ARTS RESEARCH IN FULL BLOOM:
THE 14TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL THEORY, POLITICS, & THE ARTS
Judith H. Balfe and Margaret Wyszomirski

In October the Conference on Social Theory, Politics, and the Arts met for the fourteenth time. The conference met at the American University in Washington, D.C. and was organized by arts educators David Pankratz and Valerie Morris (with the good counsel of sociologist Muriel Cantor). The gathering lasted for three days, attracted 200 participants, and included 104 formal papers and four discussion sessions. Presenters came from 27 states and four foreign countries. A number of presenters were graduate students or new PhDs, suggesting the future vitality of the field. Finally, more than 30 of the presenters were non-academics, representing a variety of arts agencies—both private and governmental. They contributed enormously to a general conference focus on issues of arts and culture policy.

For sociologists of art and culture, it was as if the program of an entire ASA Annual Meeting had been turned over to us. Papers ranged from case studies of barbershop quartets and Shriner's marching bands to discussions of censorship, the unintended consequences of corporate or state arts patronage, the effects of the mass media, and arts audiences. Inevitably, there was a session devoted to the pros and cons of the postmodernism idea. Not focusing on the sociology (politics, or policy) of art for its own sake, most papers were aimed at the wider audiences of social scientists, humanists, and arts policy decision-makers.

Standing back and thinking of the mix of papers, it is clear to us that social science inquiry into the relations of the arts and society in its cultural, economic, and political dimensions has expanded to the point that some greater efforts at synthesis are necessary. Indeed, at an evening symposium in his honor, Harold Horowitz (recently retired director of research for the National Endowment for the Arts) charged the conference with several missions for future research. Earlier studies need to be replicated and not just used as precedent. So much has changed in the field, both theoretically and contextually, Horowitz argued, that conclusions based upon "established" knowledge may need to be reformulated. He added that there is a great need for critical reviews of the literature and reconciliation of incongruous conclusions. Such work, Horowitz noted, can be undertaken by individual scholars with small budgets.

How these meetings have changed from the early days! In 1974 about 20 sociologists began to meet (more or less) annually to discuss their then-considered marginal interest in the arts. Conceived by Robert Leiminger and Derral Cheatham, early meetings occurred in analogously peripheral locations, upstate New York and downstate New Jersey. Contributing to, as well as benefiting from, increasing interest in the arts and culture across the social science disciplines, the conference has grown in size and breadth over the years—all without any formal organization or budget.

The 1989 STPSA Conference will be chaired by Joe Green, Dean of Performing Arts, at York University, Toronto. In 1990 it will be hosted by Robert Alford at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York. If you weren't in Washington or Pre- donia, you'll surely want to present at the meetings in Toronto or New York!
But I Know What I Like: An Illustration
Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang University of Washington

As part of the paper we presented at a Culture Section session of the 1988 ASA meetings in Atlanta we asked those attending to fill out a brief questionnaire about their "spontaneous personal reactions" to slides of a dozen etchings. The paper was about the posthumous reputations of etchers, and the point of this little exercise (it hardly qualifies as an experiment) was to check out our postulate that, with the maker's name removed, the work of the unrenowned often has as much appeal as the work of the most famous.

The slides were shown as six pairs similar in subject matter and technique but by artists with greatly disparate reputations. Some would have been recognized by print collectors, but we did not expect more than a few in our audience to be familiar with any of these. Those present were asked first to choose the member in each pair they found artistically more appealing and then to indicate whether this was "obvious" and came easy, whether it was less than obvious but nevertheless clear, or whether the difference appeared rather miniscule. We showed the entire set of slides a second time to ask respondents to single out two prints: one highly coveted print by one of the three most renowned Scottish etchers of the revival period and one print by a nearly forgotten artist, bought for the price of the frame at one of the junker stalls in London’s Portobello Antique Market.

We received 44 completed questionnaires from what had been a significantly larger audience. Some were so embarrassed when we identified the reputations of the artists that they would not hand in their answers even though responses were anonymous. Respondents are thus to an undetermined degree "self-selected."

The table lists these prints by title and artist in the order in which they were presented. An asterisk identifies the one by the more renowned artist. The first numeral in parentheses right after each print gives the number of nominations for highly coveted print by a renowned artist and the second is nominations for the antique dealer's discard. The figures in the two columns on the right show the percentage who preferred each print and the percentage for whom the difference was "miniscule."

The more famous generally came out ahead, but not by very much. The nominations for the most and least famous prints are also of some interest. More than a quarter of the respondents skipped this item on the questionnaire. Choices of best ranged across ten of the twelve prints, and the less renowned ones of the pairs actually garnered a total of 13 (or 42%) out of 31 nominations for most valued. The art market choice, Muirhead Bone’s Spanish Good Friday, one of his most famous prints which, on today’s market, sells between $3,000 and $3,600 (about the same nominal $-amount it brought in the 1920s), was bested by two prints and tied by two more. Both The Letter and Death Aved, received five compared to Bone’s four. The former is by a woman, passed over in favor of a man in the student competition for the coveted Rome Scholarship. She is still living, an excellent artist but unrenowned.

Turning to the Portobello end of the print market, nominations were received by all but one print, and that by an unknown. For unexplained reasons, The Letter, which was so well liked by many respondents, also received seven nominations as worthless while the print by Eveleen Buckton is the correct answer but was so identified by only two. Buckton is virtually unknown, even though a few of her prints and drawings have made their way to the British Museum print room, where they are poorly catalogued and languish in folders along with many others.

Editors’ Note: The Langs draw no conclusion, but this "exercise" does illustrate the findings of their extensive study of etchers that the "judgment of history" in aesthetic matters depends more on the exigencies of the market, gender, and family, than it depends on the aesthetic merit of the works in question. For the full details of the Lang's analysis see their: Etched in Memory: The Building and Survival of Artistic Reputation.

We welcome contributions from all section members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices Between Well- &amp; Unknown Printmakers</th>
<th>Better Liked</th>
<th>Difference Minuscule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portraits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait of a Negro - Paul Drury (2,1)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait of an Old Jew - Z. Bouvier-Honton (1,0)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cityscapes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Looking Through Brooklyn Bridge - C.R. Nevinson (4,2)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kensington Rooftops - Geoffrey Wedgwood (0,4)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure’s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Letter - Denise L. Brown (5,7)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Master - Ethel Gabain (6,1)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World War I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Spring, 1917 - James McKay (2,3)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Aved - Perry Smith (5,3)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Good Friday - Muirhead Bone (4,2)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiesta at Night, Rome - Herman A. Webster (1,1)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood Scenes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Sunset through trees) - Eveleen Buckton (0,2)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Low Tide and Evening Star - Frank Short (2,4)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = well reputed; (#,*) = judged (most renowned, worthless)
Complete and Mail by March 15 to Ensure Inclusion

If you don't want your name listed, please check here ___ and so inform us.

Name: Last_________________________ First_________________________ Middle________________

Mailing Address______________________________________________________________

Electronic Mail: ___________________________ (net) (name) (node)

Office Phone: (____)____-______

Home Phone: (____)____-______

Affiliation (Circle #): Student_1 / University or College with Graduate School_2 / None_3
4-Year College_4 / 2-Year College_5 / Government_6 / Research Organization_7 / Self-Employed_8

For each of the four questions below, please circle the letter or number of your responses and put the letter or number in the box at the top of the appropriate column.

1. What are the substantive sources of information for your research? Choose no more than 5.
   /_______/_______/_______/_______/_______/
   a. literature/books  b. movies/cinema  c. television  d. radio  e. newspapers/magazines
   f. theater  g. dance  h. street performance  i. painting/sculpture  j. fashion/cosmetics
   k. photography  l. museums  m. architecture  n. classical music  o. opera/musical theater
   p. jazz  q. popular music/rock  r. country music  s. sports  t. mass media
   u. crafts/hobbies  v. leisure  w. humor  x. youth culture  y. audiences/consumption
   1. everyday interaction  2. class, ethnic groups  3. religious groups  4. gender groups
   5. political groups  6. organizations  7. occupations  8. intellectuals

2. What are your primary theoretical, methodological or research orientations? Choose no more than 3.
   /_______/
   1. culture/society links  2. content analysis  3. critical theory
   4. sociology of knowledge  5. ethnography  6. symbolic interaction
   7. archival research  8. experimental studies  9. computer modeling
   a. analysis of large data sets  b. collective memory  c. cultural capital
   d. production of culture

3. Disciplines (o/t soc.) of greatest relevance to your culture-related work? Choose no more than 4.
   /_______/
   a. history  b. English/comparative literature  c. anthropology  d. philosophy
   e. economics  f. political science  g. psychology  h. cognitive science
   i. religious studies  j. history or philosophy of science  k. education
   l. creative writing  m. journalism  n. theater  o. painting, etc.
   p. dance  q. music performance  r. arts administration  s. psychiatry
   t. popular culture  u. American studies  v. media, communication studies
   w. musicology/ethnomusicology x. art history  y. folklore, folklife

4. Does your research focus primarily on one region? (eg. the South; Eastern Europe; the Afro-Caribbean)
   Please specify:

   ________________________________

   Are there other items we should include the next time if this is revised?
   Please specify:

   ________________________________
Creating an Annotated Membership List

The questionnaire on the next page will allow the Culture Section to create an annotated membership list. Its purpose is to facilitate networking among people with similar interests. The listings will include not only phone numbers and electronic mail addresses for those of us who have them but also four ways of identifying our scholarly orientations and research interests.

The latter are based on the forms filled out at the New York and Chicago ASA meetings, and a draft form of the questionnaire was circulated among the officers and council of the section for their comments. Its present form is the work of Pete Peterson. John Ryan has agreed to code the information, compile and distribute the annotated address list. If for any reason you don’t want your name listed, please so inform John. If you want a copy of the list, please fill out the address list just below and enclose $4.00 to defray the composition, printing, and mailing costs.

Please do it NOW to be sure to have what you want included in the list. PLEASE FIND MY CHECK FOR $4.00 ENCLOSED TO PAY FOR A COPY OF THE ANNOTATED ADDRESS LIST. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS LISTED BELOW.

From: ____________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Prof. John Ryan

Department of Sociology

Clemson University

Clemson SC 29631

Complete and Mail by March 15 to Ensure Inclusion
Princeton University - Mellon Colloquium Series on "Culture, Religion, and Society" organized by Michele Lamont 3:30 PM. For details contact Soc. Department, 452-4530.

February 28. Eviatar Zerubavel "Boundaries and the politics of classification."
March 6. Richard A. Peterson "Forms of Capital in the Status Game."
March 27. Paul DiMaggio. "Cultural diversity and cultural policy in the U.S."
April 10. Gary Fine. "Interactionist approaches to the culture concept."
April 24. Wendy Griswold. "Snatching literature from the jaws of defeat: the Nigerian Civil War as reinvented by the losers."

May 8. Archie Hochschild "Gender, culture and the two-job marital economy."
Prior speakers in this great series include:


April 5-8. Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association annual meetings in St Louis. Contact Ray Browne, Popular Culture Department, State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403.


June 12-16. "Sociology, Public Policy and the Arts" session of the International Institute of Sociology meeting in Rome. Contact Peter Etzkorn, Bitnet G1732@UMSLVMA or Sociology, University of Missouri, St. Louis, MO 63121.


June 28-30. "Symbolics of Leadership" organized by the Conference on Organizational Symbolism. Fontainebleau, France. Papers by March 1 to Susan Schneider, INSEAD, Bd. de Constance, 77305 Fontainebleau, France.

August 9-13. American Sociological Association meetings in San Francisco. The Culture Section sessions are scheduled for the final day, Sunday, August 13. Please plan accordingly. Cary Fine is the organizer of Section sessions. See Issue 3.1 and 3.3 for details.

Early October. Social Theory, Politics and the Arts Conference. Toronto. Contact Joe Green, Performing Arts, York University, Toronto, Canada.


October 5-7. Popular Culture Association in the South. Atlantic Beach, FL. Abstracts by May 1 to Elizabeth Bell, English, U. of South Carolina, Aiken, SC 29801.

October 12-15. Society for History of Technology Annual Meeting. Sacramento, CA. Send submissions to Arthur L. Greil, Bitnet FGREIL@CERAMICS, or Alfred University, Box 545, Alfred NY 14802.


WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP

Help Wanted is our newest networking service for section members. What do you need that other section members might be able to provide? Send your request to Liah Greenfeld, or Pete Peterson. Information, data, citations, contacts in special fields, semester switching, or even an exchange for your Big Sur cottage.

Peter Etzkorn requests manuscripts relating to Public Policy and the Arts to be considered for the JAF Press Annual Review volume of Research on Sociology and Public Policy. Bitnet G1732@UMSLVMA or Sociology, University of Missouri, St. Louis, MO.

Jon D. Gray is interested in networking with others interested in the sociology of popular music, historical and contemporary. Write Sociology, U. Mass. Amherst, MA 01003.

Richard A. Peterson, with an historian, is completing the process of putting together an anthology on lyrical themes in country music. Themes most desired: gender from a male perspective; war, peace and politics; race; violence; religion; the western image; family and home versus the open road. Other topics considered. Send proposals to: Sociology, Box 1635 Station B, Vanderbilt U., Nashville, TN 37235 or Bitnet G1732@VU@VCTRVA.

WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED CULTURE 5 HELP
Brian Turner. Status. A 3-dimensional theory of stratification is proposed. Make up Mas! The first is legal-political: the second, economic; the third centers on cultural capital and lifestyle. We take to the domestic, cultural, and leisure activities.

Nancy Walker. "A Very Serious Third": Women's Power and American Culture. The official male-dominated culture has denied women the freedom and self-confidence to express their opinions and ideas. The purpose of this book is to explore those changes.

Catherine Clement. Opera or the Undoing of Opera. Reading the libretto the finds that 19th century operas thrive on the negative representation of women. Opera performs the patriarchal order by requiring the death or domestication of the female heroine-victim.

Klaus Tewelde. Male Fantasia Volume 3. Male Roles: Postanalyzing the White Puppet. Explores the fascist inspiration of post world war I German puppet literature, we find that the male role must be turned to threat to resist the temptations of women and death.

Stanley Aronowitz. Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society. The power of science comes from its association with value-free methodology becoming the criterion for assessing alternative truth-claims. Only by situating scientific discourse alongside other discourse practices, can science's power be challenged.

Louis Marin. Portrait of the Third. How the images of Louis XIV worked to accomplish the masses of absolutism.


Richard Neave. The Lure of Fascination: Toward a Postmodern Culture. Rammed to the wax by this Irwin, we learn of the postmodern critical interpretation worked in the relation between self and other.


Alan Rinz. Weber, Functionality, and Social Order. Uses Pareto's ideas of social action to show the connection between rational and irrational action that Parsons elicited in the works of Weber.


Shigato Ishinomori. Japan, Inc.: Introduction to Japanese Economics (The Copic Book). This 320-page book has sold over half a million copies in Japan. It is a graphic representation of the contemporary sales-only Japanese world view.

Rick Fantasia. Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action, and Contemporary American Workers. Case studies show the complexities of contemporary American working-class consciousness.


Antoine Heron. Concept is aiming view over centers. The anthropologie de l'ambiance medical. Racial Economics. A detailed account of how the interests of music theorists, critics, composers, music educators, government agencies, the music industry, parents, and children are mediated in formalizing music education in France.

Lish Greenfield. Different Worlds: A Sociological Study of Race, Class, and Age. Race, class, and age are interrelated in American society. We explore the utility of his "center - periphery" idea in a number of empirical contexts in which once valued and beloved concert audiences against the threat made of our culture.


Books of Note R.A.P.

Here are two riveting big-format coffee table books: Milt Hinton and David G. Berger. Base Line: The Stories and Photographs of Milt Hinton. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Milt Hinton is a premier jazz photographer, and his friend Dave Berger is a sociologist who helped his subject through and bring to publication the myriad stories and candid photographs of a fifty-year period of jazz musicians and their world. The photos are excellent but ultimately somewhat repetitive.

Paul Kingsbury, ed. Country: The Music and the Musicians. Eight pounds of exposition, pictures, and documents chronicling both the commercialization and the perpetuation of the American music. Drawing on the archives of the Country Music Foundation, the pictures, documents, and interviews contribute a continuing dialogue with the text written by some of the best of country music researchers.

Back Issues of Books of Note now available. By popular demand, a complete set of all the Books of Note printed full scale and easy to read. From volume 1 #5 through volume 3 #2, this issue. Twenty two pages in all! If interested, send $4 to Richard A. Peterson, Box 1635 Station B, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235.

CULTURE 6