



# JOURNAL OF WORLD-SYSTEMS RESEARCH

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## Editors' Introduction

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This journal is published by the [University Library System, University of Pittsburgh](#) as part of its [D-Scribe Digital Publishing Program](#) and is cosponsored by the [University of Pittsburgh Press](#).

We are excited to bring you a very impressive special issue on world-system biographies, guest edited by Kevan Harris and Brendan McQuade. The papers in this special issue explore the intersections of biography and history, demonstrating how decisions and actions of particular individuals were shaped by the larger world-historical context, and how in turn the agency of individuals affects history. Our guest editors have done a superb job of bringing people into the pages of *JWSR*, and we hope this work inspires new creative endeavors that enhance world-systems analysis.

Our regular research articles complement the special issue by showing how the global structural context shapes possibilities for agency. Jonathan Shefner, Aaron Rowland, and George Pasdirtz explore how austerity policies and the hardships they generate for people and communities affect protest. Their study helps show the connections between global level policies and popular responses, and it should help strengthen the dialogue between world-systems and social movements research. As part of our new publishing platform, we are now able to allow readers to access the database used in this study directly via the [Dataverse Project](#), an open source web application that facilitates the sharing of data.

In “From Waste to Resources? Interrogating ‘Race to the Bottom’ in the Global Environmental Governance of the Hazardous Waste Trade,” Cristina A. Lucier and Brian J. Gareau provide another case of how structural factors affect individual agency. Their analysis shows how the framing of discourse around the toxic waste trade undermines efforts of environmental activists to use the very treaty that was designed to curb such trade to advance environmental protections.

In this issue we also recognize the importance of the current world-historical moment, as governments and environmental activists plan for a critical meeting of the Framework Convention on Climate Change this December. We’ve invited leading environmental researchers and scholar/activists—Patrick Bond, Nora McKeon, and Andrew Jorgenson—to share their insights on the climate crisis and antisystemic movements. We hope the essays in our special symposium help raise consciousness and offer inspiration for our readers.

Our book review section also offers an engaging set of essays, starting with a review symposium on Nancy Plankey-Videla’s *We are in this Dance Together: Gender, Power, and Globalization at a Mexican Garment Firm*. The symposium began as an “Author Meets Critic” session at the 2014 Southwestern Social Science Association meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The five essays featured here include a mix of contributions from the original conference panel (Walther, Murga, Morales, Bair, and Plankey-Videla) as well as two (Radhakrishnan and Karides) that were solicited later by our book review editor. Together, they offer a diverse set of reflections ranging across the methodological, theoretical, pedagogical, and political dimensions of the book. In addition to this symposium, we also offer our usual complement of reviews,

including a review of a non-English language book. Given the international scope of our audience, we plan to include more such reviews in the future. If you know of any foreign-language books that you think would be of interest to JWSR readers, or would like to offer your services to review books in a foreign language, please contact our book review editor, Jennifer Bair.

Finally, some housekeeping: We first want to congratulate Donald Clelland, who received the 2015 Best Article Award from the American Sociological Association's Section on Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS). Clelland's article, "[The Core of the Apple: Degrees of Monopoly and Dark Value in Global Commodity Chains](#)" appeared in the Winter/Spring 2014 Special Issue of *JWSR* on "The Political Economy of Commodity Chains."

Also, many readers will notice our new look. With this issue we are moving the *Journal of World-Systems Research* into the second generation of open access publishing! We hope readers like the new look of the journal, and we look forward to the many improvements our new publishing platform offers. As we mentioned in our last issue, our journal will now be included in major indices, and articles have been formatted to enhance searchability. All previously published and future articles will be assigned a unique Digital Object Identifier (DOI), which provides a more stable link than a URL, which can change. This will further aid in our effort to get our authors' work to those who want to read it. We will also be able to measure the impact of articles with a developing array of [alternative metrics](#) that are appropriate for online content. One downside of this move is that the website addresses (URLs) assigned to previously published articles are no longer operational. Please take note of this and update your reference lists to the new links.

As we close, we remind you that [Open Access Week](#) is October 19-25<sup>th</sup>. Please take some step to recognize the week by increasing your own understanding of the importance of open access publishing, helping colleagues and students learn about this vital movement, promoting the work of journals like the *Journal of World-Systems Research*, or by attending or organizing an event on your campus. The information economy has led to the increased enclosure of the knowledge commons, and [scholars and readers play a critical role](#) in helping keep access to information open and free. As one of the very first open access scholarly journals, JWSR is committed to helping our readers be part of the movement to keep our research free and open to readers.