

The Syllabus

The Activist #36

June 05 - June 12, 2020

Academic

Henri Lefebvre's Second Life. The Real Utopia of the Right to the City in Contemporary Poland

Przemysław Pluciński | History of European Ideas

"The category of the right to the city, conceptualized over five decades ago by the French Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre, is currently experiencing its second life...[as seen in] the increasingly widespread category of 'real utopia'...[that] treats the right to the city in epistemological terms: as a peculiar type of knowledge co-produced at the intersection of academia and social activism..."

Precarity from a Feminist Perspective: a Note on Three Elements for the Political Struggle

Natalia Flores-Garrido | Review of Radical Political Economics

"Three different approaches to understand the relationship between precarity and gender relations are presented: feminization of precarity, doing gender in a precarious context, and an intersectional analysis of precarity. After briefly characterizing them, the author offers some reflections of what each theoretical approach can offer to the political struggle against precarity."

Reducing Inequality Resulting from UK Low-Carbon Policy

Anne Owen, John Barrett | Climate Policy

"In the UK...low-carbon policy costs are placed...on items representing a higher proportion of expenditure for low income households...higher income households require nearly five times more energy than the lowest, but because levies are only raised on energy bills, those with high incomes pay only 1.9 times more towards policy costs...raising the funds through general taxation offers a fairer and practical solution."

On the Political Economy of Minority Rights. Three Ways to Manipulate a Minority: Goals, Rules, and Border Poles

Bengt-Arne Wickström | European Journal of Political Economy

"Language rights for speakers of minority languages are analyzed as well-defined policy measures that are implemented in given jurisdictions... [However,] a policy maker with a given attitude towards the minority can manipulate...the policy, the implementation rules, as well as the borders of the jurisdictions in order to achieve her or his political goals when they differ from the cost-benefit optimum."

"The Whole Damn System Is Guilty": Urban Violence, the Principal Contradiction of Racial Capitalism, and the Production of Premature Death in Oakland, California

César Rodríguez | Critical Sociology

"Discourses of "urban violence" are deployed in reaction to the mobilizations... by working-class communities of color following extrajudicial police murders... pathologizing said communities...structural violence constitutes the principle contradiction of racial capitalism...The extrajudicial police murder of Grant in Oakland catalyzed the blossoming open of this contradiction into an intensified moment of struggle."

The Anthropocene: the One, the Many, and the Topological

J. A. Stallins | Annals of the American Association of Geographers

"...the choice of when to delineate the Anthropocene's start and how to signify its presence is analogous to a modifiable areal unit problem...Geographic subdisciplines have acquired distinctive ways of sublimating socioecological patterns and processes into a timestamp...topology... integrates these temporalities of the Anthropocene...represented as a folded surface rather than a timeline..."

Taking Monsanto to Court: Legal Activism around Intellectual Property in Brazil and India

Karine Peschard, Shalini Randeria | The Journal of Peasant Studies

"...Monsanto implemented private royalty collection systems adapted to the specificities of crops and agrarian conditions in Brazil and India...[and] thus enjoyed in practice the same extraordinary degree of IP rights in these countries as in the United States irrespective of significant differences between patent and plant variety laws of both countries and the US."

Books

The Myth of the Nuclear Revolution: Power Politics in the Atomic Age

Keir A. Lieber, Daryl G. Press | Cornell University Press

"...how much capability is required for a reliable nuclear deterrent, how conventional conflicts may become nuclear wars, and how great care is required now to prevent new technology from ushering in an age of nuclear instability."

Black Collegiate Athletes and the Neoliberal State: Dreaming from Bended Knee

Albert Y. B. Jr. | Lexington Books

"This study analyzes sociocultural productions of power, knowledge, identity, and resistance through the lens of race in collegiate athletics."

The War on Disabled People: Capitalism, Welfare and the Making of a Human Catastrophe

Ellen Clifford | Zed Books

"This book reveals precisely how and why this state of affairs has come about. From spineless political opposition to self-interested disability charities, right-wing ideological myopia to the media demonization of benefits claimants, a shocking picture emerges of how the government of the fifth-richest country in the world has been able to marginalize disabled people with near-impunity."

Journalism & Essays

Still Water Gone Green': the Murray-Darling Basin and the Political Economy of Water

Scott Robinson | Overland

"...a society without being a community. A society in the sense that they live in an ordered, rule-bound way, and the relationships between them governed. Not a community, because they struggle to recognise common interests."

The Rich Need the City like an Astronaut Needs a Spacesuit': How the Super Wealthy Took over London

Rowland Atkinson | Independent

"On how the UK's largest city went from being the land of opportunity to a millionaire's playground."

We Need an Academic New Deal

Alyssa Bowen | The Nation

"Higher education work is a public good, and we university workers are prepared to fight to make it better for all."

Reports, Dissertations, & Miscellaneous

From Reception to Integration: Migrant Populations in Greece during and in the Aftermath of the Crisis

Aliki Mouriki, Nikos Sarris | National Centre for Social Research

"This publication not only investigates the impact of policies and social practices on the social inclusion of migrant populations in Greece, but also how migration policies, smothered by the refugee crisis, have gradually drifted to reception policies for asylum-seekers."

Original Gangsters: Genre, Crime, and the Violences of Settler Democracy

Sean M. Kennedy | CUNY Academic Works

"This thesis shows how liberal-democratic institutions co-opt and mystify the liberatory impulses in original cultural productions deemed 'gangster': in the U. S., through the mass-entertainment industry's erasure of fugitivity in pop versions of the gangsta-rap subgenre of trap music."

Videos

Pandemic Nativism

Dan Denvir, Aziz Rana | Jacobin Magazine

"Issues as diverse as austerity economics, free trade, mass incarceration, the drug war, the contours of the post 9/11 security state, and Donald Trump and the Alt-Right movement are united by the ideology of nativism, which binds together assorted anxieties and concerns into a ruthless political project."

Radical Daily Practices

Cristina Gamboa | AA School of Architecture

"The lecture describes the relation between the development process of LaBorda - the first housing cooperative built in Barcelona - and its architectural definition."

Policies to Build Food Security

Claire Babineaux-Fontenot | Urban Institute

"This conversation highlights the tools policymakers and practitioners have to address food needs, what has worked in previous food crises, and how policymakers can prepare for an extended recovery period, during which food insecurity will remain an issue."

Podcasts

The Start of Eco-Tourism

Mike Lanchin | Witness History

"The Monteverde cloud forest reserve in Costa Rica was established in the 1970s with the help of a group of American Quakers. The aim was to protect its unique habitat but it has become one of Central America's top tourist attractions."

A History of Violent Protest

Kellie Carter-Jackson | What Next

"Why a nice, peaceful protest may not accomplish the structural change America needs?"

Unlearning Imperialism

Ariella A. Azoulay | This is Hell!

"A call to rewind history and unlearn our imperial rights, to continue to refuse imperial violence by making present what was invented as "past" and making the repair of torn worlds the substance of politics."