Best of the Week

Make Fossil Fuels Great Again? The Paris Agreement, Trump, and the US Fossil Fuel Industry
Lukas Hermwille, Lisa Sanderink | Global Environmental Politics
"...The Paris Agreement has institutionalized a narrative paradigm that is surprisingly resilient. While the election of Donald Trump and his climate and energy policy led to a narrative shift in the coal industry, the oil and gas industry remained conspicuously silent in its immediate response and maintained its narrative strategies despite its alignment with the Paris Agreement."

“Climate Refugees”-A Useful Concept?
Gregory White | Global Environmental Politics
"It is highly unlikely that this concept will go away. For nearly four decades the notion of environmental refugees has been used by scholars, environmentalists, security and defense intellectuals, policymakers, artists, and writers."

The Nuclear Sensorium: Cold War Nuclear Imperialism and Sensory Violence
John Shiga | Canadian Journal of Law and Society / Revue Canadienne Droit et Société
"Nuclear imperialism projected its power not only through weapons tests, the vaporization of land and the erosion of the rights of people who lived there, but also through the production of a nuclear sensorium—the differentiation of modes of sensing the bomb through legal, military, and scientific discourses and the attribution of varying degrees of epistemological value and legal weight to these sensory modes."

On ‘Modified Human Agents’: John Lilly and the Paranoid Style in American Neuroscience
Charlie Williams | History of the Human Sciences
"The personal papers of... John C. Lilly...hold a classified paper he wrote in the late 1950s on the behavioural modification and control of 'human agents'...Lilly claimed that the use of sensory isolation, electrostimulation of the brain, and the recording and mapping of brain activity could be used to gain 'push-button' control over motivation and behaviour."

Racial Innocence: Law, Social Science, and the Unknowing of Racism in the US Carceral State
Naomi Murakawa | Annual Review of Law and Social Science
"Racial innocence is the practice of securing blamelessness for the death-dealing realities of racial capitalism. This article reviews the legal, social scientific, and reformist mechanisms that maintain the racial innocence of one particular site: the US carceral state."

“Balance-Sheet” City: Martin Wagner and the Visualization of Statistical Data
Anna Vallye | Journal of Urban History
"Martin Wagner (1885-1957) was a leading city planner of the Weimar Republic and chief planner for Greater Berlin from 1926 to 1933...For Wagner modern techniques of social data calculation and representation, such as the balance sheet and the graph, became key instruments of planning by translating urban territory into an avatar of the metropolitan economy..."

Salvatore Babones, John H. S. Aberg | International Theory
"...Power has centralized as it has globalized, generating steep global hierarchies in world society that are similar to those that characterize national societies. The centrality of the United States in the networks of world society makes it in effect the 'central state' of a new kind of international society that is..."
endogenized within integrated world society."

**Computing Utopia: The Horizons of Computational Economies in History and Science Fiction**

Stainforth, Walton | Science Fiction Studies

"This article connects the recent flourishing of economic science fiction with the increasing technicity of contemporary financial markets, to pose questions about computational economies, both historical and fictional, and their ambiguous utopian currents...The article puts insights from the histories of cybernetics, computer science, and economics into dialogue with sf novels that experiment with different sociopolitical configurations of computational economies."

**Global Governance "As It Was, Is and Ought To Be": A Critical Reflection**

Stephen Gill | Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and

"This essay reflects on the past, present, and potential future of global governance, its historical practices and principles, the interests it has served, and who/what it has included/excluded or marginalized...It reflects on developments from the eleventh century up to World War II and critically appraises presently dominant principles and practices of global governance..."

**Sweden's Turn To Economic Inequality, 1982-2019**

Göran Therborn | Structural Change and Economic Dynamics

"In 1980 Sweden was probably the least unequal country of the world, but as part of the international turn of the centres of capitalism Sweden became one of the European frontrunners of economic unequalization. How did this happen?"

**BOOKS**

**The Gig Academy: Mapping Labor in the Neoliberal University**

Adrianna Kezar, Tom Depaola, Daniel T. Scott | John Hopkins University Press

"This book reveals the magnitude of the problem for individual workers across all institutional types and job categories while illustrating the damaging effects of these changes on student outcomes, campus community, and institutional effectiveness."

**Shadow Network: Media, Money, and the Secret Hub of the Radical Right**

Anne Nelson | Bloomsbury

"[This work] traces how the collapse of American local journalism laid the foundation for the Council for National Policy’s information war... and reveals how the group has collaborated with the Koch brothers to outfit Radical Right organizations with state-of-the-art apps and a shared pool of captured voter data..."

**Geography’s Quantitative Revolutions: Edward A. Ackerman and the Cold War Origins of Big Data**

Elvin Wyly | West Virginia University Press

"When so many people have access to the most powerful technologies humanity has ever devised for the precise determination of geographical coordinates, do we still need a specialized field of knowledge called geography?"

**JOURNALISM & ESSAYS**

**The Role of Librarians in a Historical Age of Obsession**

Mark Purcell | Literary Hub

"Many libraries, at least the larger or better organized, had two catalogues: a shelf-list, enumerating the books in the order in which they stood on the shelves (which may well have been loosely by subject), and an alphabetical catalogue or at least an author index to go with with it."

**Ethnicity As Counterculture**

Ken Chen | n+1

"The seeming superficiality of today’s cultural politics did not cause the left’s decline, but simply represents a symptom of it. How can we imagine a we capacious enough to house the many different communities that come through this space or through this country?"
Public Ownership Pays for Itself
Cat Hobbs | Tribune

“The CBI is wrong about Labour’s nationalisation plans. For most people in Britain, the costs of privatisation will always be higher than public ownership... Bringing these assets into public ownership would not only pay for itself, it would have huge benefits for the environment, society and economy.”

REPORTS, DISSERTATIONS, & MISCELLANEOUS

Global Internet Interconnection Infrastructure: Materiality, Concealment, and Surveillance in Contemporary Communication
Fernanda R. Rosa | American University

"With a focus on the information circulation infrastructure of the internet, this is a study of internet governance and design... and makes a first effort in internet governance scholarship to examine governance by internet exchange points (IXPs)."

Isabel Ortiz, Matthew Cummins | Initiative for Policy Dialogue

“This papers considers some alternatives to austerity for financing resources, [such as] re-allocating public expenditures, increasing tax revenues, lobbying for aid and transfers, eliminating illicit financial flows or using fiscal and foreign exchange reserves and managing debt by borrowing or restructuring existing debt.”

Accumulation By Dispossession and Electoral Democracies: An Analysis of Land Acquisition for Special Economic Zones in India
Kartik Misra | University of Massachusetts Amherst

“This paper shows that factors like inequality in land ownership (class) and hierarchies of caste and gender hinder the ability of small and marginal farmers from protecting their class interests even though they have de jure political rights and majority in the voting process.”

VIDEOS

The Dollar Hegemon? Evidence and Implications for Policy Makers
Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas | Banque de France

"We live in the world dominated by the dollar and this domination has never been stronger. What are the consequences for international trade and globalization?"

Capital Is Dead: Is This Something Worse?
McKenzie Wark, Natasha Lennard | Verso Books

“It’s not capitalism, it’s not neoliberalism-what if it’s something worse? In this radical and visionary new book, McKenzie Wark argues that information has empowered a new kind of ruling class. Through the ownership and control of information, this emergent class dominates not only labour but capital as traditionally understood as well.”

Democracy in Decline: After Local Media Disappears, What Comes Next?
Matt Gertz | KODX Seattle

“Can democracy as we know it survive without a culture of independent investigative journalism? The panel delves into the rise of media conglomerates trafficking in partisan broadcasting, and explore strategies for supporting and sustaining a local media that’s relevant for 21st century America.”

PODCASTS

The New Culture Wars (on the alt-right)
Nathalie Olah | The New Intellectual

 “[This episode] discusses the bland cultural landscape, created by upper classes and dominated by middle class taste... and talks about the rising power of the university, the growing hostility of the alt-right toward art, and how the new culture wars aren’t between left and right but between the classes.”

Reconstructing Notre-Dame De Paris
“On this episode... an expert panel... take a look at the domestic policy and politics of raising Newstart and increasing wages, what the left can learn from the political marketing of the right, and tackle international politics from New Zealand to Canada to Brexit Britain.”

**Chinese Students In U.S. Schools**

Yingyi Ma | The Annex Sociology Podcast

“With Yingyi Ma, from Syracuse University, this podcast discusses the challenges facing college students from China, and how to create learning environments that can help them succeed.”