

FROM THE LEFT

THE MARXIST SECTION

NEWSLETTER of ASA

Spring, 1997: V 20 No 3
T.R. Young, Senior Editor



**Das Verdamnt Kapitalismus! Wenn will er selbst
destroyen?**

****Cartoon by Crumb**

SECTION OFFICERS:

CHAIR: ALAN SPECTOR,
Purdue/Calumet, Hammond, In., 46323,
Email: <spector@calumet.purdue.edu>

PAST CHAIR: Sara Schoonmaker,
Redlands U., Ca., 92373.
Email: <sschoonmaker@igc.apc.org>

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Martha Gimenez, U/Colorado,
Boulder, Co., 80309, Email:
<gimenez@csf.colorado.edu>

Monica Bahati Kuumba, Soc.,
Buffalo State College
Buffalo, NY., 14222, Email:
<Kumbamb@SUNYBUFVA.CS.SNYBUF.EDU>

Stephanie Shanks-Meile,
Soc/Anthro, Indiana University,
N.W., Gary, Indiana, 46408, Email:
<sshank@iunhaw1.iun.indiana.edu>

Gary Welborn, Sociology,
Buffalo St. College,
Buffalo, N.Y., 14222, Email:
<welborgs@snybufaa.cs.snybuf.edu>

Martin Murray, Soc.,
SUNY, Binghamton, NY, 13901
Email: <mmurray@bingsons.cc.binghamton.edu>

Lauren Langman,
2012 N. Howe St.,
Chicago, Il., 60614, Email:
<llang944@aol.com>

Jim Salt, Sec/Treas
History, Pol/Sci, Soc.,
University of Tampa,
Tampa, Fla., 33606, Email:
<salt@alpha.utampa.edu>

NEWSLETTER: T.R. Young,
The Red Feather Institute,
Weidman Mi. 48893: Email:
<T.R.Young@UVM.EDU>

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Email: listproc@csf.colorado.edu
Then type: sub psn your
name.1

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THE FUTURE OF US CAPITALISM: In a Globalized Economy.

1. The future of the USA capitalism depends in no small part upon its military. It is the only Super-Power in the world. Many old and new capitalist countries depend upon it for social peace. Both national and trans-national corporations need US military presence for local capitalists to survive and thrive. These countries concede favored position to the USA in markets, raw materials and investment/profit rates. If one is interested in and only in the future of US Capitalism, global hegemony bodes well for it.

2. The USA controls the World Bank, the OEDC and USAID as well as the International Monetary Fund...these together are used to force 3rd world countries to retire debt to US, German, British and Japanese banks. And bring home a lot of wealth. profits and food to developed countries. Without such fiscal tools, the US is forced to rely on the CIA and direct military intervention ... very costly in terms of dollars and in terms of political legitimacy at home and abroad. AS long as the USA continues to control these fiscal tools and to use them to gain advantage for US capitalists, American capitalism is in fair shape.

3. US corporate prosperity hinges upon several factors at home as well: the creation of new consumer goods; competition on price in the global market means control of labor costs; transfer of taxation to middle classes; extraction of surplus value from those with discretionary funds; profits from the 3rd world; corporate avoidance of tax liability, control of civil suits by consumers; escape from regulation by state agencies; control of employee theft. In a word, externalization of costs; internalization of profits.

4. The US capitalist agenda is different from that of the US as a nation-state...political legitimacy depends upon the state serving diverse demands. Success of corporate capital in steering social policy subverts the legitimacy the US state. A great deal of social unrest brews and bubbles as the US State serves these needs even as wages diminish, taxes grow, welfare decreases, the infra-structure deteriorates and those surplus to profit/production needs of US Capitalism increase.

A. The fate of US Capitalism depends upon the mobility of capital. The center of capitalism has moved over the centuries; now it moves ever faster as stock markets are connected, satellites and global communications are cset in place. Global capitalism will, doubtless, continue to change shape, social and geographical location. This shift is beyond the control of US State policy at home or in the global economy. Freedom to move capital increases everywhere since the collapse of bureaucratic/centralized socialism.

B. The Advantages of Capitalism. Survival of US capitalism depends upon its ability to control/mask its contradictions:

1. Capitalism is the most productive economic system heretofore developed; but it tends to strangle distribution.
2. Capitalism is the most innovative system so far developed; but innovation is in high profit lines while essential common goods are neglected.
3. Capitalism is the most flexible system yet created by humans; that flexibility is bought at the cost of community health at home and abroad.
4. Capitalism requires an ever-improving knowledge system; however knowledge remains a commodity and is confined to those who have funds to buy it.
5. Capitalism tends to destroy ancient forms of privilege, power and social status ... not excluding race, gender, religion and ethnic preference; however the social linkage between self and society is weakened along. Massification of self and society creates ever more problems in family, religion and market.
6. Capitalism requires social peace; the movement of jobs, capital, profit, goods, and employees in a globalized economy means the end of predatory warfare in its military modality; yet this is a false peace of economic hegemony non-the-less it is a sea-change from previous use of force to capture markets, access raw materials and exploit labor in 3rd world colonies...21st c. wars begin as ethnic cleansing and end as economic suicide.

Resolution of these and other contradictions in one realm means transfer to another realm...and loss of political legitimacy in both the old and new arena of class struggle.

C. The Globalization of Social Problems in the 21st Century. For most of US history, social processes within the USA shaped infant mortality rates, longevity, crime, poverty, suicide and other social problems. Now decisions in Toyko and Hong Kong affect crime rates in Omaha and Orlando. The social and geographical location of social problems change as new social forms expand and contract throughout a globalized economy...and limit the ability of the US State to handle them. Political legitimacy problems accumulate. At some point early in the 21st century, the capitalist state must abandon US capital.

D. Some 1000 Transnational corporations now run the global political economy; some 300 are based in the USA; new TNC's appear, merge and fail. Each birth and each death of a MNC affects US future. As capital is globalized the social base of the MNC is also globalized. As US capital deserts the US, the state will begin to serve other sectors of that class.

E. The global political economy is heavily stratified and becoming weekly, more sharply inequal in terms of wealth, power and status. Inequality subverts political legitimacy and requires ever more resources allocated to social control tactics at home and around the world.

F. Bloc Formation. Just as nations displaced counties and townships, blocs will replace nations as a major social form in human affairs: There are 10-12 blocs emerging, the most advanced is of course, the European Union... but the NAFTA will be a powerful actor in 21st century. The South American Cone will likely form a bloc as will Sub-Saharan Africa. Japan may finally get her Co-prosperity Sphere which may include NZ and Oz. The Islamic countries may form two or even three economic blocs. Since the Arab states control most of the oil reserves, it will be a force to reckon. All by itself, China is a bloc; when Hong Kong joins it next year, the structure of the global economy will make undergo great change. The same is true of India; it has cheap labor, a well trained/skilled professional class, fair transport, fair communications and a new global-oriented leadership.

G. Fundamentalist States and Blocs. Israel and the Islam deserve special mention. Israel may join the Sub-sahran Bloc and, with South Africa, make it a player on the world stage. There are 3 places in Israel where new industries are fostered and then cut loose; Kafir Vradim in Northern Israel is the most successful. More will come to determine the social location of Israel in the Global Economy. Internal politics may subvert Israel as a distinct political entity. The same may be true of Islamic states and blocs. Fundamentalist politics are inimical to global investment and trade. Yet fundamentalist politics are most appealing to those marginalized by Globalization processes. The USA may well discover this home truth as economic conditions deteriorate.

H. Democratic Socialism. With the collapse of bureaucratic/repressive socialism, other forms of socialism now seem more likely. The Mondragon co-ops in northern Spain; Kerala State in India; the communist cities of Italy; newly re-organizing nations in Central Europe as well as the possibility of great improvement in Cuba and perchance China hold out promise for a better way to do social justice on a global scale. The success/failure of emergent democratic and socialist political economies in East Europe and elsewhere will affect transformations in capitalist countries...not excluding the USA.

J. China. The fate of US Capitalism and that of Europe may depend upon what happens in China the coming years. If China succeeds in challenging capitalism either as a socialist formation or a competing capitalist formation, great changes in labor markets on a global scale will occur. The center of global finance may well continue its great cycle around the world from Venice to Brussels to London to New York

and now to Tokyo. Should China become an economic super-power, all that is solid melts into thin air...including US hegemony.

K. The Internet is a wild card in the great transformations of the 21st Century...as are other communications technologies yet to be developed.

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 GRADUATE STUDENT PAGE 

ADDRESS FOR THE SOCGRAD NETWORK! Information about graduate programs in sociology as well as problems common to all grad students. Email: <LISTSPROC@CSF.COLORADO.EDU>
 Then type: SUB SOCGRAD YOUR_NAME.

**NEW Graduate Student Paper Award. The Conflict, Social Action and Change Division of SSSP has established an Award for a grad student paper that address issues of relevance to the Division. The focus of the Division this year is peace and conflict, activist scholarship, social change, community activism and university/community relations. SEND papers to: NANCY A. NAPLES: Sociology, Ucal at Irvine, 92717. Fax: 714-824-7417.

**The SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION offers free membership to its section for grad students. Contact CG Ellison, Membership Chair at University of Texas/Austin.

**The ASA Section on Peace and War announces the Elise M. Boulding Award for Distinguished Student Paper. The Award will be presented at the ASA Meetings in Toronto. 5 copies before 15 April to: Lynne Woehrle, Sociology, Syracuse U., Syracuse, NY, 13244,

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REQUIUM for a Sociologist. Jessie Barnard died at age 83. Her writings began with a broad look at Social Problems at Mid-Century and ended with a much more focussed examination of patriarchy which lead to a series of foundational feminist writings which continue to inspire women and men alike who are interested in social justice and the enlargement of the human project. Jessie Barnard was born in Minneapolis, daughter to immigrant shop-keepers. She supported her husband, L.L. Bernard bearing his children and his work along with her own academic career. Dr. Bernard 'retired' from Penn State in 1964; she was 61 and just beginning her major work. She then wrote *The Sex Game*, *The Female World*, *The Future of Marriage*, *The Future of Motherhood*, *Women and the Public Interest* as well as many other such ground-breaking work. The "Jessie Barnard Award," of the ASA continues to recognize her work and the mentoring for which she is rightly honored. Graduate Students who would like to know more about Bernard may look at her bio in ASA Footnotes, Nov., 1996, from which much of the data in this tribute comes.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The ASA MARXIST SECTION now has a HOME-PAGE, thanks to Martha Gimenez and Glenn Muschert. The URL is:
<http://csf.colorado.edu/psn/marxist-sociology/index.html>

**DISMANTLING CORPORATE rule of the Global Economy. Social Activists are invited to join the 5D movement to oppose corporate rule of the global economy. 5D offers the following activist agenda:

1. Define corporate rule
2. Dissect corporate rule
3. Denounce corporate rule
4. Disrupt corporate rule
5. Dismantle corporate rule of the global economy.

CONTACT: The International Forum on Globalization
 950 Lombard Street, San Francisco, Ca.

- **RADICAL PHILOSOPHY ASSOCIATION continues to offer praxical expressions of ethics, epistemology, logic and metaphysics to its members and readers. To subscribe to RPA, post to: <majordomo@indiana.edu> and send this message: Subscribe [your email address]
- **RPA sponsors a 3-day conference in Mexico City. Contact: peffer@acusd.edu or: evans@duq3.cc.duq.edu or: wrehberg@lightlink.com
- **STUDY/TRAVEL to Cuba with RPA. May 13-27. Contact: JON TORGERSON at Drake U: <jt5001R@acad.drake.edu>
- **THE CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES also offers a Travel Seminar to Cuba. Contact CHARLES MCKELVEY: <CEMCK@CSL.PRESBY.EDU>
- **CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC VALUES. Ron ARONSON is developing a Left think-tank with Democratic Socialists of America Contact: RARONSO@CMS.CC.Wayne.edu>
- **SOCIALIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE. Contact: Gail Presby at: <znh@marisb.marist.edu>
- **ASA MEETINGS IN TORONTO: The Marxist Section Meetings are on Wednesday, August 13, 1997. FORMAL SESSIONS are:
- **STATE TERRORISM: contact STEPHANIE SHANKS- MEILE: <sshanks@iunhaw1.iun.indiana.edu>
- **THE NEW WORLD ORDER: Globalization/Imperialism: contact: MARTHA GIMENEZ: <gimenez_m@gold.colorado.edu>
- **CLASS STRUGGLE AND IDENTITY POLITICS:
contact LAUREN LANGMAN <YLPSSLO@cpua.it.luc.edu>
or Steve Rosenberg <mdr@borg.evms.edu>
- **Round-Tables for the Marxist Section are set as follows:
- REFERRED ROUND-TABLES
- **BERCH BERBEROGLU: Class Analysis of 3rd World Societies
<berchb@scs.unr.edu> Fax: (702) 784 1358
- **MORT WENGER: Militias, Zapatistas, Crips and Bloods: Pre-Theoretical Rebellion and Resistance.
MGWENGO01@ULKYVM.LOUISVILLE.EDU
- **MIKE-FRANK EPITROPUOULOS: Tourism and State Planning in Greece.
- **MICHAEL GRIMES, LSU, and JOAN MORRIS, U/CENTRAL FLORIDA: Life in Academia for Working Class Sociologists.
- **DEREK PRICE, American U.: The Global Military Complex of the New World Order. Email: DP4257A@American.edu
- INFORMAL DISCUSSION ROUND-TABLES
- **JOANNE NAIMAN and JOHN SAKERIS: Canada and the New World Order. Ryerson Polytech, 350 Victoria St., Toronto, M5B 2K3, Ontario, CANADA. Email: <jnaiman@acs.ryerson.ca>
- **HELEN RAISZ: Life and Death in the Global Economy.
<hraisz@mercy.sjc.edu>
- **LLOYD KLEIN: The Devil and Ms. Jones: Identity Politics and the "Jenny Jones Murder Trial." <lklein@uhavax.hartford.edu>
- **JACKIE CARRIGAN: Marxian Theory and Health Issues. U/Colorado at Boulder, Co., 80309-0329
<carrigan@rastro.colorado.edu>
- **Theoretical and Empirical Investigations of the State. Contact: Karp@vms.cis.pitt.edu
- **BILL WHIT: Marxist and non-Marxist Approaches to Food, Eating and Agriculture. Contact: whitw@GVSU.EDU
- **SOLOMON GASHAW: Class, Ethnicity and the State in Ethiopia: <egashaws@caa.mrs.umn.edu>
- **VALERIE SCATAMBURLO: Sociology, York University. Capitalism and Identity. <valeries@yorku.ca>
- ***CONFERENCE on PROPERTY, COMMODITY, CULTURE: Manhattan, Kansas, March 6-8, 1997: Possible topics: *Personal property/public responsibility*visual rights *Tenure *Transnational capital, globalism, *Mode of production, social formation, and deterritorialization and forms of property *The revival of nationalism: cultural *Education as consumer good and economic property *Children: property or

persons *Virtual property and copyright *Prostitution and sexwork *Class and turf *Marriage: history and future *Enclosure and commons *Slavery *Property and crime AND MORE!! Address proposals and queries to Tim Dayton, Department of English, Denison Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. Phone: (913) 532-6716. FAX: (913) 532-7004. Email: TADAYTON@KSU.KSU.EDU

**SOCIALIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE. 28-30 March, 1997 at Borough of Manhattan Community College. THEME: Radical Alternatives on the Eve of the Millennium.

**CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGY: A new Journal. Send your articles to Dragan Milovanović. Subscribe for \$20/year [\$15/year for low income]. Ask your library to get it! A valuable addition to radical criminology.

**RETHINKING MARXISM. The Editors of Rethinking Marxism announce the 3rd International Conference around the theme, 'POLITICS AND LANGUAGES OF CONTEMPORARY MARXISM' at UMass, Amherst. During the four days of the Conference, Thurs., Dec. 5 to Sun., Dec 8, there will be concurrent sessions on issues which intersect with marxism; feminism, racism, queer theory, and post-colonial studies. Contact STEPHEN CULLENBERG, Econ, Ucal-Riverside, Ca. 92521 by AUGUST, 1996.

**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. A new Award. Send nominations to T.R. Young, <TR.Young@UVM.EDU>.

**MARXIST SCHOLARSHIP AWARD: Chair, Larry Miller.

**AL SYZMANSKI AWARD: Chair, Abigail Fuller

CROP is an organization sponsored by UNESCO and is located at: <<http://www.svf.uib.no/helsos/crop/crop.htm>>. It helps coordinate research and conferences on poverty around the world.

**NEW BOOK on BUILDING TRADE UNIONISM IN THE PHILIPPINES by Kim Scipes. \$18.95. To order, write: Sulu Books and Arts, 465 6th St., SF, 94103-4794.

**New Book On CORPORATE WELFARE STRATEGY and the WELFARE STATE by Davita S. Glasberg and Dan Skidmore.

**New Book by Bill Domhoff: STATE AUTONOMY or CLASS DOMINANCE? Case studies in policy making in the USA. Domhoff says that state policy is still in control of corporate elites.

ELIZABETH BOWMAN AND BOB STONE reported on Worker Ownership on the Mondragon Model at the AHS Meetings in Hartford, Oct. 1996. They argue that these co-ops offer models for workplace democracy in the global workplace. Contact: ebowman@igc.apc.org.

STEVE VOGEL has a new book, AGAINST NATURE. Steve uses Critical Theory to think about environmental ethics in a post-empiricist modality. SUNY PRESS.

GILBERT GERMAIN writes A DISCOURSE ON DISENCHANTMENT: Reflections on Politics and Technology. SUNY PRESS.

ROBYN ECKERSLEY reflects on Green political theory in ENVIRONMENTALISM AND POLITICAL THEORY. SUNY.

KENNETH BAYNES offers THE NORMATIVE GROUNDS OF SOCIAL CRITICISM in his new book. SUNY PRESS.

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***CULTURAL MARXISM is the human half of marxist studies. At their best, they follow the advice of Marx that ways of thinking, feeling, acting and researching are preshaped by one's location in the social structure. More than that, such psychological embodiments of class, racist, gender, age, ethnic and religious institutions fit, follow and adapt to the ups and downs of the great and small cycles of capitalism. Yet, there are very many moments when human beings can break with the ruling epistemologies of an epoch ... Marx and those who worked with and against him are case in point. Words, icons, images, and ideologies do make a difference in the lived experience of particular human beings and call forth rebellion and resistance rather than compliance, apology and transfer of existential anger to another group, gender or society.

The 1997 Catalog of Cultural Studies put out by Sage Publications hold a wide variety of such works well worth one's attention. Below is a very brief summary of several. one can get more information at Sage: email: order@sagepub.com

**Questions of Cultural Identity ... by Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay. A wide variety of radical/marxist/feminist authors contribute to this exploration of what is happening to the structure of self in a massified, rationalized, fragmented social order. Hall, Bauman, Rose, Frith, and Grossberg among others.

**Doing Cultural Studies another book edited by Hall and his associates at the Open University ... Hall has been central to cultural marxism in England for over a quarter century ... his insights into how to do cultural studies are augmented by his fine associates there and at Leicester.

**PostEmotional Society. Stjepan Mestrovic at Texas A&M continues to bring the damage done to human/social emotions by a mass,

industrialized political economy ... Mestrovic carries the sociology of knowledge and ideological studies over to the human ability to feel compassion and expand solidarity beyond the isolated and fragmented structure of self.

**Culture, Multiculture, Postculture... is a work by Joel Dahn which helps us understand how culture has become so important to the structures of conflict and repression. It serves as counter-weight to those of us who give too much weight to class and political economy.

**Cultural Theory & Late Modernity ... Johan Fornas at the University of Stockholm offers a wide ranging and multi-dimensional understanding of culture and theories about culture.

***Undoing Culture ... by Mike Featherstone at Nottingham/Trent. Featherstone picks up on the central question in radical social psychology ... how has/is the globalization of capitalism affecting culture and our understanding of it.

**The Commercialization of American Culture ... by Matt McAllister. McAllister makes the case that advertizing, in its efforts to generate markets for a hard-pressed capitalism, invades every domain of social life.

**The Masque of Femininity... Efrat Tsellon at Leeds uses Freud, Goffman, Elias, Lacan, Baudrillard and others to show how the bodies and souls of women are shaped by marketing considerations, by religious gender programs and by hegemonic male media.

**Postmodernism and the Social Sciences... by Robert Hollinger. A fine companion to Pauline Vaillancourt-Rosenau's book with a similar title. Most marxists spend far too much time attacking postmodern critique rather than thinking about how it fits into a globalized political economy and of its potential for human emancipation from reified ways of doing race, class, gender, science and knowledge itself ... go for it!

**Cultural Identity and Global Processes ... by Jonathan Friedman. Those marxists/progressive scholars who like to think about on the widest possible sweep of history and being will find this book their cuppa.

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BOOK REVIEW: Progressive sociologists, Marxists and gender theorists will be interested in a recently released collection of writings by Felix Guattari (The [Guattari Reader](#), ed. by Gary Genesko. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996). Guattari, who died in 1992, was a leading figure in the anti-psychiatry movement in the 1970's, co-founded the innovative psychiatric clinic at La Borde with Jean Oury, and was a founding editor of the journal [Recherches](#). The range of Guattari's theoretical interests and political involvements was as formidable as it was eclectic, ranging from "schizo-analysis" and semiotics, to radical ecology to queer politics. Throughout his life, he remained committed to the project of existential liberation through collective practice. The book contains many previously published works along with several noteworthy new translations. There are excellent pieces on the theory of capitalism, (written with Eric Alliez); on communism and the problem of post-industrial alliances (from his work with Antonio Negri); and the possibilities of revolution. Guattari extends the conventional critique of capitalism beyond a theory of class antagonism and relations of production to include the effects of capitalist semiotization (discourse, modes of enunciation) and capitalist investments of desire or libido (the production of "desiring machinery"). The book also contains some of Guattari's reflections on homosexuality and identity (notably, his reaction to the order to sieze Issue 12 of [Recherches](#), "Three Billion Perverts: an Encyclopedia of Homosexualities." Guattari, of course, is also well known for his collaboration with Gilles Deleuze and their critiques of representation, dialectical reason, and psychoanalysis ([Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia](#) and [A Thousand Plateaus](#)). Part of the strength of this collection is that it contains several clear statements of Guattari's position on postmodernism, which he explicitly rejects as a form of " neo-liberal cultural prostitution" and an "ethical abdication" (he gives the example of postmodern architecture). It's both instructive and revealing of the - current politics surrounding the debate on postmodernism how someone like Guattari can be identified with this movement, even when he advocates something radically different.

....Bill Bogard Whitman College

KEVIN ANDERSON has a new work, 'Uncovering Narx's Unpublished Writings.' Anderson reports on the fate of a considerable body of Marxian writings in the old USSR. It is a most valuable addendum to an already rich legacy of analysis on class, gender, clan, capitalism and the struggle for social justice.

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MARXIST SECTION FINANCIAL REPORT

Dues Income: \$750.00. Expenses: Annual Meeting--\$200.00. Net Assets: \$1,282.14.

1996 Newsletter Budget: Number per issue: 450. Printing Costs per issue--\$312.86; mailing costs per issue: \$62.19. Annual Allowance:

\$1500.20.

Membership Report: 1995: 406 members. 1996: 382 members--Student: 86; Regular--284. Remember, the MS pays section dues of your grad students!!!

Next Meeting: August 9-13 in Toronto: THEME: Bridges for Sociology: See Page 4 for a list of Session and Organizers.

**MARXISM IN A POSTMODERN AGE: Confronting the New World Order. Eds: Antonio Callari, Stephen Cullenberg and Carole Biewener. Published by Guilford Press. A Collection from the 1992 conference, RETHINKING MARXISM. A look at the creativity and variety in the marxist camp today.

**JOURNAL OF WORLD SYSTEMS RESEARCH. Volume 2 is available free on the internet: <<http://csf.colorado.edu/wsystems/jwsr.html>>. V. 2 contains articles by Daniel Whiteneck and by W. Warren Wagar. Chris Chase-Dunn urges the Wagar article on progressive scholars. Send articles for V.3 to Chase-Dunn at: Sociology, Johns Hopkins U., Balt., Md., 21218.

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*****Join the Marxist Section of the ASA*****

FROM:

TO:

The American Sociological Association
1722 N. St., N.W., Washington, D.C.,20036

___ I am a member of ASA; enclosed is \$10 for Marxist Section Dues.

___ I am not a member of ASA; send me membership forms at the address above.

INTERNET ADDRESS: <MEMBERSHIP@ASANET.ORG>

(Make checks payable to ASA)

***The [RED FEATHER INSTITUTE](#) is now on-line with its own Home-Page thanks to David Langer and to Steve Cavrak at the University of Vermont. The RF Archives are under construction but there are several resources available; the 3rd Edition of the Red Feather Dictionary of Radical, Feminist, Marxist and Postmodern terms may be down-loaded. There are several articles on Chaos Theory and Non-Linear Social Dynamics as they bear on traditional marxist concerns. There is also some teaching materials for interactionally rich and informationally richer classes. Thanks to my technical assistant, David Langer for his good help.

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