

Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy

E-Newsletter No. 8

October 2020

Dear colleagues and friends,

We hope that this newsletter finds you safe and in good health. It is a cliché to say we are living in unprecedented times, but we say it nonetheless as we adjust to a new way of living and working and as we adapt to new forms of collaboration. As is the case for most if not all of us, the Polanyi Institute will continue to work remotely, at least through May 2021. Concordia University remains closed; all classes are being taught online through the winter and spring semesters. Plans for the 15th International Karl Polanyi conference, originally to be held in Montreal, April 22-24, 2021 have also been affected. We only learned recently that all public events have also been cancelled. Our hope to be able to host a hybrid conference, is no longer possible. We regret this but we fully support the decision to prioritize the health of all participants. Planning a conference at this time is complex, as we all know, but with a dedicated organizing committee and technical support by the university, we look forward to an excellent online event. Paradoxically, this will enable greater participation. A call for papers will be issued in the coming days.

As you will read below, we have a full program of webinars in the coming months leading up to the April international conference. We are grateful to all the speakers who have accepted to participate in what promises to be a series of rich and dynamic discussions about critical issues. Please mark these events in your agenda. As well, we remind researchers that the [Karl Polanyi Digital Archive](#) is always available for consultation. Please [contact](#) the Institute should you require any assistance accessing material.

The Institute will be hosting a number of new doctoral and post-doctoral research associates in the near future. Requests are currently awaiting financial support. Unfortunately, we will have to postpone residence at the Institute until next autumn at the earliest, but once funding is attained, new Institute post graduate researchers will be invited to present their research in forthcoming webinars. Please stay tuned!

Since its creation in 1988, the Institute has played a pivotal role in the advancement and dissemination of Karl Polanyi's work and his influence on vital contemporary debates. This has never been more important than today, as the full societal impact of Covid-19 has yet to be felt. Many refer to this as a Polanyi moment, as a return to business as usual is clearly not possible. For our work to continue, we invite a [**financial contribution**](#) to support the activities of the Karl Polanyi Institute. Our financial resources remain modest and we are grateful for your support.

UPCOMING ON-LINE EVENTS – SAVE THE DATE –

► Can Trump Win the Upcoming November Election?

Join us for a conversation with **Fred Block**, University of California, Davis; **Robert Kuttner**, Co-Editor of *The American Prospect*; and, **Margaret R. Somers**, University of Michigan, moderated by **Daniel Salée**, School of Community and Public Affairs and Political Science, Concordia University. (News that Donald Trump has tested positive for Covid-19 arrived as we were about to distribute this newsletter. No doubt this contributes to an already tense election and to the discussion we will have just one week before the November 3rd election).

Date / Time

Tuesday, October 27 / 12 – 1:30pm (EDT)

Venue

On-line Webinar

The event is free of charge. [**Registration**](#) (with Eventbrite) is required. The webinar link will be e-mailed to those who register.



► Dialogue about the *Democratizing Work Manifesto*

In May 2020, three scholars [**Isabelle Ferreras**](#) (Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), [**Dominique Méda**](#) (University of Paris-Dauphine, France), and [**Julie Battilana**](#) (Harvard University, Kennedy School, United States) launched an op-ed on “democratizing work” signed by over 5000 researchers from over 700

universities on all continents. Now known as the *Democratizing Work Manifesto*, it was published in 43 newspapers in 36 countries and translated into 27 languages around the world. In their own words: **"it is time to democratize firms, decommodify work, and remediate the environment"** calling upon academics to co-design a strategy for "an economic future that is both sustainable and democratic." In their forthcoming book, *Le manifeste travail. Démocratiser, démarchandiser, dépolluer* (Les Editions Seuil, October, 2020), Thomas Piketty writes: *"Ce livre-manifeste plein d'énergie redonne de l'espoir! Il sa'git d'une contribution fondamentale pour penser un autre monde, un autre système économique..."* *"Democratric, green and feminist, it lays a cornerstone for building a fairer and more inclusive society."* An English edition will soon follow. This initiative is mobilizing a worldwide movement committed to the values expressed in the *Manifesto*.

We are delighted and honoured to host two events in November with the authors of the *Democratizing Work Manifesto*, one in French and a second one in English, in collaboration with the *Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la mondialisation et le travail (CRIMT)*, and *Axe Travail. Observatoire international sur les impacts sociétaux de l'intelligence artificiel et du numérique*. The authors of the *Manifesto* will be joined by invited speakers from the labour movement and civil society organizations to engage in a conversation on the *Manifesto* and the way forward.

Session in French:

Date / Time

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 / 9h30 am (EST)

Venue

On-line

Moderator: Gregor Murray, Director, CRIMT

Session in English:

Date / Time

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 / 9h00 am (EST)

Venue

On-line

Moderator: Gregor Murray, Director, CRIMT



► **Brexit, Trump, Deindustrialization & the Politics of Our Time:
A Round Table**

Presenters

Steven High, Department of History, Concordia University accompanied by researchers associated with the international project “**Deindustrialization & the Politics of Our Time.**”

Date / Time

Friday, November 27 / 10am-12pm (EST)

Venue

On-line via Zoom

Brexit, the election of Donald Trump as US President, and the rise of right-wing populism across continental Europe have refocused attention on the connections between race, gender and class in deindustrialized working-class communities. These volatile events have prompted debate and conjecture about the root causes and timing of the current social and political upheaval but little sustained research focusing on those “left behind.”



► **Book Launch in collaboration with Bloomsbury Publishing, London,
U.K.**

Karl Polanyi and the Contemporary Political Crisis

Peadar Kirby, University of Limerick, Ireland

In analyzing the roots of contemporary crises, Peadar Kirby brings Karl Polanyi into conversation with critical contemporary thinkers, including Paul Mason, Wolfgang Streeck, Kate Raworth, Ian Gough, among others. Identifying this period as a Polanyi moment of unprecedented transition. For Kirby, Karl Polanyi is the inspiration for a new eco-social paradigm rooted in a diversity of citizen based initiatives around the world that will shape the contours of a new society and rescue humanity from crisis. We are delighted to launch this book in collaboration with *Bloomsbury Publishing*.

Date / Time

December TBC

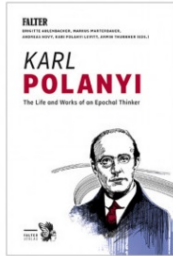
Venue

On-line via Zoom



Literary Corner

► Publications



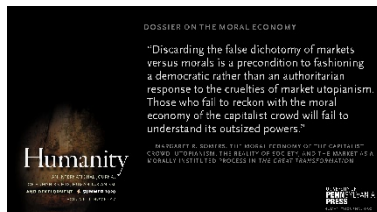
The Life and Works of an Epochal Thinker

Armin Thurnher, Brigitte Aulenbacher, Andreas Novy, Markus Marterbauer, & Kari Polanyi Levitt (Eds.)
Falter Verlag, 2020



Polanyi & l'imaginaire économique

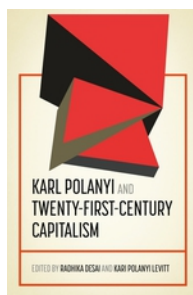
Nadjib Abdelkader, Jérôme Maucourant, & Sébastien Plociniczak (Eds.)
Éditeur le Passager clandestin, 2020



The Moral Economy of the Capitalist Crowd: Utopianism, the Reality of Society, and the Market as a Morally Instituted Process in Karl Polanyi's The Great Transformation

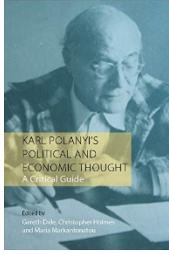
Margaret R. Somers

In *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 2020



Karl Polanyi and Twenty-First-Century Capitalism

Radhika Desai & Kari Polanyi Levitt (Eds.)
Manchester University Press, 2020



Karl Polanyi's Political and Economic Thought. A Critical Guide

Gareth Dale, Christopher Holmes & Maria Markantonatou (Eds.)

Agenda Publishing, 2019

► **Video**

Kari Polanyi Levitt: on Polanyi, Red Vienna and Bennington (October 2019)



In October 2019, Bennington College (Vermont) organized a conference to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the publication of *The Great Transformation*. After the event, the conference organizers, Professors John Hultgren, David Bond, and Susan Sgorbati sat down with Professor Kari Polanyi Levitt to discuss a range of topics, including how Polanyi came to Bennington and what it was like growing up in Red Vienna. [Full interview.](#)

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