adapter aux nouvelles réalités. L'avenir de l'emploi se dessine déjà avec de nouvelles couleurs.

TREMBLAY, DIANE-GABRIELLE. 2008. *L'éclatement de l'emploi*. Presses de L'Université du Québec.

Abstract: Le présent ouvrage fait le point sur les défis actuels en matière d'emploi. Après avoir mis en évidence la transformation des formes d'emploi et du temps de travail, l'ouvrage traite de la problématique de l'insécurité d'emploi, dans un contexte caractérisé par le recul des marchés internes du travail et par le développement des emplois précaires. La précarité d'emploi et la flexibilité du travail ne peuvent être vues comme des panacées. Elles sont, au contraire, à la source même de nos problèmes de compétitivité et de productivité, et aussi de certains problèmes d'articulation entre l'emploi et la vie familiale ou personnelle. Les organisations publiques et privées de l'avenir devront s'adapter aux nouvelles réalités. L'avenir de l'emploi se dessine déjà avec de nouvelles couleurs.