



Report on the Second ISA Forum of Sociology, Buenos Aires, August 1-4, 2012

Compiled by Bill Carroll

At Buenos Aires, RCO2 presented a full slate of 19 sessions (eight of them in collaboration with other RCs) plus three concurrent Round Tables. The conference theme, Social Justice and Democratization, was taken up by many speakers, in a great variety of perspectives and approaches. We are very grateful to the local organizers for enabling our sessions to run well from a logistical perspective, in particular former RCO2 Treasurer Daniel Fridman of the Department of Sociology at the University of Victoria for many crucial interventions and Ariel Wilkis, of the School of Sociology at the University of San Martín and Argentina's National Scientific and Research Council (CONICET), for organizing and co-sponsoring our reception.

These notes are meant to convey some of the highlights from RCO2 sessions that formed part of a very stimulating conference. They are based on brief reports that I invited from session organizers and chairs.

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REPORT

RCO2 ECONOMY AND SOCIETY SECOND ISA FORUM OF SOCIOLOGY BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA 1-4 AUGUST 2012

Wednesday, August 1, 2012: 12:30 PM-2:00 PM

Alternatives to neoliberal globalization: Comparing counter-hegemonic projects - Part I

Session Organizers: William CARROLL and Markus S. SCHULZ, Chairs: William CARROLL and Markus S. SCHULZ

This joint session drew a large crowd and featured five very strong papers and a spirited discussion. Peter Evans's 'In search of a great transformation: Weaving together a new historical subject' raised the question of how the density of synergistic links among counter-hegemonic movements can be strengthened in ways that pull together partial visions of an alternative to neoliberal globalization. Peter distinguished three political strands that need to be interwoven: the human rights strand, which at its best can effect an ideological jujitsu upon liberal hegemony, the strand, represented in the Occupy movement, that opposes the dominance of financial capital, and the proletarian strand of the global labour movement. Joana S. Marques, in 'Solidarity economy and counter-hegemony in the world-system: Insights from Brazil,' presented case studies from Brazil and Portugal that explored the distinctiveness of contemporary social economy, compared to earlier forms, and pointed to subordination of market logic in the re-investment of profit for collective purposes as a key counter-hegemonic development. Mike Geddes presented a paper on 'Contesting neoliberal hegemony - the case of Bolivia,' which charted the failure of the neoliberal passive revolution in Bolivia in the 1990s and early 2000s, and the ambitious but fragile project of the current Morales government to build a broad popular bloc that re-founds the state on the basis of decolonization, a deepening of democracy, ecological sustainability and alternatives to capitalism. Henry Veltmeyer's 'Post-neoliberalism: An emerging radical consensus in Latin America' explored some major challenges in the 'Pink Tide', in particular, the common resort to resource extractivism, the lack of forward and final-demand linkages in development strategies, and the tendency for state and capital to form alliances and for class struggle from below to assume the form of Indigenous protagonism in defense of the commons. Speakers were admirably concise, which left a good amount of time for a wide-ranging discussion of strategies, possibilities and limitations in counter-hegemonic projects.

Wednesday, August 1, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:00 PM

Latin America and global social change

Session Organizer: Christopher CHASE-DUNN, Session Chair: Bill Carroll

The first of several RCO2 initiatives at this Forum placing the spotlight on Latin America, this session focused on contemporary socio-political transformations from below and from above. Christina Cielo reported on her research in Cochabamba, where she has discerned in local practices three ideal-types of global development: neoliberal urbanization (based in individualized private property), counter-hegemonic territoriality (based in labour solidarity in opposition to Others that can include migrants) and 'divergent associations' of migrants organized communally. Alexis and Rebecca Alvarez presented an intriguing quantitative analysis of the relationship between political ideology and the actual human rights record of Pink Tide regimes. Daniel Benzi (with coauthor Giuseppe Lo Brutto) examined new trends in south-south cooperation, and argued that a southern 'aid' industry is under construction in Latin America. Kathleen Schwartzman's paper took up the political economy of Mexico and the USA, and presented an empirically rich argument to the effect that they are in synergistic decline. Finally, Chris Chase-Dunn, in a paper coauthored with Angie Garita and David Pugh, took the long-term view of Latin America as a region in the modern world-system whose predominant semi-peripherality and specific status as the 'backyard' of the American hegemon are structural features that help explain the Pink Tide of progressive left regimes there.

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 10:45 AM-12:15 PM

Theorizing gender, state and economy

Session Organizer and Chair: Heidi GOTTFRIED

This session on “Theorizing gender, state and economy” addresses several questions: What do we gain or lose from different methodological and interpretive strategies and from conducting research at different levels of analysis? What temporal concepts (such as tipping points) or complexity theory are appropriate? How do varieties of gender regimes affect different trajectories? Does the social organization of care (structures of social reproduction) matter in explaining differences? What role and impact do gender politics and women’s mobilization have on trajectories of change?

Feminist scholarship has made important strides, improving our understanding of the forces behind gender (in)equality by either advancing gender-sensitive perspectives on policymaking processes, discourses, and politics and comparative welfare state developments or offering rich case studies and theoretical contributions. Alternative feminist approaches point to different aspects of policies and institutional arrangements that are consequential for explaining gender stratification patterns across countries (see Walby, *Globalization and Inequalities* and my forthcoming book *Gender, Work and Economy: Unpacking the Global Economy*). Some theories emphasize structure and others process, either at the macro-level or the meso-level, and view gender and class as either mutually constitutive or analytically independent. In each case, comparative feminist research integrates the family and civil society in relationship to the economy and the state. By gendering institutional characteristics and practices, feminist analyses highlight the persistence and change of both public and private forms of power in the context of political interventions and political systems.

The papers presented in this session provide in-depth descriptions of welfare state systems in particular countries over time, and help to assess the relative weight of global, national, and sub-national forces (metropolitan urban space in Nadya’s paper and canton’s in Sarah’s paper) to explain the presence or absence of particular policies, and detail their consequences for gender inequality. When considered side-by-side, the case studies here point to both convergence and divergence with regard to policy sets and patterns of inequality within and across countries. Clearly there is a general tendency toward path-dependency, indicating the resilience of the nation state and national social values in shaping the policy process. The attention to historically specific contexts helps gauge why some policies are more resistant or open to negotiation, compromise, and change.

The financial crisis looms in the background of these presentations seeking to explain persistence and change of gender inequality in the current conjuncture. Each asks, in different ways, how feminism can contribute to our understanding of, not only the cause and consequences, but also the political responses to this crisis. In the forefront of her analysis, Sylvia Walby argues for integrating finance more centrally in feminist theories of capitalism. No doubt, feminism must move from the national to the global to pick up new storylines concerning globalization of migration, financialization, and transnational care chains traversing and creating new global spaces of production and reproduction. Nation states are not political containers of economic processes, and policy formation, political institutions, and political mobilization increasingly cross national borders. At the same time, these papers show the importance of analyzing policies, discourses, practices at particular sites and on multiple scales.

Toward a New Research Agenda

As we discuss these issues here in Latin American, it is incumbent on us to consider how our theories travel and apply to cases across different regions of the world economy. Drawing on the conceptual tool kit of social geography can aid in the investigation of power relations from above and below territorial borders of the nation state. Addressing place, space, and scale brings feminism back to large structures, which link power relations at both micro- and macro-levels, and calls attention to resistance ranging from local to global arenas. What concepts and theories can best capture this comparative impulse and global reality? Do we need a social geography perspective to fully explain why gender inequality persists, and why patterns of inequality differ across time and place? Sylvia argues that “developing political responses to the financial and economic crisis involve coalitions of gendered forces that vary between locations.” How does place matter? What are the sites and spaces for political action and how do they vary?

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 12:30 PM-2:00 PM

Economy, economists & public decision making

Session Organizer and Chair: Mariana HEREDIA

The session's call was very successful: we received 15 proposals, most of them excellent. We decided to accept nine oral presentations, as well as two papers to be distributed. Our session included American, French, Italian, Austrian, Brazilian, Russian and Argentinean scholars. Except for one author who could not come to Buenos Aires because of personal problems, all the speakers were present. Two papers were sent in advance and other two were distributed before the session. Apart from one, all the others papers were presented in English. Due to the quantity of papers, time was short: each researcher could speak 7 minutes. Power Point presentations (used by every speaker) helped us to develop complex ideas quickly. Fortunately, we had 15 minutes after the presentations, for questions and discussions.

Subjects and approaches presented in our session illustrated the consolidation and evolution of economy and economists' research. Konstantin Fursov, author of the Russian paper, exemplified a long tradition in this field: the study of an intellectual movement (in this case, mathematical economics in USSR). In the same way, Tod van Gunten and Karin Fischer accorded special attention to Economic Ministers and Central Bankers but integrated a concern for their networks. With Hernán Ramírez's paper, these three presentations also illustrate the growing importance of comparative research in Latin American countries, not only in elite formation and the general content of macroeconomic policy but also in institutional variables which enable a deeper knowledge on countries' differences. The progress of this field was also evident in papers interested in economists' influence in other public policy areas such as railway (Jean Finez) and poverty (Marcia Cuhna) as well as in their interplay with other professionals in regulatory agencies, especially lawyers (Iage Miola). Finally, José Marcos Noveli's paper asked whether the left turning point in Brazil implies a new developmentalism against previous neoliberal ideas.

Compared to earlier research on economists, the session brought to the fore several stimulating developments: from economists' formation to economists' networks and practices; from economists' intellectual traditions and organizations to economists' interplay and negotiations with other actors (politicians or other professionals); from neoliberalism as a *deus ex machine* to institutional translations and national differences; from neoliberals to experts' participation in contemporary democracies.

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 2:30 PM-4:00 PM

Organizing markets

Session Organizers: Daniel FRIDMAN, Jose OSSANDON and Dean PIERIDES

The joint RC17/RC02 session attracted papers that addressed our call directly; how can the production and organisation of markets as policies be accounted for and rendered sociologically useful? Contentious discussions about whether the different empirical contexts in which the various studies presented (Chilean education, health and transport, Argentinian surveillance and the European public service) were exemplary cases of institutionalised patterns or calculative actions reflected contemporary debates in the Sociology of Organisation as well as Economy and Society. In joining this session conceptually with the adjacent RC17 session on Organising climate change we were able to continue the conversation from one packed session across to the other, continuing to ask questions about how markets are organised and how other objects are organised by markets. All in all, this was yet another enormously successful collaboration between RC 17 and RC02.

Friday, August 3, 2012: 9:00 AM-10:30 AM

Conflicting economies, livelihoods and social-environmental interactions

Session Organizers: Mark STODDART and William CARROLL, Co-chairs: Mark STODDART and William CARROLL

The session, "Conflicting economies, livelihoods and social-environmental interaction" was a joint session of RC24 (Environment and Society) and RC02 (Economy and Society) and provided a valuable space for dialogue about environment-economy conflicts in a variety of settings around the world. Five papers were presented, which included research grounded in Asia, Europe, and North America. The papers examined the ways in which a variety of social groups – fishers in Korea, Natives in the U.S. , farmers in India, and communities in Japan and Portugal – adapt to and resist social transformations that damage local environments, community health, and economic wellbeing. The papers demonstrated that environmental risks and threats to communities are often bound together, and that these need to be addressed as interconnected social-ecological issues.

Friday, August 3, 2012: 10:45 AM-12:15 PM

Informal economies and the ethnography of economic life.

Session Organizer: Daniel FRIDMAN

There were two sessions on ethnography and economy. One session focused on informal economies, and there were presentations from colleagues from Brazil and Turkey. Maria Raquel Lima presented an analysis of informal recyclers working in a landfill in Rio de Janeiro's outskirts, and focused on the role of "the bag" (of recycled material) as a unit of analysis for economic calculation. Cecilia Soares Barbosa presented on her fieldwork in a 'camelodromo' also in Rio de Janeiro. The camelodromo is a large market of 'pirate' goods, fake replicas of original brands. Cecilia made the point that the replicas are not always seen as a copy of something else, but rather a valuable good in its own right. Finally, Filiz and Burhan Baloglu presented on their ethnographic work on 'pirate' cab drivers in Istanbul. In the last couple of decades, the number of irregular taxis has almost tripled the number of licensed taxis; the presenters offered a detailed description of this market. The discussion after the presentations stressed the point that we need to understand informal markets better, and the problem of determining the frontier between the formal and informal: there is quite a lot of formal organization in these irregular markets and occupations.

Organizing the production of alternative visions to support social justice

Session Organizers: William CARROLL and Vishwas SATGAR, Chair: Michelle WILLIAMS

This joint session with RC44, Labour Movements, offered four quite distinct analyses of how the production of counter-hegemonic social visions is organized in different contexts within the current crisis of globalized capitalism. Vishwas Satgar focused on the South African climate jobs campaign as a collective agent confronting climate catastrophe with its insistence that 'climate jobs' be created to reduce the causes and impacts of climate change while alleviating South Africa's chronic employment crisis. Peter Evans analyzed three strands of labour activism to explore the kinds of overlapping practices and identities that can help construct new subjects for social justice. William Carroll and JP Sapinski presented an analysis of transnational alternative policy groups and the roles they play in helping to integrate the global network of alternative knowledge production and mobilization within the alter-globalization movement. Finally, Thomas Posado discussed the nuanced politics of workers' control and the demands for nationalization that have been occurring around the government of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela. The diversity of perspective that were voiced in the discussion period confirmed the great range of ideas and practices that comprise the search for alternative social visions and transformative strategies today.

Friday, August 3, 2012: 12:30 PM-4:00 PM

Neoliberalism and recomposition of Latin American elites. Parts 1 and 2

Session Organizer: Alejandra SALAS-PORRAS

Two sessions were dedicated to the ways in which Neoliberalism and globalization have promoted a recomposition of Latin American elites. The case of elites in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and Chile were examined and both differences and similarities were found. Eli Diniz, Renato Boschi and Flavio Gaitán illustrated how political elites in Brazil and Argentina explore ways to reconstruct a developmentalist agenda in the context of severe constraints and tensions which globalization and the recent Neoliberal reforms entail. In contrast, Matilde Luna, Cristina Puga and Alejandra Salas-Porras showed that both economic and political elites in Mexico have embraced with vengeance the neoliberal global project, changing drastically social practices. In particular, elites in Mexico have embarked on an increasingly greater and more intense circulation between economic and political fields of action and they have expanded their activism in political, academic, social and philanthropic arenas. Paula Canelo y Mariana Heredia examined the changes undergone by state elites in Argentina due to the process of democratization and also the adoption of neoliberal reforms. In particular, they flesh out the social and academic trajectories followed at the national and subnational levels.

With respect to the similarities, programs of privatization have led to a massive reallocation of resources and a greater economic concentration in most countries, as well as to a transnational projection of the largest Latin American corporations. Karin Fisher made the case for Chile, where elites control most resource based exports, retailing, banking, real-state and telecommunications, expanding their activities throughout South America. Andrés Wainer y Martin Schorr pointed to the de-nationalization of the Argentinean economy which goes hand in hand with the transnationalization of a few economic groups. Likewise, Alicia Girón and Lorena Kobe demonstrated the connection between concentration in the banking sector and political power.

Saturday, August 4, 2012: 9: 00 AM-10:30 AM

The ethnography of economic life

Session Organizer: Daniel FRIDMAN

The second ethnography session took up ethnographies of economic life more generally. Florian Stoll and Martina Loew presented a comparative ethnography of hairdressers in Dortmund and Hamburg. The class differences between the settings in both cities derived in a different use of time and space in each place. Fredrick Wherry presented a paper on the analytics of economic ethnographies. In contrast to analyses that highlight the universality and unproblematic transferability of economic calculation, Frederick stressed what ethnography can teach us about what people actually do in unfolding situations rather than what they do in an experiment. He pointed to mathematical calculation as a dramaturgical performance, a negotiation of and a set of repairs within existing relationships, and a set of improvised scripts imperfectly performed by individuals. Leslie Salzinger talked about her fieldwork in foreign exchange trading floors in New York and Mexico City, focusing on the grounded existence of the abstract notion of 'emergent markets'. She explained how the apparent dilution of culturally specific scripts in the realm of international trading is not such: Latin American traders in New York often turn their specific knowledge and cultural backgrounds of their countries of origin into another advantage to turn a profit. Nicolas Viotti proposed a reflection on the articulation between religion and economic life from an ethnographic perspective. He focused on concepts and practices related to prosperity, money and entrepreneurship in *The Art of Living*, a movement of personal growth among the Argentine urban middle class. Finally, Michel Villette presented his work on the multiple realities of the corporation in which scarcity of communication and keeping people in the dark is a regular practice. The presentations in both sessions highlighted the interest in ethnography as a fruitful way to approach the complexities of everyday economic life and the opportunities it brings to illuminate larger social and economic processes.

Saturday, August 4, 2012: 4:15 PM-5:45 PM

Knowledge based economies and networks of knowledge transfer

Session Organizers: Julian CARDENAS and Gabriel VELEZ-CUARTAS

The session Knowledge Based Economies and Networks of Knowledge Transfer was created to meet scholars whose fields of interest are related to science and technology and knowledge. Paper presenters and attendants discussed different cases of studies. An interesting side discussion arises about the use of economic sociology theories to frame the analyses, and the lack of a specific theory on knowledge based economies. The organizers – Julián Cárdenas and Gabriel Vélez – will develop an email list to keep in touch with those interested in these topics and will announce a call for papers in order to foster the research on how knowledge becomes central on economics, politics and society.



Embedding Post-Capitalist Alternatives: the global network of alternative knowledge production and mobilization

by William K. Carroll and J.P. Sapinski
Department of Sociology, University of Victoria

November, 2012

The production of knowledge that can inform practices to create alternative economic and political futures is an important though neglected issue in the economic sociology of contemporary capitalism. Given capitalism's global reach, alternative think tanks that bring to these production processes a transnational viewpoint and that mobilize knowledge for transnational publics are of particular strategic import. Since the 1970s, *transnational alternative policy groups* (TAPGs) have emerged as a component of global civil society, generating visions and strategies for a 'globalization from below' that points toward post-capitalist alternatives. This study proceeds from a neo-Gramscian understanding that hegemonic policy groups (such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Trilateral Commission) and TAPGs are *embedded* in opposing historical blocs, as they develop and deploy knowledge with the intent to make their respective blocs more coherent and effective.

Here, we map the global network of 16 TAPGs and 247 kindred international groups – alternative media, social movement organizations, and international NGOs – in order to discern more specifically how TAPGs are embedded in a larger formation. The TAPGs were purposively selected to represent the key producers of alternative policy, based in the global South (n=8) and North (n=8). The kindred groups are all the organizations directly linked to the 16 TAPGs, according to the *Yearbook of International Organizations* or (if the TAPG is not listed in the *Yearbook*) according to the TAPG's own website.

We find that TAPGs, like their hegemonic counterparts, occupy the position of 'brokers': they bridge across both geographic spaces (e.g. North-South) and movement domains, but they do so in a complex and uneven way. Our analysis reveals a large variation in the volume of relations brokered by individual TAPGs, and also delineates different patterns of mediation among the TAPGs studied. Our geographical analysis (see Figure 1) shows that, on the one hand, the majority of TAPGs headquartered in the global North connect either with organizations that are located in their own region or with those located in the global South. On the other hand, although TAPGs from the South link to organizations of the North, they also are much more likely to reach across to organizations in other regions of the global South. Looking beyond their immediate relationships, TAPGs often act as bridges between pairs of organizations. They broker a large volume of interregional relations within the global North and within the global South, as well as between North and South. We find that TAPGs from the North broker between other organizations that are also headquartered in the North, which contributes to tightening the Northern NGO network. Similarly, Southern-based TAPGs tend to participate in South-based networks; however, they also bridge between North and South more often than TAPGs based in the North –contributing to Southern-based solidarity networks while building relations between Southern and Northern segments of global civil society. TAPGs located in the global South thus appear to occupy a specific position at the interface between the Northern and the Southern segments of the global network of alternative knowledge production.

The patterns of mediation between movement domains also vary among the TAPGs in our sample. Figure 2 (which shows connections between the 16 TAPGs and sets of organization aggregated according to their predominant political frame) indicates that TAPGs occupy strategic positions *between* movement domains, and that their relations are not limited to organizations associated with their own domain. Two of them, Focus on the Global South (Focus) and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RosaLux) each mediate among six different domains, including the liberal-humanitarian sector, with RosaLux showing relatively extensive ties to anti-capitalist groups. On the reverse side, all but three TAPGs mediate between at least two domains. This configuration suggests that, as they produce and mobilize alternative knowledge, TAPGs mediate among a plurality of movement sectors and political projects. Their cognitive praxis positions them to speak to multiple counter-publics, with the possibility of fostering a convergence across difference. The ideological frameworks with which TAPGs engage extend from liberal-humanitarian to radical anti-capitalist.

Our network analysis suggests that transnational alternative policy groups are well placed to participate in the transformation of the democratic globalization network from a gelatinous and unselfconscious state, into an historical bloc capable of collective action toward an alternative global order. However, this general finding must be qualified in two respects. On the one hand, there are gaps in the bloc, having to do with the representation and integration of regions and movement domains, and with the salience of post-capitalism as a unifying social vision. On the other hand, our architectonic network analysis does not reveal what the various relations and mediations in which TAPGs are active agents actually mean in concrete practice. There is a need both for closer analysis of the specific kinds of relations that link transnational alternative policy groups to other international actors, including intergovernmental organizations and funding relations, and for field work that explores the actual practices of these groups, *in situ*.

(condensed from a paper with the same title, presented at the Second ISA Forum, Buenos Aires, August 2012)

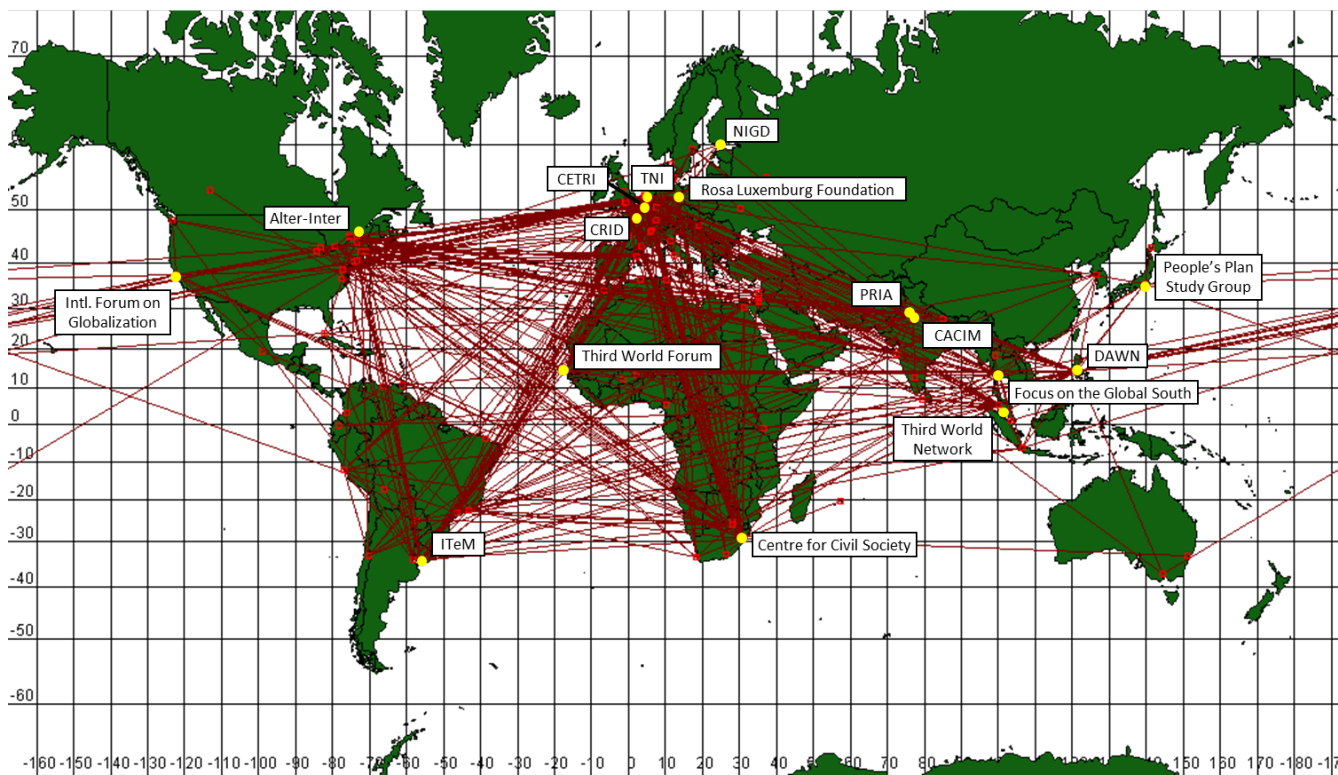


Figure 1. The network of TAPGs in the world

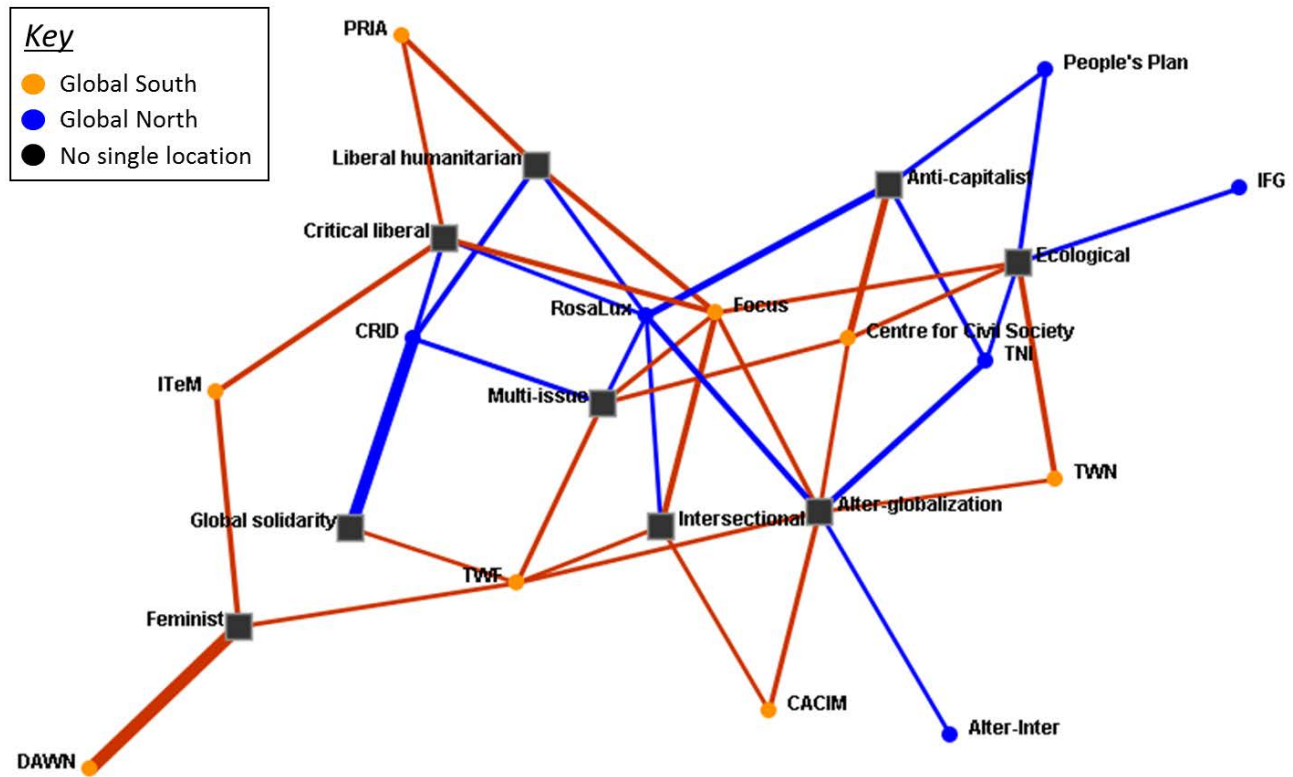


Figure 2. TAGs mediating between movement domains

Abbreviations used in the figures

Focus	Focus on the Global South (Bangkok)
Alter-Inter	Alternatives International (Montréal)
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (Manila)
CRID	Centre de recherche et d'information pour le développement (Paris)
People's Plan	People's Plan Study Group (Tokyo)
ITeM	Instituto del Tercer Mundo and Social Watch (Montevideo)
PRIA	Society for Participatory Research in Asia (New Delhi)
TNI	Transnational Institute (Amsterdam)
TWF	Third World Forum (Dakar)
CETRI	Tricontinental Centre (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium)
TWN	Third World Network (Penang, Malaysia)
RosaLux	Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (Berlin)
IFG	International Forum on Globalization (San Francisco)
NIGD	Network Institute for Global Democratization (Helsinki)
CCS	Centre for Civil Society (Durban)
CACIM	India Institute for Critical Action: Centre in Movement (New Delhi)

Report on "Embeddedness and Beyond: Do Sociological Theories Meet Economic Realities?"

International Conference in Moscow, October 25-28, 2012

by Bill Carroll

RC02 co-sponsored this conference, along with the ESA Economic Sociology Research Network, and with the support of the ASA Economic Sociology Section. The lead organizer and host was the National Research University – Higher School of Economics (HSE) and Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology, in Moscow. Vadim Radaev, Chair of Economic Sociology at the Higher School of Economics, chaired the Local Organizing Committee; Zoya Kotelnikova, also of the Higher School, was centrally involved in making the conference such a success.

The conference featured eight keynote speakers in four plenary sessions and eight thematic 'mini-conferences', each with multiple sessions. This report is highly selective, as it is based on my own attendance at some of the many sessions that composed the conference.

Things got off to a very strong start, with a plenary featuring Glen Morgan and Frank Dobbin, on **Capitalist Development and Institutional Change**. Morgan's 'Capitalism and capitalisms in the Twenty First Century' offered a strong political-economy analysis of recent transformations in global capitalism that have witnessed the disintegration of global value chains and the rise of networked forms of governance, along with a deepening problem of value creation and risk in uncertain markets. The new form of capitalism has had massive impacts upon national capitalisms: states are pressed to improve the profit prospects within their borders, and central banks have to rescue the system by socializing losses after the gains have been privatized – setting up a chronic fiscal crisis best exemplified today in the Eurozone. Morgan's analysis led to the realistically pessimistic conclusion that strong (global) capitalism combined with weak (national) capitalisms portends increased and ongoing uncertainty and crisis. Keeping with the conference theme, Frank Dobbin's 'The fund-manager-value revolution: how institutional investors rewrote shareholder value' focused in on a telling gap between theory and reality in contemporary corporate business. In the 1980s, agency theory, pushed mainly by institutional investors wanting higher returns, gained traction as a rationale for breaking the power of entrenched corporate management. However, the selective adoption of certain agency-theory-based reforms, falling under the rubric of 'shareholder value' led corporations to financialize their operations and embrace higher risks, without the supposed quid-pro-quo of increased real transparency. The results – evident in the collapse of practitioners of faux transparency such as Enron and Lehman Brothers – have been increased crisis tendencies. In Dobbin's view, the problem with the new system of corporate capitalism is its structurally induced high risk-taking, which in the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown, creates the conditions for an inevitable second slump.

At the session on **The Making of (Financial) Markets**, Tomas Loding and Odd Gasdal's 'Financialization of the public sector – Wall Street hubris and Norwegian municipal administrations' examined the growing importance of financial market profits for funding the public sector, as hydroelectric utilities in Norway shifted from a non-profit public-utility model to a profit-seeking enterprise model emphasizing securitization and reinvestment in financial markets. Based on interviews with mayors in several towns, the study revealed their understanding of financialization in technocratic terms and their trust in expert systems, and raised the question: will the public sector's automatic-stabilizer effect in mitigating economic crisis tendencies be lost as financialized public assets become subject to systemic boom/bust tendencies. Olav Velthuis's 'Making monetary markets transparent: the European Central Bank's communication policy and its interactions with the media' was also based in field work, in this case at a leading Dutch newspaper, where the journalistic framing of 'transparency' was found to clash with the ECB's desire to use the media as a communication instrument. News routines led journalists to emphasize stories that 'move the market' (and sell papers); hence, journalists' concept of transparency, emphasizing muckraking and exposé, thwarted the Central Bankers' intention to construct and disseminate a framing and practice of transparency as a way of reducing uncertainty and preventing panic.

At the session **From Economic Knowledge to Economic Reality**, Stefan Ouma presented 'Enabling global connections: the making of world market agencies in frontier regions of global agrarian capitalism.' Based on field work in Ghana, the study

explored the microphysical processes that underpin global markets, specifically for organic mangoes. Key to this is the transformation of subsistence farmers into agents who can evaluate exchange value and participate in the certification of fruit as organic. Ouma's study revealed the extensive socio-technical engineering involved in commodifying a product for the world market, as farmers become normalized within practices of prudent calculation and the securing of revenue to enable both subsistence and debt repayment.

Marion Fourcade's keynote address at the plenary session on **Culture and Valuation** considered 'The economy as morality play,' how cultural practices of shaming, contempt and disrespect turn economic hierarchies into moral hierarchies, while economic transactions serve as powerful vehicles for reproducing these inequities, as in the higher interest rates mandated for debtor states such as Greece, which signify past moral failure. Indeed, the Eurozone crisis has the basic features of a morality play, as 'tough love' conditionalities are imposed upon the morally degraded 'PIIGS' (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain) as a means of re-educating these delinquent societies, in a replay of the IMF Structural Adjustment Programs of the 1980s Latin American debt crisis. As the once-rosy prospect of a convergence of European national incomes recedes, austerity imposed on the semi-periphery provokes radicalization that compounds the estrangement from Europe's 'civilizational core' – portending disaster.

RC02's mini-conference on Capitalist Globalization and its Alternatives first took up the issue of **Structures and Contradictions in Capitalist Globalization**, in a session that included three papers. Dennis McNamara's 'Coordination across borders – towards sociology of East Asian regionalism' focused on the likely effects of regional economic integration, as ASEAN + 3 the ten members of ASEAN and three north-Asian states of China, Japan and South Korea consult on and coordinate economic policy. McNamara queried to what extent and in what ways participating states can upgrade production chains, encourage institutional complementarity and tap synergies for innovation, noting that inter-regional trade within ASEAN Plus Three has now surpassed the NAFTA zone. Georgian Murray and David Peetz's 'Global financialization of ownership and the implications for climate change' integrated data from the Carbon Disclosure Project with share-ownership data to show that global finance capital is divided between 'short-termers' uninterested in the issue of climate change and 'climate interested investors' who take up such issues as the long-term costs of climate change and the creation of green industries. Where investors signed up to the Carbon Disclosure Project control at least 1.5% of shares, target firms also tend to be members of the Climate Disclosure Project, suggesting a fractionation of capital, and a struggle over these perspectives, within the transnational capitalist class. Calvin Liu's 'Hegemony and counter-hegemony in world history: alternatives in China's post-1979 development' presented the provocative thesis that the form of development underway in China contains a counter-hegemonic kernel in that accumulation takes place not through dispossession of the peasantry, who, due to the legacy of Maoism, continue to own rural land even as they have migrated to cities.

The mini-conference's second session, **Alternatives Within and Beyond Globalizing Capitalism**, included five presentations. Arianna Lovera's 'A little differently: alternative finance between anti-capitalist critique and market constraints' reported on three financial cooperatives in Italy and France that fulfill the functions of banks yet advance a reformist critique of capitalism, relating more to civic markets than to capital markets. With lending criteria that emphasize the creation of 'only positive externalities', they recruit clients willing to pay a 'fair price' to participate in the social economy, while offering educational services to build a solidaristic culture among clients/members, which increasingly advances a political critique of capitalist banks. Aaron Pitluck, in 'What does a speculation-free financial system look like? Critically appraising Islamic finance as an alternative financial system', noted that the intent in Islamic finance is to avoid trading in risk, to prohibit gambling and to create fairness between transacting parties. Yet in practice, Islamic financial instruments closely resemble conventional ones. Pitluck offered a tentative explanation of this paradox of convergence by citing three social forces operating within Islamic finance: the coercive isomorphism of a secular legal system, competitive isomorphism as Islam finance must compete with conventional finance, and mimetic processes that press toward a convergence of interest rates. William K. Carroll presented a paper, co-authored with JP Sapinski, 'Embedding postcapitalist alternatives: the global network of alternative knowledge production and mobilization', which is included in condensed form elsewhere in this newsletter. Kevin St Martin's 'Performing diverse economies and enacting economic alternatives: the case of community-supported fisheries' interrogated the neoliberal transformation of fisheries on the north-east coast of the USA as a transition from livelihoods to capital accumulation, as fishers have been transformed into neoliberal actors following the norm of economic individualism, and as regionalized catch quotas and the technological inscription of space undo community and traditional property rights. Following Gibson-Graham, St. Martin argued that the neo-

liberal machine evokes resistance that can be amplified, but that structural analyses of capitalist globalization may miss this in imposing a totalizing narrative. Finally, Sandy Ross's 'Beyond embeddedness and performativity: an hybridised economic sociology' considered the fault line the runs between conventional economic sociology, 'composed of a piece of economic sociology and a piece of Economics' – an economic sociology largely acceptable to economics – and the work of economic scholars in 'other' traditions, particularly political economy, but also economic anthropologists and others, which is 'lumped together as "against" or "separate from" a newer, more 'pure' tradition.' Ross called for a 'cyborg economic sociology' that challenges the dualism of economic sociology and political economy by going beyond performativity, rational choice theory and Marxism.

As the reader will have noticed, the conference was interestingly diverse. Picking up on Ross's distinction, its centre of gravity was definitely on the 'economic sociology' side (although this report does not adequately reflect that), but various questions from the floor at plenaries pressed the speakers to engage with political-economic themes of power, class/gender/race, accumulation, structural crisis and the like, which balanced the scales somewhat. Greater exchange across the economic sociology/political economy divide, and greater representation of the global South among plenary and other speakers would have been welcome in my view. Nevertheless, 'Embeddedness and Beyond' offered a good range of empirical and theoretical insights and perspectives on the social practices and structures of contemporary capitalism.

**2013 Annual Meeting of the Political Economy of World-Systems Section
of the American Sociological Association and the**

**World Society Foundation Award of Excellence Program
for Research Papers on World Society
April 12-13, 2013**



In 2013, the Political Economy of the World-System Section of the American [Sociological](#) Association (PEWS) and the World Society Foundation have joined forces to sponsor a conference at the University of California, Riverside (UCR). This will be the **37th Annual Spring Conference of PEWS and the 4th World Society Foundation [Award Program](#) for Research Papers**. Local organization will be undertaken by the Institute for Research on World-Systems (IROWS) at UCR. The conference will be held **April 12-13, 2013**.

**Conference and Papers Theme:
"Structures of the World Political Economy and
Future Global Conflict and Cooperation"**

Some see recent developments in the world political economy as fundamental departures from the structures of the past while for others these recent changes are similar to those that have occurred in earlier centuries. The international division of labor in the world economy seems to be in a constant state of flux, and the most recent wave of financialization has sent the global economy into a crisis. Rising [food prices](#) and high unemployment have contributed to an increase in anti-authoritarian movements in the Middle East and elsewhere, while many developed countries are facing unsustainable levels of sovereign debt and pressures for greater austerity.

What are the implications of these developments for the future of global conflict and cooperation? Western powers are engaged in several wars in the Middle East. The "rogue" states of Iran and North Korea command a [great deal](#) of international attention. Moreover, a handful of semiperipheral countries including China, South Korea, Brazil and Russia continue to vie for a more prominent place on the world stage. There are struggles within international organizations between the old world powers and those that are rising. Thus, the world-system seems to be evolving toward an increasingly multi-polar political structure in which the ability of the U.S. to generate hegemonic consensus and order has declined.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Power and Justice in the Contemporary World-Economy

Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, August 9, 2013

<http://powerandjustice.com> |

Pre-register by February 23, 2013 to *present* | Register by July 1, 2013 to *attend*.

This one-day conference will focus on highlighting sociologists' contributions to contemporary struggles for social justice around the world. Conference streams will focus on topics like:

- Alternatives to capitalist development
- Biofuels and global warming
- Can we have development AND justice?
- Challenges in international development
- Criminal justice and injustice
- Current affairs in major regions of the world
- Development
- Economic and social rights
- Economy and society
- Environmental footprints
- Environmental justice
- Faces of globalization
- Food security
- Food sovereignty
- Human rights
- Indigenous movements
- Indigenous nationhood
- Indigenous peoples' struggles
- International law and institutions
- Local struggles for rights and/or justice
- Peace movements
- Policing and social control
- Race, class, and gender in the world-system
- Social movements
- Strengthening civil society
- The international treaty system
- The political economy of the world-system
- The politics of austerity
- The rise of the surveillance state
- The transnational capitalist class
- Transnational corporations
- World-systems and ecosystems

The conference program is open and all proposals for participation on topics related to power and justice in the contemporary world-economy will be considered.

TO PARTICIPATE: There are multiple ways you can participate in this conference.

1. To attend without presenting, simply register at powerandjustice.com by July 1, 2013. Registration fees are \$20 for full-time employed professionals, \$10 for students, retired professionals, and others who are on limited budgets.
2. To participate by giving a presentation, pre-register at powerandjustice.com by February 23, 2013 and select the presenter option. Presenters will be asked to present their knowledge or expertise on their chosen topic, not an academic research paper. For example, an expert on global inequality would be expected to summarize the state of academic knowledge about inequality levels and trends, not present the results of a specific research paper. If you register as a potential presenter, you will be asked to provide a 100-word description of the topic(s) on which you would like to present. We are open to all suggestions and will organize panels based on the submissions we receive.
3. To propose an invited panel (a fully-staffed 90 minute panel of presenters), please contact Salvatore Babones at sbabones@inbox.com as soon as possible.
4. To volunteer to chair a panel, simply check the appropriate box on your registration and we will contact you to make arrangements.

CONFERENCE PAPERS: All conference participants (both presenters and non-presenters) who **pre-register by February 23** will have the opportunity to submit a conference paper that will be fully peer-reviewed and included in an online conference proceedings volume. You need not present at the conference to take advantage of this facility, though you do have to register. Initial papers will be due April 29, 2013. Final papers (revised based on peer review feedback) will be due July 1, 2013. Pre-registrants will be contacted in late February about the opportunity for paper submission after the close of pre-registration.

**CALL FOR PAPERS:
Labor and Global Solidarity – The US, China and Beyond**

The Labor & Labor Movements Section of the ASA and the Society for the Study of Social Problems are pleased to announce a Mini-conference entitled **Labor and Global Solidarity – The US, China and Beyond** to be held concurrently with the ASA and SSSP meetings in New York City on **Monday, August 12th, 2013**. The conference is co-sponsored by: the Asia and Asian American Section of ASA; the Labor Studies Section of SSSP; the Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies at CUNY; the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education; the Manhattan College Labor Studies Program; *Critical Sociology*; SAGE UK, the Labour Movements Research Committee (RC44) of the International Sociological Association; and the China Association of Work and Labor of the Chinese Sociological Association.

The one-day mini-conference will bring together scholars and practitioners to address the changing landscapes of work and labor organizing at multiple scales, from the local to the transnational. Facing the global re-organization of production chains, the expansion of precarious work, hostile political climates, and the continued world-wide economic malaise, workers and their allies nonetheless continue to act, from escalating unrest across China, to new models of organizing in NYC, to greater cross-border solidarity, North-South and South-South.

To engage these developments and spark discussion, the conference will include panels on both local, global and transnational labor issues and organizing strategies. We also seek a mix of activists and academics. Finally, the mini-conference is an opportunity for international exchange as five labor scholars from China will be participating throughout the event and across the different panels. Papers including the U.S. and China are especially welcome, but topics and evidence from all over the world are appropriate.

We invite submissions of abstracts (min. 300 words) or full papers on a broad range of topics related to local and global labor, but are particularly interested in submissions that address the following themes of the conference:

- **Labor in China**
- **Insurgency and Institutions**
- **Organizing (im)migrants – here, there and in the diaspora**
- **South–South Solidarity**
- **Transnational Labor Organizing – How & When does it Work**
- **Informal work, informal worker organizing**
- **Monitoring international supply chains from the shop floor(s)**
- **Responses to global economic crisis**

To submit an abstract or paper, please send it to the conference co-organizers: Carolina Bank Munoz (carolinabm75@gmail.com), David Fasenfest (critical.sociology@gmail.com), and Steve McKay (smckay@ucsc.edu). **Abstracts or papers are due February 15, 2013**. If submitting an abstract, full drafts of accepted papers are due June 30th, 2013. Papers presented at the conference will also be considered for publication in a planned special issue of the journal *Critical Sociology* and/or in a separate edited book. Conference participants will be responsible for covering their own travel and lodging expenses (though meals for participants on the program will be provided). The conference will be free and open to the public.

Call for Papers Geographies of Labor

35th Annual North American Labor History Conference
October 24-26, 2013
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan

The Program Committee of the North American Labor History Conference invites proposals for sessions, papers, and roundtables on “Geographies of Labor” for our thirty-fifth annual meeting.

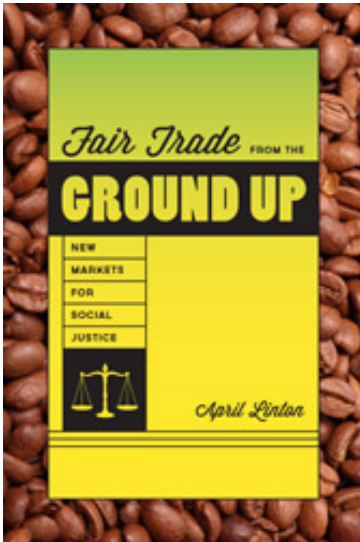
Over the last several centuries, transformations in technology and in economic, social, political, and cultural practices have created new spatial regimes within and across geographic boundaries. Whether negotiating the changes around them or taking advantage of new possibilities to shape alternatives, workers have been central to remapping this emergent environment.

Inspired by the “spatial turn” in the social sciences, this conference will explore the myriad ways in which workers have interacted with a variety of geographic categories. We welcome projects that seek to understand these interactions through a number of lenses, including, but not limited to: empire, globalization, uneven development, mobility, and migration/immigration at the transnational, national and/or local level. We invite proposals from a wide variety of disciplines, especially history, geography, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, and cultural studies.

Submissions of proposals for papers, panels, and roundtables should include a one paragraph abstract and a brief biographical statement per each participant by **March 29, 2013** to:

Professor Francis Shor, Coordinator
North American Labor History Conference
Department of History
Wayne State University
3157 Faculty Administration Building
Detroit, MI 48202

Phone: 313-577-9325; Fax: 313-577-6987
Email: nalhc@wayne.edu



Fair Trade from the Ground Up: New Markets for Social Justice

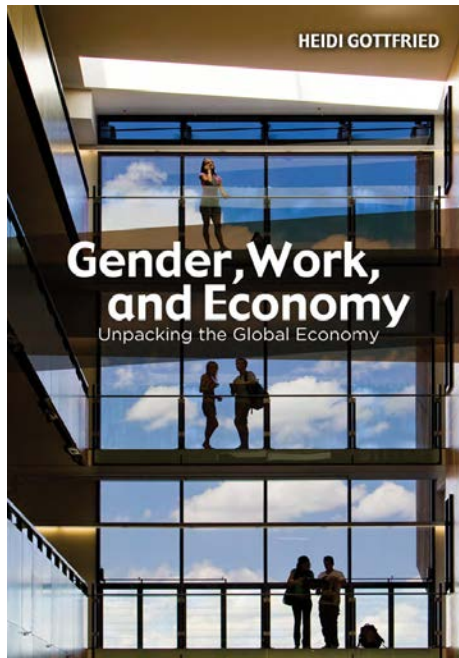
April Linton

Fair Trade promises to raise living standards in developing countries through:

- * worldwide minimum prices for commodities
- * support for democratically governed cooperatives
- * requirement of minimum wages and safety standards for workers
- * training to help producers improved quality and develop business skills
- * encouragement of eco-friendly practices
- * third-party certification

In contrast to the free trade status quo, Fair Trade relies on informed consumers to choose more [direct supply](#) chains that minimize the role of middlemen, offering economic justice and social change as a viable and sustainable alternative to charity. But does it work?

Fair Trade from the Ground Up documents achievements at both the producer and the consumer ends of commodity chains and assesses prospects for future growth. From [Guatemalan coffee](#) farmers to student activists on U.S. college campuses, the stories of individuals inform April Linton's analysis. Drawing on studies by social scientists and economists, as well as on new case studies, she provides balanced answers to hard questions: How can large institutions be persuaded to commit to using Fair Trade suppliers? Does ethical consumerism work? Are the "social premiums" that are built into Fair Trade prices really being used for community projects? Will Fair Trade market growth reach the scale of organics or green products? This book meets a long-felt need among economic-justice activists, consumer groups, and academics for a reliable qualitative and quantitative overview of achievements of the Fair Trade movement.



***Gender, Work, and Economy:
Unpacking the Global Economy***

Polity Press, 2012

Heidi Gottfried

This engaging new text uses a feminist lens to crack open the often hidden worlds of gender and work, addressing enduring questions about how structural inequalities are produced and why they persist. Making visible the social relationships that drive the global economy, the book explores how economic transformations not only change the way we work, but how we live our lives.

The full extent of changing patterns of employment and the current financial crisis cannot be fully understood in the confines of narrow conceptions of work and economy. Feminists address this shortcoming by developing both a theory and a political movement aimed at unveiling the power relations inherent in old and new forms of work. By providing an analysis of gender, work, and the economy, Heidi Gottfried brings to light the many faces of power from the bedroom to the boardroom. A discussion of globalization is threaded throughout the book to uncover the impact of increasing global interconnections, and vivid case studies are included, from industrialized countries such as the US and the global cities of New York, London, and Tokyo, as well as from developing countries and the emerging global cities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Dubai.

This comprehensive analysis of gender and work in a global economy, incorporating sociology, geography, and political economy perspectives, will be a valued companion to students in gender studies and across the social sciences more generally.

For more information, and to order, visit <http://www.polity.co.uk/book.asp?ref=9780745647647>

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