

Editors' Introduction

We recently lost a leading figure in world-systems research with the passing of Janet Abu-Lughod. Abu-Lughod was probably best known by world-systems researchers for her book *Before European Hegemony: the World System AD 1250-1350* (first published in 1989 by Oxford University Press), which has had a profound impact on the field. Her theoretical and empirical work is highly respected and widely cited by fellow anthropologists, as are her contributions to feminist research. Abu-Lughod received the Distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association's Section on Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS) in 1999, and is one of just four people whom the section has honored with this recognition. She also served on the editorial board of the *Journal of World-Systems Research*. In this issue we invited some other leading thinkers in the world-systems tradition to help us reflect on the [contributions Janet Abu-Lughod](#) has made to this field. In doing so, we seek to both honor and learn from our ancestors and help new generations of scholars further research on world-systems.

We are also proud to feature in this issue the [keynote address of Immanuel Wallerstein](#) to the 38th Annual Conference of the Political Economy of the World-System, which was held at the University of Pittsburgh in April 2014. Wallerstein helped launch two and a half days of fascinating discussion about the roles of social movements in world-system transformation by offering a wide-ranging overview of antisystemic movements over five centuries. While much of this account is familiar to *JWSR* readers, Wallerstein's analysis of the contemporary challenges and prospects for antisystemic movements should inspire innovative scholarly and political work at this critical world-historical moment.

Articles in this issue reinforce the tradition in world-systems scholarship of integrating insights from other disciplines and perspectives into our efforts to understand the workings of the world-economy. In particular, they draw attention to the ways in which the environment and gender affect world-system dynamics. Women and the environment represent the peripheries of the world-economy in the sense that their political marginalization/exclusion has meant that they have borne some of the highest costs of capitalist expansion. Our authors in this edition of *The Journal of World-Systems Research* remind us of what we learn about the prospects for addressing inequalities by focusing our attention on these critical dimensions of the world-system.

In the opening article, [Smith, Hooks and Lengefeld](#) draw from environmental sociology's notion of the 'treadmill of destruction' and from research on peace and security to show how environmental damage results not just from capitalist expansion but also from the efforts of hegemonic actors seeking to maintain their power through novel types of militarized interventions. They build upon Mary Kaldor's concept of "new wars" to analyze the Colombian case as one in which the United States and its allies use the war on drugs to employ technologies in ways that transfer the risks and costs of interventions to the peripheries—in other words, to the local populations and their surrounding environments. Their detailed accounting of these risks reinforces the need for scholars to focus attention on actors that are typically excluded from formal politics and discourses, and it should inspire more comparative research on military interventions and their implications.

[Daniela Danna's](#) article helps reiterate the need for world-systems scholarship to make visible those actors excluded from power. She reviews research in demography to identify how world-systems analysis can be enriched by incorporating a number of insights from this body of research. In particular, Danna demonstrates the roles women play as decisionmakers within

households, and how the contexts of their decisions are shaped by world-system dynamics. Her paper illustrates both the importance of expanding our attention to gender and of the interplay between the large-scale structures of the world-economy and women's agency.

[Primrose Nakazibwe and Wim Pelupessy](#) add to the case for incorporating gender into world-systems analysis. They note that women's contributions to agricultural commodity chains are overlooked in most analyses, and their meta-analysis of recent research finds that gender has yet to be fully integrated into these analyses, concluding that many studies "frequently fail to address whether this [the integration of women into agro-commodity chains] will lead to a durable form of empowerment that allows women to make meaningful decisions and socio-economic choices." Their article proposes remedies to this omission.

[Benjamin Marley and Samantha Fox](#) offer an analysis of how the accumulation of environmental costs, new regulations, and responses to the human and social impacts of West Virginia's coal industry, coupled with changes in the global demand, help account for the relocation of most U.S. coal mining to Wyoming. They demonstrate the need for greater attention to the inter-connected and world-historical dimensions of ecological, social, and economic factors that shape changing industries and practices.

In this issue, our book review section includes a [special symposium](#) on an important new book, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* by Vivek Chibber, winner of the 2014 Political Economy of the World System Section Book Award. In this symposium, an interdisciplinary group of prominent scholars engage with the book's arguments and their relevance for issues of vital importance to world-systems research. We hope *JWSR* readers enjoy this issue and that our entire collection of [book reviews](#) will invite them to explore new and diverse works on the themes of our journal.

As we close our introduction, we want to acknowledge and celebrate the 20th year of publication of the *Journal of World-Systems Research*. Our journal was at the forefront of the effort to make scholarly research more easily accessible to readers around the world, and represents the first generation of free, open access publishing. We are proud to help carry forward the visionary work of *JWSR*'s founding editor, Christopher Chase-Dunn, and we thank him for his commitment and leadership over the years. We are preparing to move into the second generation of open access publishing, and will be migrating to a new online submission system in the coming months. This will improve our journal's online visibility/searchability and its presence in major scholarly indexes. Significantly, it will allow us to integrate new metrics for assessing the scholarly impact of our content, which is something for which librarians and open access advocates have long been advocating. As we work to keep information free and accessible, we are finding that we must engage in the political and educational work to resist efforts to privatize and commercialize the knowledge commons. We encourage readers of *JWSR* to learn more about and to support the open access movement (see Jackie Smith's [The Open Access Movement and Activism for the "Knowledge Commons"](#)) and to join us in celebrating the seventh annual [Open Access Week](#), October 20-26, 2014.

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