



# Marxist Sociology Section

<http://marxistsociology.org/>

Summer 2016

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Section on Marxist Sociology

American Sociological Association

## Introduction to the Summer 2016

In this issue of the Marxist Sociology Section newsletter you will encounter familiar segments and new additions. Inside you will find calls for papers for upcoming conferences, notices of additional conferences, the list of publications from members, and the section schedule at ASA.

Additionally, you will find two essays written by members of the section. The first essay, written by Valeria Vegh Weis, a recent graduate, discusses her dissertation, *The History of Criminal Selectivity: A Reading from Marx, Engels, and Contemporary Marxist Thought*. The second essay, written by Cristina A. Lucier, Assistant Professor at Lynn University, and Brian J. Gareau, Associate Professor at Boston College, entitled, "A Brief Critical Commentary on the Formalization of the E-Waste Recycling Economy, in China and the World," offers a an insight into their recent collaborative work.

Both of these works are found on the section website. See below if you would like to submit your own work.

## Call for Submissions—Marxist Section Blog

The Marxist Section has launched a blog on its website, <http://marxistsociology.org/>, and posts are featured on the site's main page. The primary purpose of the blog is to highlight the work of Marxist Section members. The blog editorial team invites submissions for the following types of content:

- a) Summaries of published articles, books, and PhD dissertations
- b) News analysis and commentary
- c) Findings from in-progress research
- d) Book reviews, film reviews, and podcast reviews
- e) Poetry and artwork
- f) Citations for recently published books/articles

Submitted content should be around 800-1,200 words. The editorial team intends to publish all or most submissions but reserves the right to reject submissions. We will do our best to post things in a timely manner.

Go to the website to submit materials online: [www.marxistsociology.org](http://www.marxistsociology.org).

## Inside this issue:

Call for Submissions	Pp. 1, 2
Non-ASA conference Announcement	Pp. 3-5
Section Award Winners Announcement	Pp. 5
Publications	Pp. 6-10
<i>The History of Criminal Selectivity</i> by Valeria Vegh Weis	Pp. 11-12
<i>A Brief Critical Commentary</i> by Cristina A. Lucier and Brian J. Gareau	Pp. 13-15
ASA 2016 Marxist Sociology Section Sessions Schedule	Pp. 16-19



**One Day Conference Commemorating 150 Anniversary of the Publication of Marx's  
*Capital*, Vol. 1.****Call for Papers  
Hofstra Cultural Center**

Presents a one-day symposium

*Marx's Critique of  
Political Economy and  
the Global Crisis Today*

On the 150th Anniversary of the  
Publication of Karl Marx's *Capital*

**Thursday, April 6, 2017**

We invite submissions of papers to be presented at a one-day symposium to be held at Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York. We are soliciting papers from any discipline that extend and apply Marx's analytical apparatus (including labor theory of value) to some aspect of the crisis of global capitalism today.

**Confirmed Plenary Speakers:**

David Harvey

**Distinguished Profess., The Graduate Center, CUNY;  
Author of *Limits to Capital*, 1982**

Silvia Federici

**Professor Emerita, Hofstra University;  
Author of *Caliban and the Witch*, 2004**

Harry Cleaver

**Professor Emeritus, University of Texas at Austin;  
Author of *Reading Capital Politically*, 1979**

The deadline for submission of abstracts is **October 15, 2016**. Applicants should email a 250-word abstract to symposium co-directors Conrad Herold at [Conrad.Herold@hofstra.edu](mailto:Conrad.Herold@hofstra.edu). Include your name, email address, and a brief biographical statement. Selected papers must be completed and ready for circulation to panel participants by **February 15, 2017**. Selected submissions will be included in an anticipated published anthology.

Symposium Co-Directors:

**Conrad Herold, PhD**, Department of Economics, Hofstra University

**Marc Silver, PhD**, Department of Sociology, Hofstra University

For more information, please contact the Hofstra Cultural Center at 516-463-5669.

**A Scholar, Activist Gathering: From 1999 to 2016 and Beyond****Featuring:**

*Cindy Domingo, David Cobb, Heather Day, Rosalinda Guillen, together with Ben Manski, Charlotte Ryan, Gregory Maney, Rose Brewer and you.*

**Location:** King County Labor Temple

**Date and Time:** Sunday, August 21, with

panel discussions from 6:00 to 8:00pm, followed by afterbar

**RSVP via Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/995368963895375/>

The period of struggle begun in the early 1990s and sometimes symbolized by the 1999 Seattle WTO protests has not only continued, but expanded and flowed into other currents of social change, producing in recent years the movements to abolish corporate personhood, the Wisconsin Uprising, Occupy Wall Street and the Occupy movement, and the Dreamers, and most recently, Black Lives Matter and various interventions in the 2016 elections.

What might an examination of the movements of the past two decades teach us about the needs of activists and social change scholars in the coming years?

**Join us at 6pm on Sunday, August 21st, at the King County Labor Temple for an activist-scholar gathering.**

We're bringing participants in the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association (ASA) and Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) together with community activists who have particularly useful personal perspectives on the needs and trajectories of social change work in 21st century American society.

*This event is free and open; we'll just pass the hat to cover room rental and other costs.*

***A discussion with:***

**Rose Brewer:** Morse-Alumni Distinguished Professor and past chair of the Afro-American & African Studies Department at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Dr. Brewer holds affiliated appointments in the Departments of Sociology and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. She has written extensively on black families, race, class and gender, and public policy, publishing over 40 refereed journal articles, book chapters, and scholarly essays in these areas. Dr. Brewer has been a member of the board of Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty and Genocide, United for a Fair Economy, and other organizations. Additionally, Dr. Brewer was a founding member of the Black Radical Congress.

**David Cobb:** A "people's lawyer" dedicated to making the promise of a democratic republic a reality. Born in  
(continued on page 4)

**A Scholar, Activist Gathering: From 1999 to 2016 and Beyond (continued)**

San Leon, Texas, David Cobb worked as a laborer before going to college. In 1993 Cobb graduated from the University of Houston Law School going on to maintain a successful private law practice in Houston for several years. Following this, David Cobb devoted himself to full time activism in order to achieve real democracy in the United States. He was active with the global justice movement in the 90s, was the Green Party's presidential nominee in 2004, and is a co-founder of Move to Amend, the campaign to abolish the doctrines of corporate constitutional rights and money equals speech.

**Heather Day:** Co-founder of Seattle's Community Alliance for Global Justice (CAGJ) with others who helped organize the 1999 WTO protests and were inspired to build a membership based, multisectoral organization for global justice in Seattle. She was co-chair of the Board for many years before becoming the CAGJ's Director in 2007. Heather has a Masters in Geography from the University of Washington. Her research focused on how Free Trade Areas of the Americas was defeated by activists collaborating transnationally in the Hemispheric Social Alliance.

**Cindy Domingo:** Cindy's political career began as a member of the U.S.-based Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) in the early 1970s fighting to better the living and working conditions of Filipino Americans and to end the US supported Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. Over the past four decades Cindy has continued to be active in local, national, and international human rights issues. Cindy is the Chair of the LELO/Legacy of Equality, Leadership, and Organizing, a 43-year-old organization whose mission is to empower workers, especially workers of color and women, in their communities and workplace. Today, Cindy mainly focuses on building international solidarity with movements in Cuba and the Philippines. She is the co-founder and current co-chair of U.S. Women and Cuba Collaboration and Chair of WILPF's Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Issues Committee.

**Rosalinda Guillen:** Born in Texas, grew up in Mexico, and moved to Washington State with her family at age 10 in 1960, Rosalinda worked as part of the migrant farm labor community in the northwest for much of the next decade. She then worked on Skagit State Bank for 16 years, but quit only four years before she was eligible to retire in order to organize farm labor for the United Farm Workers (UFW), where she eventually serves as UFW's Northwest Regional Director, Policy Director, Executive Board Member, and National Vice-President. Following her work for the UFW, she served as the Executive Director of La Unión del Pueblo Entero (LUPE), a non-profit organization founded by Caesar Chavez. Currently, Guillen is the executive director for Community to Community Development (C2C).

**Gregory Maney:** Dr. Maney has engaged in collaborative research projects with activists promoting social justice and human rights. Examples include partnering with the Greater Uniondale Area Action Coalition (on the foreclosure crisis and other community development issues), LifeWay Network (on human trafficking), the Long Island Alliance for Peaceful Alternatives (on creating sustainable local peace institutions), the Long Island Immigrant Alliance (on preventing and responding to hate crimes against immigrants), and the Workplace Project (on the human rights status of day laborers). Dr. Maney is the Wachtel Distinguished Professor for the Study of Nonviolent Social Change and the Director for Active Citizenship and Community Partnerships at Hofstra University's Center for Civic Engagement.

**Ben Manski:** An activist who was involved in the global anti-corporate mobilizations leading up to, including, and immediately following the Seattle WTO protests. Ben Manski was the national coordinator of  
*(continued on page 5)*

### A Scholar, Activist Gathering: From 1999 to 2016 and Beyond (Continued)

the Democracy Teach-Ins of the 1990s, helped launch the student anti-sweatshop movement, and active in Earth First! organizing across the Upper Great Lakes and Pacific NW. In 2004, Manski founded the Liberty Tree Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, a strategy center central to various democratic upsurges including the Wisconsin Uprising of 2011. Manski practiced law for eight years in Wisconsin and is currently seeking a PhD in Sociology at UC Santa Barbara. He is Director for Special Initiatives for the Next System Project and Associate Fellow with the Institute for Policy Studies.

**Charlotte Ryan:** Dr. Ryan is a former labor and community organizer. Currently, Dr. Ryan is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. She co-directs, with William Gamson (Boston College) and Kevin Carragee (Suffolk University), the Movement and Media Research Action Project. Since 2008, Dr. Ryan has collaborated with the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless (RICH) to document its movement building practices (rihomeless.org). Active in UMASS Lowell's Climate Change Initiative, she teaches *Fast Food-Hot Planet*. Currently, Dr. Ryan is writing a primer on communication activism.

**RSVP via Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/995368963895375/>

### ASA Marxist Sociology Section Awards 2016

**Marxist Sociology Lifetime Achievement Award (Co-Winners):**

David Fasenfest  
Scott McNall  
Howard Waitzkin

**Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award:**

Wendy Matsumura, *The Limits of Okinawa*

**Outstanding Marxist Sociology Article Award:**

Barry Eidlin, "Class vs. Special Interest: Labor, Power, and Politics in the United States and Canada in the Twentieth Century," *Politics & Society* 43, no. 2 (2015): 181-211

**Albert Szymanski-T.R. Young/Critical Sociology Marxist Sociology Graduate Student Paper Award:**

Daniel Auerbach, "Metabolic Rifts and Temporal Shifts: A Brief History of Logging in the Adirondack Forest."

**Marxist Sociology Praxis Award:**

Corey Dolgon

Thank you to everyone who served on the award committees and to those who nominated individuals for awards.

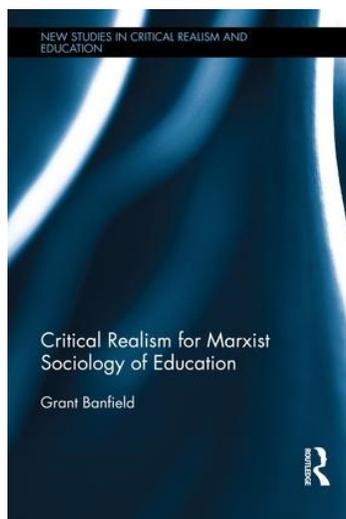
Congratulations, again, to the awardees for the section this year. The awards will be presented on Saturday, August 20, at the Tap House Grill in Seattle, at the reception for the section (7-10 PM).

## Publications

### Books

#### *Critical Realism for Marxist Sociology of Education*

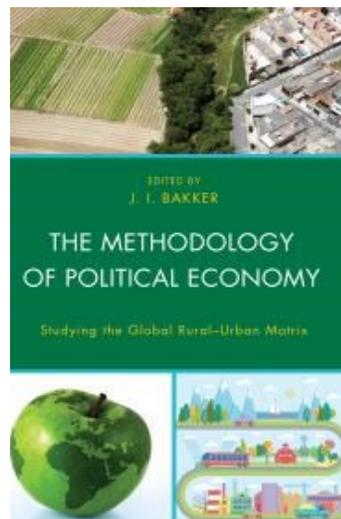
Grant Banfield  
Routledge (2016)  
www.routledge.com



This book offers a critical realist intervention into the field of Marxist Sociology of Education. Critical realism, as developed by British philosopher Roy Bhaskar, is known for its capacity to serve as a conceptual underlabourer to applied fields like education. Indeed, its success in clarifying and resolving thorny issues of educational theory and practice is now well established. Given critical realism's sympathetic Marxist origins, its productive and critical engagement with Marxism has an even longer history. To date there has been little sustained attention given to the application of critical realism to Marxist educational praxis. The book addresses this gap in existing scholarship.

#### *The Methodology of Political Economy: Studying the Global Rural-Urban Matrix*

J.I. (Hans) Bakker (editor)  
Lexington Books (2016)  
www.rowman.com



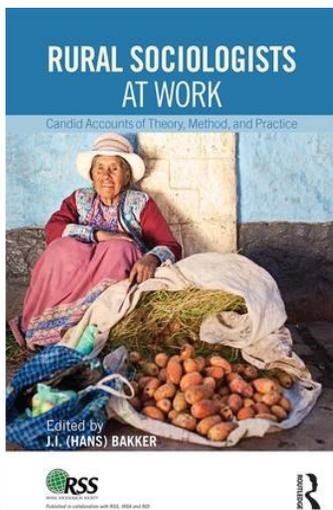
The importance of the global rural-urban matrix is often overlooked due to urban-normativity. But sometimes agrarian populism and a pastoral rural imaginary result in the equally fallacy of a rural-normativity, as in Jeffersonian nostalgia for a lost way of life that never existed. The nature of rurality in North America is important to study, but as Alessandro Bonanno makes clear, we cannot limit ourselves to the study of one or two nation-states. We must take a global perspective when it comes to the bio-physical environment and the nature of the world capitalist system. This collection takes such a perspective.

The editor frames the contributions with a Meta-Paradigm called the New Political Economy Perspective (NPEP) and explains the roots of that approach in Classical Political Economy and the Canadian Political Economy Tradition of Harold Adams Innis. There are chapters by an anthropologist, a geographer, two generalist sociologists and a group of rural sociologists. There is also a chapter on psychiatry and mental health; and, another chapter which discusses pedagogy. The use of an inter-disciplinary framework to study global issues makes this a stimulating book which provides a window on issues that are often overlooked.

## Publications (continued)

***Rural Sociologists at Work: Candid Accounts of Theory, Methods, and Practice***

J.I. (Hans) Bakker  
Routledge (2016)  
www.routledge.com

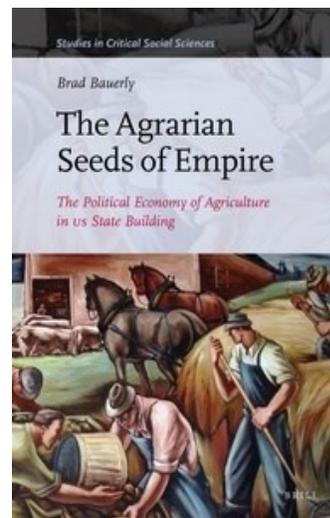


This collection of original chapters, written by prominent social scientists, elucidates the theory and practice of contemporary rural sociology. The book applies lessons from the careers of sociologists and their field research endeavors, covering a wide range of topics: agricultural production, processing, and marketing; international food security and rural development; degradation

of the bio-physical environment across borders; and the study of community, family, health, and many other issues in an increasingly globalized world. The authors' candid accounts provide insight into possibilities for enhancing opportunity and equality and serving basic human needs.

***The Agrarian Seeds of Empire: The Political Economy of Agriculture in U.S. State Building***

Brad Bauerly  
Brill (2016)  
www.brill.com

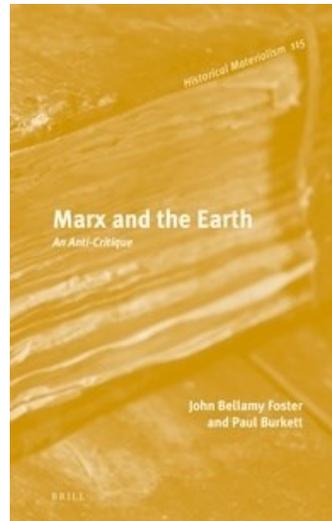


*The Agrarian Seeds of Empire* outlines the influence of agrarian movements on the process of US institutional capacity building between 1840- 1980. Out of the mix of the developing new Nation and the expanding capitalist system emerged strong farmer's movements that produced state building processes central to American political development. It

will show how the forces of state building and social movements converged to produce agro-industrialization. This agro-industrial developmental project was instrumental in both the development of the industrial food system and US Empire as the institutional capacities were later used to impose the same project outside of the US. These findings link together and augment existing approaches to capitalist development, International Relations, and theories of the state and the food system.

**Publications (continued)*****Marx and the Earth: An Anti-Critique***

John Bellamy Foster and Paul Burkett  
Brill (2016)  
[www.brill.com](http://www.brill.com)



A decade and a half ago John Bellamy Foster and Paul Burkett introduced a new, revolutionary understanding of the ecological foundations of Marx's thought, demonstrating that Marx's concepts of the universal metabolism of nature, social metabolism, and metabolic rift prefigured much of modern systems ecology. Ecological relations were shown to be central to Marx's critique of capitalism, including his value analysis. Now in *Marx and the Earth* Foster and Burkett expand on this analysis in the process of responding to recent ecosocialist criticisms of Marx. The result is a full-fledged *anti-critique*—pointing to the crucial roles that dialectics, open-system thermodynamics, intrinsic value, and aesthetic understandings played in the original Marxian critique, holding out the possibility of a new red-green synthesis.

**Publications (continued)****Articles**

- Antonio, Robert J. and Brett Clark. 2015. "The Climate Change Divide in Social Theory." In *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives*, Riley E. Dunlap and Robert J Brulle, eds. Cambridge: Oxford University Press, pp. 333-368.
- Bin, Daniel. 2016. "So-Called Accumulation by Dispossession." *Critical Sociology*: doi: 10.1177/0896920516651687.
- Bin, Daniel. 2015. "Macroeconomic Policies and Economic Democracy in Neoliberal Brazil." *Economia e Sociedade* 24(3): 513-539.
- Clausen, Rebecca, Stefano B. Longo, and Brett Clark. 2015. "Fishy Business: Genetic Engineering and Salmon Aquaculture." In *Genetically Modified Organisms in Foods*, Ronald Ross Watson and Victor R. Preedy, eds. London: Elsevier, pp. 159-165.
- Dolgon, Corey. 2016. "Junk Freedom." *Critical Sociology*. 42(2): 187 –191.
- Dolgon, Corey and Reuben Roth. 2016. "Twenty-First Century Workers' Education in North America: The Defeat of the Left or a Revitalized Class Pedagogy?" *Labor Studies Journal* 41(1): 89-113.
- Eidlin, Barry. 2016. "Why Is There No Labor Party in the United States? Political Articulation and the Canadian Comparison, 1932 to 1948." *American Sociological Review* 81(3):488–516.
- Foster, John Bellamy. 2016. "Marxism in the Anthropocene: Dialectical Rifts on the Left." *International Critical Thought* 6(3): 1-28.
- Foster, John Bellamy. 2016. "Monopoly Capital at the Half-Century Mark." *Monthly Review* 68(3): 1-26.
- Foster, John Bellamy and Brett Clark. 2016. "Marx's Ecology and the Left." *Monthly Review* 68(2): 1-25.
- Friedman, Samuel R. 2016. "What Happened in Ukraine?" *Jewish Currents*: <http://jewishcurrents.org/what-happened-in-ukraine-41755>.
- Friedman, Samuel R., Barbara Tempalski, Joanne E. Brady, Brooke S. West, Enrique R. Pouget, Leslie D. Williams, D.C. Des Jarlais, Hanna L.F. Cooper. "Income Inequality, Drug-Related Arrests, and the Health of People Who Inject Drugs: Reflections on Seventeen Years of Research." *International Journal of Drug Policy* 32: 11-16.
- Gellert, Paul K. 2016. "Palm Oil Expansion in Indonesia: Land Grabbing as Accumulation by Dispossession." *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* 34: 65-99.
- Halley, Jeffrey A. "Esquisse d'une théorie de la rationalisation et de la résistance dans le domaine de la culture [An Outline of a Theory of Rationalization and Resistance in Culture]." In *Les Frictions Créatives Art-Politique [Creative Frictions of Art/Politics]*, Florent Gaudez, ed. Paris : L'Harmattanm, pp. 117-126.

(continued on page 10)

**Publications (continued)****Articles**

- Jasso-Aguilar, Rebeca and Howard Waitzkin. 2015. "Resisting the Imperial Order and Building an Alternative Future in Medicine and Public Health." *Monthly Review* 67(3): 129-142.
- Longo, Stefano B., Brett Clark, Thomas E. Shriver, and Rebecca Clausen. 2016. "Sustainability and Environmental Sociology: Putting the Economy in its Place and Moving Toward an Integrative Socio-Ecology." *Sustainability* 8(5): No. 437: doi:10.3390/su8050437.
- Oddsson, Guðmunder. 2016. "Neoliberal Globalization and Heightened Perceptions of Class Division in Iceland." *The Sociological Quarterly* 57(3): 462-490.
- Mayer, Jeremy, E. Gilliam, Bonnie Stabile, Shanaz Ahmed, Douglas Anderson, Claudia Chaufan, and James Hager. "Medical System Rant and Response." *World Medical & Health Policy* 8(1): 107-116.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2016. "A Massive Loss of Habitat: New Drivers of Migration." *Sociology of Development* 2(2): 204-233.
- Waitzkin, Howard. 2016. "Doctor-Workers: Unite! Could Disobedience Be the Path Ahead?" *Medscape*: <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/863297>.
- Waitzkin, Howard. 2016. "Universal Health Coverage: The Strange Romance of *The Lancet*, MEDICC, and Cuba." *Social Medicine/Medicina Social* 9(2): 93-97.
- Waitzkin, Howard and Rebeca Jasso-Aguila. 2015. "Imperialism's Health Component." *Monthly Review* 67 (3): 113-128.
- Waitzkin, Howard and Ida Hellander. 2016. "Obamacare: The Neoliberal Model Comes Home to Roost in the United States—If We Let It." *Monthly Review* 68(1): 1-18.
- Wright, Erik Olin. 2016. "But at Least Capitalism is Free and Democratic, Right?" In *The ABCs of Socialism*, Bhaskar Sunkara, ed. London: Verso, pp. 22-29.
- Wright, Erik Olin. 2016. "How to Think About (and Win) Socialism." *Jacobin*: <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/04/erik-olin-wright-real-utopias-capitalism-socialism/>.
- Wright, Erik Olin. 2016. "Is the Precariat a Class?" *Global Labor Journal* 7(2): 123-135.
- Wright, Erik Olin. 2016. "Real Utopias and Institutional Transformation." *Justice, Power, and Resistance* 1(1): 33-52.

## The History of Criminal Selectivity by Valeria Vegh Weis

In my dissertation, *The History of Criminal Selectivity: A Reading from Marx, Engels, and Contemporary Marxist Thought*, I assess the historical and social-economic conditions that underpin the unequal legal treatment and selective prosecution of people based upon class, race, gender, and age. I identify particular patterns of “criminal selectivity.” I consider this phenomenon from the rise of capitalism to today, throughout Europe and the United States. Although the unequal functioning of the criminal justice system is widely recognized today as a key concept for analyzing crime and punishment, the selectivity phenomenon has not been strictly conceptualized and developed.

Up until mid-twentieth century, different criminological schools of thought concentrated only on the study of crime itself (Classical School), the criminal (Inquisition and Positivism), or the social and geographic environment of the offender (Sociological Schools). All of these traditions attributed the causes of criminal phenomena to behavioral or biological shortcomings or to problems of individual socialization. All ignore references to the social context that involves criminal conflict. It was only in the 1960s when U.S. sociologists developed the Labeling Approach Theory, which focused on the criminal agencies and their unequal practices, suggesting a break in the thinking about the criminal phenomenon. In the 1970s, Critical Criminology theory took a further step by researching the connection between the function of those criminal agencies and the characteristics of the capitalist system of production. Later, in the 1980s, the school of Left Realism focused on the advancement of criminal policies from a Leftist perspective, in order to confront the proposals of “Law and Order” sponsored by neoliberal governments. This theory, however, neglected wider theoretical research.

Though there have been attempts to clarify the inequality of the criminal justice system, as well as Marxist theoretical approaches to Criminology, there are almost no studies of the specific phenomenon of criminal selectivity. While it has been considered collaterally (e.g., Critical Criminology and Left Realism) and from an abstract perspective (e.g., Labeling Approach), it has not yet been explored in its historical and socio-economic context. Additionally, these theories did not identify specific mechanisms through which modern criminal selectivity is manifested, nor did they trace its development in earlier historical moments. In my research, I unpack the relationship between the “productive structure” (the economic conditioning of social processes) and the various forms of criminal selectivity, from the fifteenth century (the period that Marx described as the dawn of the capitalist system of production) to today. I focus mostly on the experience of Western Europe because, generally speaking, it is where the historical trends first developed. Moreover, this region has been studied by the classics of Marxism with a greater emphasis. The project also considers the United States from the twentieth century to today, covering the period when it became an economic and political superpower. This period includes the time when the country emerged as a center for criminological theories.

My investigation relies on the theoretical and methodological legacy of Marx and Engels, in dialogue with contemporary Marxist thought and major theories within Criminology. On one hand, the legacy of Marx and Engels frees the research from the risk of relying on norm-based legalistic analysis, which is removed from empirical reality. On the other, the contributions of Criminology and other disciplinary fields help to avoid an over-simplified analysis with linear connections between “criminal selectivity” and the needs of the production system.

Against this backdrop, I propose a typology of criminal selectivity that goes along with the evolving “economic structure” (namely the relationship between “sum of relations of production” and the economic structure of society). From my analysis there are three modalities of criminal selectivity:

1. “original criminal selectivity” (late fifteenth to late eighteenth century),
2. “disciplinary criminal selectivity” (late eighteenth to twentieth century), and
3. “bulimic criminal selectivity” (late twentieth century to the present).

(continued on page 12)

## The History of Criminal Selectivity

By: Valeria Vegh Weis

In each one of the three modalities of criminal selectivity, I analyze four relevant elements:

1. the contextual setting,
2. the mechanisms through which the selectivity shows up (which I refer to as “infra-criminalization” and “over-criminalization”),
3. the subjects who have been persecuted through criminal selectivity and those who have been in power of this selectivity process, and
4. the discourses that legitimized the application of punishment in each mode, and the material assumptions underpinning them.

Regarding the second element (b), it is important to note that the theories of “Labeling Approach” and “Critical Criminology” established the concepts of “primary criminalization” (the primary filtering process where only certain types of socially negative behavior are criminalized by the legislature) and “secondary criminalization” (the secondary filtering process where only certain types of criminalized behavior are actually prosecuted by law enforcement). Existing research in the area only explains that these concepts are highly relevant to understand screening by state agencies without, however, explaining how such screening is made. As a result, I develop the concepts of “over-criminalization” and “infra-criminalization,” which are traversed by the concepts of “primary criminalization” and “secondary criminalization.”

Infra-criminalization explains a double-process: on one hand, how the legislative branch is extremely reluctant to criminalize certain types of conduct perpetrated by individuals who are in an advantageous socio-economic position, even though such conduct can produce a significant “social harm” (“primary over-criminalization”). On the other, how the executive branch minimizes the prosecution of such conduct by these advantaged groups (“secondary over-criminalization”).

Over-criminalization also explains such a process: on one hand, how other types of conduct perpetrated by individuals with low socio-economic status are subject to an emphatic legislative treatment (“primary over-criminalization”), even though they produce scarce “social harm.” On the other, how the law enforcement agencies exercise an excessive prosecution of these type of conducts (“secondary over-criminalization”).

Within the dissertation, I show that “criminal selectivity” has been present since the dawn of the capitalist system of production and that it was an element of utmost relevance for the purpose of founding it and assuring its development. I highlight how, through over-criminalization, in its various configurations, criminal selectivity constituted an essential tool to ensure social control. Meanwhile, through infra-criminalization in its various forms, criminal selectivity facilitated the invisibility of those individual behaviors and collective enterprises that were necessary for the preservation and/or expansion of capitalism. The contributions of Marx and Engels, the Marxist tradition, along with Criminology in connection with related disciplinary fields, allow us to abandon the abstract perspective of criminal selectivity and read it in its historical context, from a praxis-orientated framework.

*This essay, and others like it, can be found on the Section on Marxist Sociology of the American Sociological Association website: [www.marxistsociology.org](http://www.marxistsociology.org). If you would like your work featured on the Marx Section website see the call for submissions found on the section homepage.*

## **A Brief Critical Commentary on the Formalization of the E-Waste Recycling Economy, in China and the World**

by Cristina A. Lucier and Brian J. Gareau

Environmental news in the latter half of 2015 has been characterized by an upsurge of discouraging stories worldwide, not least from China. Despite the recent slowdown in economic growth, there have been industrial accidents and unprecedented air quality issues plaguing the country. However, there is at least one local environmental story that appears to defy this bleak trend. In December of 2015, the highly polluted town of Guiyu was suddenly vacated, and all of the informal hazardous waste recycling that had been polluting the soil, the water, and the bodies of young children, came to a halt. Residents of Guiyu had previously made their living by recycling discarded electronics (or e-waste) in their homes and in their yards. In 2015, these workers were ordered by the government to move their operations into a new formalized industrial park equipped with ventilation and other safeguards. Cleanup of the waste site has slowly begun as workers are establishing themselves in the newly built industrial park (Standart 2015).

As recently as last year, Guiyu had been one of the e-waste recycling capitals of the world, with massive volumes of discarded electronics from the United States and elsewhere flowing (illegally) into the city and being smashed, burned, and soaked in acid in order to recapture the valuable components for resale (Xing et al. 2009; Wong et al. 2007). Children of Guiyu were found to have some of the highest blood lead levels in the world. All of this went on, essentially unabated, for about 20 years. Suddenly, in 2015, it appears to have stopped. Why?

To be sure, falling commodity prices have provided some of the disincentive for workers to continue their illegal operations against government orders. But this is not explanation enough. Why have the Chinese authorities now decided to focus on stopping pollution resulting from hazardous waste imports, which were implicitly condoned or ignored for nearly two decades and at a time when the country has a plethora of potential environmental challenges to consider? A potential explanation for this about-face can be found by looking at the evolving economics and politics surrounding the global trade in hazardous wastes such as e-waste.

In the 1980's through the early 2000's, the transfer of hazardous wastes from OECD to non-OECD countries was cited by activists, scholars, and some policy makers as a clear manifestation of global environmental injustice (Pellow 2007). Wealthy countries enjoyed the benefits of modern production and consumption, while poorer countries were left to deal with the toxic byproducts. To help stop this environmental injustice, the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was created. This global environmental treaty quickly became the focal point for the international community to battle over whether the transfer of hazardous wastes from OECD to non-OECD countries should be banned altogether. In the mid 1990's, a so-called "global ban" was unanimously adopted as an amendment to the Basel Convention. However, the amendment has remained contested ever since and has still not achieved the required number of country ratifications to become legally binding. Therefore, countries like China remained hotspots for global e-waste recycling.

While the American public was periodically made aware of the situation through creative activist campaigns or media exposés from Frontline or 60 Minutes, the U.S. Government was less than supportive, or was even sometimes openly hostile, toward any legally binding regulations to limit the transfer of hazardous wastes from wealthy to poor countries. The United States is one of the only countries (besides Haiti) to have signed but not ratified the Basel Convention. Although the U.S. is not a Party to the Convention, the existing Basel regime still prevents the U.S. from exporting many streams of hazardous wastes to Basel Parties without following certain procedures. Under U.S. law, however, electronic wastes have not even been regarded officially as hazardous. For years, shipping containers full of discarded electronics routinely left U.S. ports and

*(continued on page 14)*

**A Brief Critical Commentary (continued)**

ended up in cities like Guiyu where workers engaged in open burning of PVC-coated copper cables and the use of woks for acid leaching of precious metals from circuit boards (Puckett 2006).

**Formalization of E-Waste: The Need for Critical Sociology**

In recent years, this whole situation began to change. On the international level, there have been resolutions for Parties to find a way out of the regulatory stagnation on the Basel export ban (Lucier and Gareau 2014). At this point, the most likely solution is one that strongly favors the recycling industry, waste exporting countries, and non-OECD countries interested in recycling hazardous wastes. This proposed solution centers on removing the environmental justice-based “North/South” distinction from the Basel Convention’s export ban. Instead, proponents argue that countries should be able to ship hazardous wastes to any country that has demonstrated the capacity to manage them in an “environmentally sound manner” (i.e., in a factory with some safeguards as opposed to in a residential village or an open field) (Lucier and Gareau 2015).

In the case of e-waste, this would be beneficial for industry, as it allows them to establish economies of scale in countries where labor costs are lower and environmental regulations are not as strictly enforced (and where more and more of the world’s e-waste is being generated). This also benefits waste exporting and waste importing countries, as the valuable materials contained in e-waste would no longer fall out of the purview of the formal economy. In essence, capital and states have realized that the informal e-waste recycling economy was undercutting the ability to establish a formalized e-waste recycling infrastructure. Due to a convergence of factors, a formal e-waste recycling infrastructure has become a priority only recently. In brief, these factors include an increased volume of e-waste being generated within and outside of the OECD, an increased demand for consumer, business, and military electronics globally, and a fear over “critical shortages” of certain raw materials, such as rare earth elements.

So why was Guiyu, a ground zero of sorts for debates over global environmental injustice in the hazardous waste trade, suddenly vacated and its workers moved to a formalized industrial facility? The Chinese government has claimed a desire to crackdown on environmental issues such as illegal hazardous waste imports and illegal electronics dismantling and recycling. But it is important to keep in mind that behind seemingly beneficent measures such as these lie a complex array of vested interests focused on maximizing profits and ensuring privileged access to critical raw materials (Cf. Economy 2010). Whether workers will in fact be safer, or see any improvements in their standards of living as a result of these new formalized e-waste facilities remains a contested question. Based at least on recent reports concerning the safety of e-waste recycling facilities even in OECD countries such as the U.S., it is clear that risk of long-term exposure to heavy metals such as lead, mercury, and cadmium remains high while wages remain low, and we can expect the scenario to be worse in places like China (Ceballos et al. 2014; Ceballos, Gong and Page 2014). Thus, the task of activists must be expanded from exposing sites of informal or illegal e-waste recycling to also consider the health, wellbeing and safety of workers who are being brought into the rapidly growing formalized e-waste economy.

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*(continued on page 15)*

**A Brief Critical Commentary (continued)**

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*This essay, and others like it, can be found on the Section on Marxist Sociology of the American Sociological Association website: [www.marxistsociology.org](http://www.marxistsociology.org). If you would like your work featured on the Marx Section website see the call for submissions found on the section homepage.*

## ASA 2016 Marxist Sociology Section Sessions Schedule

**ASA 2016 meeting  
Seattle, Washington  
Marxist Sociology section**

### Abbreviated Schedule

**Saturday, August 20**

**8:30 to 10:10am**

**Marxist Sociology Paper Session:**

**Pedagogies for Solidarity: Education for Collective Consciousness**

**Location: Washington State Convention Center, Level Six, Room 612**

**10:30am to 12:10pm**

**Marxist Sociology Paper Session:**

**Co-Revolution: Bringing Anti-Systemic Movements Together**

**Location: Washington State Convention Center, Level Six, Room 611**

**2:30 to 3:30pm**

**Marxist Sociology Refereed Roundtable Session**

**Location: Washington State Convention Center, Level Six, Room 608**

**3:30 to 4:10pm**

**Marxist Sociology Business Meeting**

**Location: Washington State Convention Center, Level Six, Room 608**

**4:30 to 6:10pm**

**Marxist Sociology Paper Session:**

**Capitalism and the Anthropocene: Confronting the Ecological Crisis**

**Location: Washington State Convention Center, Level Six, Room 611**

**7:00 to 10:00pm (The ASA program says 6:30-8:00 PM, but our reservation is 7-10)**

**Marxist Sociology Reception and Award Presentations:**

**Offsite Location: Tap House Grill, 1506 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA**

### Full Schedule (With List of Presenters)

**Saturday, August 20**

**8:30 to 10:10am**

**Marxist Sociology Paper Session:**

**Pedagogies for Solidarity: Education for Collective Consciousness**

**Session Organizer:**

**Roxanne Gerbrandt, Austin Peay State University**

**Papers/Presenters:**

**Encounter, Solidarity, and Education at Trump Tower: Horizontal Pedagogy in Occupy Wall Street - David Backer**

## ASA 2016 Marxist Sociology Section Sessions Schedule (continued)

Food Sovereignty and Pedagogical Mobilization in the Argentine Countryside - Efe Can Gurcan, Simon Fraser University

Marxist Pedagogy for Revolutionary Times: Crisis, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process - Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University; Britany Gatewood, Howard University; Jerome Scott, League of Revolutionaries

Organizing, Policy, and Pedagogy: The Cultivation of Transnational Working Class Consciousness in the Global Era - Jason Y. Struna, University of Puget Sound

Solidarity Beyond Assessment: An Experimental Study in the Development of Critical Thinking and Writing Skills - Joshua Edward Olsberg, National University; Raphi Rechitsky, National University (California)

Student Solidarity: Organic Student Learning Communities and College Success - Ann M. Strahm, California State University, Stanislaus

Understanding the Conflicting Role of Families in First-generation College Students' Academic Experiences - Jennifer A Strangfeld, CSU Stanislaus

### 10:30am to 12:10pm

#### Marxist Sociology Paper Session:

#### Co-Revolution: Bringing Anti-Systemic Movements Together

Session Organizer:

Leontina M. Hormel, University of Idaho

Papers/Preseners:

Obamacare, the Neoliberal Model, and the Social Movement for a Just and Accessible Health System - Howard Waitzkin, University of New Mexico; Ida Hellander, Physicians for a National Health Program

Passive Revolution, Transformism, Ceasarism? An Alternative Gramscian Explanation to Progressive Governments in Latin America - Rebeca Jasso-Aguilar

An Ethics of Violence Based on Practice: The Rojava Revolution - Huseyin Arkin Rasit, Yale University; Ezgi Deniz Rasit, Northeastern University

Species-being, Communism, and the Origins of Neo-Zapatismo - Christopher Gunderson, Howard University

### 4:30 to 6:10pm

#### Marxist Sociology Paper Session:

#### Capitalism and the Anthropocene: Confronting the Ecological Crisis

Session Organizer:

Brett Clark, University of Utah

Presider:

Daniel Auerbach, University of Utah

Papers/Preseners:

Marxism in the Anthropocene: The Left and the Great Climacteric - John Bellamy Foster, University of Oregon

## ASA 2016 Marxist Sociology Section Sessions Schedule (continued)

Anthropogenic Change: Shifts of climate change discourse in the Boston Globe, 1981-2015 - Elise Largesse, Boston College

Managing the Carbon Rift: Social Metabolism, Geoengineering and Climate Capitalism - Jean Philippe Sapinski, University of Oregon

The More This Changes Everything, the More it Remains the Same - Alexander M. Stoner, Salisbury University; Andony Melathopoulos, University of Calgary

**2:30 to 3:30pm**

**Marxist Sociology Refereed Roundtable Session and Business Meeting**

**August 20, 2:30 to 3:30pm, TBA**

### **Table 01. Social Justice Movements**

Another Socialist World is Possible - Lauren Langman, Loyola University of Chicago; Tova Benski, College of Management

In and Beyond Class: Radical Subjectivity of the Youth - Onur Kapdan, UCSB

### **Table 02. Struggle**

Race-Religion-Ethnicity-Caste: Focal Point of the Global Class Struggle - Alan Jay Spector

The African American Class System: A Colonized Experience Under Four Racial Domains - Charles Pinderhughes, Essex County College

### **Table 03. Marxist Research**

Capitalizing Craft: A Field Theory Approach to Analyzing Production and Consumption - Christopher Shane Elliott, University of North Carolina

Reductionism in Marxian Approach and its Critique - Matti Kortesoja, University of Tampere

Rethinking the Corporation, Rethinking Democracy: The Mainstreaming of a Radical Discourse - Ben Manski, University of California, Santa Barbara

Unchaining the Dialectic: Toward a General and Intersectional Formulation of Marx's Systematic-dialectical Method - Benjamin Levy

### **Table 04. Marxism and Crisis (Political, Economic, and Cultural)**

Testing Marx's General Law of Underproduction: The Case of Oil - Kirk S. Lawrence, St. Joseph's College, New York; Jason W. Moore, Binghamton University

The Crisis of Finance Capitalism - Roslyn Wallach Bologh, College of Staten Island, and Graduate Center, CUNY

The Gospel of Resiliency, Neoliberalism, and the Politics Waterfront Development in New York City - Steven

## ASA 2016 Marxist Sociology Section Sessions Schedule (continued)

Lang, LaGuardia College at CUNY

### **Table 05. Social Movements I**

Do Interests and Organizations Matter? Lynching and the Klan in Indiana, 1858-1930 - Richard L. Hogan, Purdue University

Ideological Mobilization Revisited: A Case Study of the Returning Educated Youth Movement in Socialist China - Pengfei Zhao, Indiana University

Marcuse, Gramsci and Social Mobilization - Lauren Langman, Loyola University of Chicago

### **Table 06. Social Movements II**

Organizing for Today's Revolutionary Times: Building a Transformative Sociology Movement - Britany Gatewood, Howard University; Jerome Scott, League of Revolutionaries for; Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University

Gender Protests and Feminist Networks in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe - Lorna Lueker Zukas, National University

Incomplete Proletarianization of Rural Migrant Workers in China: Structural Analysis and Subjective Understanding - Yu Guo, University of Maryland, College Park

### **Table 07. Culture, Music, and Identity: Critical Perspectives**

Mariachi Music in South Texas: A Study of Socialization, Identity, and Mestizaje - Amador Salazar, University of Texas at San Antonio

Music and Immigration in the United States and Chile: Identity and Hybridization - Jeffrey A. Halley, The University of Texas San Antonio; Christina Eloise Lopez-Mobilia, UTSA

White Kids Don't Love Hip Hop: The White Culture Industry System and the White Consumer Myth - Walter Edward Hart, Texas A&M University

Worst in Show: Television Talk Program Genre and the Reification of Class Consciousness - Lloyd Klein, Hostos Community College, CUNY

### **Table 08. Climate Change**

Global Political Economy, Fossil Capital and Climate Change: Looming Ecological Depletion in West Asia - Tarique Niazi, University of Wisconsin

Herbert Marcuse, Climate Change, and Radical Subjectivity - Michael J. Sukhov