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How Should We Look at Buildings? A Preliminary Reflection on the Sociology of Architectural Objects

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Sociology has never gone as far nor been as rigorous or exhaustive as anthropology in the analysis of cultural objects.[1] We have sought to increase precision by concentrating instead on the production of culture, considering the actors who produce and consume cultural artifacts as we would other workers and consumers in specific historical periods, within particular institutions and concrete organizational settings.[2] Certainly, in studying the passage of late twentieth century architecture from a dominant modernist code to postmodern eclecticism (1993), I have stayed clear of interpreting the architectural objects themselves. This was by deliberate choice. On the one hand, I was interested in what architects thought had happened, and in the constraining or enabling conditions under which they practiced. On the other hand, I had read too much architectural criticism and history to even try to approximate their sophisticated analyses of architectural form. Predictably, I relied on the architects' discourse and I took form as one of their predominant concerns, but my account of the postmodern shift concentrated on the social context where it had occurred. In fact, for a sociologist

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Culture Day in LA
Tuesday, August 9

A Cultural Perspective on Economic Welfare

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All things considered, what is the best an economy can do in allocating resources? This is the question welfare economics poses for itself. The same "best outcome" question applies to other institutions, but economics addresses it with a forthrightness befitting the queen of the social sciences. Once raised, these questions have a nagging tendency to stick around, whether or not they find any answer. They cannot be ignored or sent into oblivion by a clever redefinition of terms. That is because they grow out of the very same human interests that define the institutions themselves. We only care to abstract an economy from social relations in general because, in a concrete way, we care about *who* gets *what* and whether better arrangements might not be made. The human faculty of "perfectibility," in Rousseau's sense, takes over from there.

It is troubling and embarrassing to economics, therefore, that it has not been able to answer the question of best economic outcomes. Not only has it yet to glimpse the millennium; periodically the whole enterprise seems about to collapse. Economists say so, too, and not just the

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Language, Networks, and Culture

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I long assumed that language conveniently conforms itself around cultural needs and social networks. Even though my halting experiences with Spanish, German and French convinced me that one had but a single native language, I hoped that language modifies our cultural side as little as air modifies our speech because the alternatives shown me by older linguistics seemed useless or even specious. My research perspective has recently been reopened by encountering socio-linguistic results of the past 15 years, which I would like to sketch.

Perhaps you've seen "Six Degrees of Separation," either the movie or the Broadway hit starring Stockard Channing which I saw two years ago. John Guare's title takes off from some social science of the nineteen-sixties, from Stanley Milgram's probes of what he called 'the Small World.' The lead character, Ouisa, wife of a Manhattan art dealer, muses that you can reach through a chain of about six acquaintances to most anyone else in our country. Interactions on stage build upon each other in dialogue of crackling wit that invokes and touches further circles of acquaintance as well as triangles and other networks on stage.

The new sociolinguistics can help us probe scenes in life, direct or via Guare portrayal. Social networks are the infrastructure of this changing Small World that Guare

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like myself, concerned with the conditions of work in which cultural objects are produced and communicated, the insistence of architectural critics and historians on formal qualities is frustrating. Architecture is a professional activity, a business, a collective enterprise, a material intervention with almost inevitable social and political implications—certainly not an autonomously conceived expression of artistic authorship. The public, official discourse of architects and cognoscenti seldom acknowledges any of this. Yet their emphasis on objects for their own sake suggests that our production of culture theory should find ways of accounting for something that so greatly concerns the producers themselves.

Indeed, it is not easy to transport to the domain of architecture modes of understanding art production that apply to other art forms. Producers of art, Kenneth Dauber aptly says, are "the actor or actors who have effective control over the choice of form." They are interested in a genre for the alternatives it contains and allows: "Saying one thing rather than another, putting one design on a pot rather than something else, are integral to meaning." (1992: 566, 563) Architecture is too complex as a form of production, and too special as an art, to afford anything but limited choice of forms and control over meaning to its producers. A full sociological account of an architectural object requires a social history of how that particular object came to be what it is, a history of the decision to build, and of how the building was commissioned, designed, realized and received.[3]

Surely, we need to date the building and identify its style; but it is more significant from our point of view to keep in mind that architecture is first of all *a business*. In Europe, architect-designed buildings (what I call "architects' architecture" to distinguish it from buildings in which architects have not intervened) assumed from the seventeenth century on the function of raising land values and contributing to the wealth of a *rentier* class. No other art is as immediately grafted upon the economy as architecture is through its products; cost determines the dependence of architecture upon its patrons or clients and constitutes the architect's first servitude. Arguably, therefore, the first meaning of a building in capitalist society is economic: independently of what the architect wants to signify, a building connotes the complex political economy of construction to which it belongs.

However, short of a full historical and economic account, we may still want to read in architectural objects the possible responses of different categories of users, forming hypotheses about how different publics would "decode" the meaning of a building. Here I merely propose some tools for examining the "shared significance embodied" in buildings.[4] Drawing from semiotics and from the sociology of culture and technology, I begin outlining the content that architectural objects can communicate under stringent constraints. Any possible parallel between cultural objects produced and received in the same time and place would require us to approach each category in its own terms.

The Specificity of Architectural Objects

We cannot regard architectural objects only as sculptures: they are buildings first, meant for use, not contemplation only. They are part of everyday life, a vernacular art. The utility of architectural objects poses a challenge to semiotics for if we take the building and its elements (doors, windows, stairs, roofs and the like) as signs, they usually have no referent other than the function they permit. The door is a hole in the wall, which refers primarily to itself as a possibility of passage. Yet as Umberto Eco (upon whose semiotics of architecture I draw) notes (1973: 134), we recognize and understand "the *meaning* of 'stair as a possibility of going up' on the basis of a code that [we] can work out . . . even if, in fact, no one is going up that stair at present and even though, in theory, no one might ever go up it again." Therefore, the *denoted* meaning of architectural elements is the possibility of function codified in our culture. *We* (though not a hypothetical primitive) know that stairs as well as elevators are for going up and down and we have internalized the movements required by their use. Indeed, I do want to suggest that some architectural units are more universal and more easily understood than others, *appearing* therefore as "natural" because their forms implicitly evoke movements that the human body can perform in nature.

Bruno Latour's pathbreaking analysis of "nonhuman actors" (1988) applies exactly to what buildings and their units denote: their potential behavioral meaning is what Latour and Akrich call the *script* or *scenario* inscribed in their conventional forms. Function is fulfilled by scripts *encoded* in the nonhuman elements of social life: we can describe them (as do instruction manuals) because we are able to *decode* the ordinary objects that make up our material culture. Now, "decoding the script" of a VCR requires a human actor abler or smarter than some 70 percent of American VCR owners, but we should not in principle need instructions to understand the primary functions encoded in our buildings. If we find our way *to* them and are allowed *into* them, we can follow automatically the *prescriptions* that their units communicate.[5] Any building, taken as a sign and an organized system of "nonhuman actors" is, first of all, a storehouse of "scripts." These scripts tell us the story of different possible users, with different kinetic abilities and pragmatic knowledge of technology. In a given culture, average actors have internalized basic scripts, and most buildings tell the simple stories of basic uses connected with habitation. I believe that the internalization of the *utilitarian* scripts inscribed in buildings (therefore the unconscious ways in which we find our way through them and avail ourselves of their elements) is what normally makes us ignore the architectural object as such. As Walter Benjamin (1968: 241) noted, they are "the prototype of a work of art the reception of which is consum-

mated by a collectivity *in a state of distraction.*" Architects must either accept this basic inattentiveness, take it, in fact, as an indication that the building "works," or fight against it. They often attempt to do both things at the same time, even in monuments which, by definition, ought to be noticed.

We understand the whole building *by its type*, however, even before we respond to the scenarios prescribed by its parts. A building denotes, first and above all, the culturally and historically specific *social* function that it serves; we interpret this function by mobilizing complex *typological* codes that are sociological and embodied in architectural form. Our appreciation of architecture is inseparable from the sense that its forms are appropriate for the social functions they denote. Thus, it is not only that buildings must satisfy structural conditions based on the laws of gravity and the resistance of materials before they can begin to denote their primary functional meanings. They must also respect our cultural capacity to decode them typologically. A public's implicit repertory of appropriate building types drastically limits architectural innovation: an architect who imposes difficult scripts and alien semantic codes to a community of users invites them to either reject or subvert the building's design.[6]

In this respect, architectural objects are most similar to the messages of mass communication: received "in a state of distraction," they reinforce well-known meanings and resonate with everything a known or hypothetical public already knows. If their interpretation of primary functions (their denoted meanings) violates the scripts we know, they risk creating an unacceptable interference. Thus, like media messages, most contemporary architectural objects offer novelty at a secondary level: a new twist, a take, even a fantastic scenography to decorate the not-for-real, not-for-keeps parts of everyday life.[7]

We know well that the primary function of architectural objects is not all that they are meant to convey. The complex typological codes we mobilize to "read" a specific building involve it immediately in a system of differences: we know that this is a storefront, not a residence, but also that in Harlem it may be a church. We suspect, in fact, that difference may be the main interest of architects, and also that of architects' clients, even though they absolutely must see to fulfilling the primary functions of construction. Difference can be marked through size, form, ornament, and style (which includes all of the above). Responding to a collective intentionality, architects fill buildings with *connoted* meanings. So do, importantly and unpredictably, layers upon historical layers of different users. For instance, the program for Philadelphia's late nineteenth century City Hall brazenly indicated that the doors of public rooms had to be tall and massive enough, and their handles placed high enough, to awe immigrant masses assumed to be short (Brownlee, n.d.).

In Eco's apt expression, an architectural object *denotes a form of inhabitation*, just like a spoon promotes and signifies a form of eating. But it can also *connote* the overall ideology that informed the architect's design, the system of differences that architect and client intended to mobilize, thinking of other users than themselves (as in the example above) or ignoring what users are capable of "decoding." Thus, a suburban railroad station denotes a service, while just by its type it also immediately connotes an ideology about the *good* life, to Americans and millions of moviegoers all over the world who have *seen* Mr. Blanding build his dream house on the screen, and seen how one lives in it, since the 1950s. But the image of the good life is to some extent transformed by a station that is all shining glass and metal and flat or angular forms; then it declares, for instance, "Bay Area Rapid Transit System, Pacific Rim, the future," even in genteel residential suburbs that negate their own economic reality. *Connoted* meanings are the secondary function of architectural objects, no less socially significant than the primary uses they *denote*. Part of our analysis should focus on the signs themselves, to make hypotheses about *what* they connote *for whom*, including the architects and their clients. Style deals in *connoted* meanings. I believe it moves the users from a form to an ideology of inhabitation because it signifies that something more than "mere building" is happening, to those who can recognize its conventions as to those who cannot.

In establishing the system of differences that allows the stylistic shift toward ideological signification, cost obviously plays an important part. But cost disappears as a determinant of difference when we consider that any single building enters into *immediate relations with its neighbors, and into mediated relations with all the buildings past and present that its users know*. This, perhaps the most distinctive and specific signifying capacity of architectural objects, resides in the durability of buildings and in their special relation with cities.

Buildings *outlive* the inevitable obsolescence of the codes by which we read them. The durability of architectural objects inevitably loads them with historical references: for both learned and lay knowers, the architectural object is full of implicit and explicit comparisons to other objects, past and present. For the expert, every design implicitly or explicitly deals with the history of forms—negating it, alluding to it, analyzing it, invading and remaking it. But all buildings, by accretion, constitute the city's living fabric and make visible the ever-present past of architecture. Because our time exaggerates the obsolescence of forms and the need to change them, mass consumption retrieves and repossesses obsolete forms. But special and very different groups of users do the retrieval by themselves: from gentrifiers to "recyclers" to scavengers, to those who, as Eco says, make the effort to read the old forms *philologically*, under the codes pertinent to their birth. More commonly, however, we enrich the form-signs by *semantic fission*, having abstracted them from their origins and reinserted them in a new context.

The city, in my view, operates incessant and automatic semantic fissions, each of its components referring us by

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implicit comparisons to all the other forms and ideologies of inhabitation that we know. For a sociology of culture, the strategic architectural objects reside in cities: within the urban fabric, they develop their highest cultural potency. Architecture is the most fully and unavoidably public in cities, the most available for inspection, if not for use. There, architects face the problem of either displacing other objects and their codes of interpretation, or seeking a dialogue with the context, that is, establishing differences within a common code. How users (intended and not) respond to what is always a rhetorical gesture depends on who they are. The battles around use are also battles around signification. It is where architecture comes to constitute the city, where it can be appropriated as shelter and as symbolic landscape, that the political sociology of urban resistance and the sociology of culture can enrich one another on a common ground.

NOTES

[1] Some notable recent exceptions are Griswold (1987), Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991), Dauber (1991), and Brain (forthcoming).

[2] See Crane (1992) and Peterson's important statement (1979); two important examples of the production of culture approach are Becker (1982) and Crane (1987).

[3] For a partial attempt in this direction, see Sarfatti Larson (forthcoming); Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991) provide a convincingly "thick" description of their object's history.

[4] I am citing Griswold's (1986) well-known and apt definition of cultural objects.

[5] Latour's analysis is based precisely on a breakdown of automatic *subscription*, as he calls our acquiescence to and compliance with the prescribed behaviors encoded in nonhumans.

[6] For examples of "subversion," see Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991) and Boudon (1972).

[7] I draw here from Michael Schudson (1989).

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Rambo on Economic Welfare

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misfits and chronic malcontents but also thoughtful insiders such as E.J. Mishan (1969), who called the field's accomplishments after fifty years "discouragingly meager." Twenty years later Hahnel and Albert (1990) see welfare economics as having totally exhausted itself. They suggest a solution: to expand the framework of economic choice into other social institutions, based on a new theory of human nature. Their concepts of "complementary holism" and "the human center" give you some idea of their direction. This opening up of the problem, in some ways converging with Coleman's (1990) theory, is a move in the right direction; but they, like Coleman, fail to locate the deepest source of difficulty for welfare economics. Its problems have resulted from an inability to conceptualize common standards (with an emphasis on the word "common"), which are the *sine qua non* of a best economic outcome. This "relatively autonomous" element is not primarily found "horizontally" within other institutions but "vertically" (i.e., in Parsons' sense, at a higher cybernetic level) in culture. Economics cannot answer the question of best outcomes from within the logic of methodological individualism, a logic that eliminates any references to culture. The short explanation for this is that there is no objective standard for judging one outcome better than another, so economists must introduce *a priori* standards, a practice that inevitably begs the central question of whether they are common standards.

So much for preaching to the faithful. This problem of best institutional outcomes is not, I think, within the standard repertory of cultural sociology. Not that the work in our field could not be respecified or translated to show that all along this was a presuppositional concern; but this kind of problem, this search for a best—not in an ethical sense, but an empirical one—has not been an important self-conscious orientation.[1] There are reasons for this: the difficult dual reference to culture and social structure, for one. More troubling is the whiff of taboo themes: equilibrium, or even social engineering. Above all, there may be little faith left that this type of question can escape a hopeless relativism, or that it has the necessary empirical referents, or that the ethical/empirical distinction can be usefully made. If I am right, this line of criticism betrays a misunderstanding of the problem. After all, our field is

used to a certain amount of vertigo as it attempts to ground its assertions, and used to working with ethics *as* an empirical matter. More attention to best outcomes is due. The odd balance of practical intent and formalist utopianism in economics imposes an important kind of discipline on thought—economists have used it well—which is a helpful alternative to the ironic, postmodern opening up of meaning to a nihilistic particularism. Specifically, then, cultural sociology should consider the problem of economic welfare as a way of learning how to be more useful to others—economists *et al.*

Consider the way economists have handled the problem of best outcomes. In their treatment of welfare all the familiar dodges around culture are brought into play. Perfect information and the absence of externalities are key simplifying assumptions. The former cuts off the problem of interpretation; and a large category of externalities are the symbolic effects of market outcomes. To a limited extent these assumptions can be relaxed—not to the point of developing a fully cultural argument, however, with "sui generis," collective ideal references. Even more awkward is the behavioristic definition of preference as the end-product of a choice among alternatives, with the calculated result that any complexity in the subjective formation and *holding* of preferences is avoided. The consequence of this analytical austerity is that each consumer can be crowned sovereign over his or her own preference set; or, as they more aridly put it these days, "preferences are independent." It is easy to see how this crude device, this social-psychological abomination, works against any consideration of culture.

This much is true for all fields of neoclassical economics. What is distinctive about welfare economics is that it must treat the notion of preference in a collective way. The best economic outcome is the one preferred by a collectivity of people. (Not *everyone* in the society, necessarily—a complication I avoid, but in principle can be handled.) The problem of preference formation, ostentatiously ignored elsewhere in the discipline, is writ large as the system framework expands from the person to the group. Now the internal workings of "deliberation" are social, not "psychological," and can no longer be passed over as an irrelevant black box but constitute the very question at hand. That question is, how are mutually exclusive alternatives sorted through to produce the best outcome?

The market can be seen as a kind of institutionalized deliberation on best outcomes. That is how welfare economics has viewed it. The collective best is the sum of individual bests, the unwitting aggregate of freely maximizing choices under reality constraints of scarcity and the prior history of allocations. In fact, given the standard economic assumptions, it can be shown that a perfect market produces a neat form of best outcome, the so-called "Pareto-optimum." That is where no one can be made any better off without making at least one other person worse off. The relationships described by this model of production possibilities and indifference curves are elaborate and elegant, tying together producers and consumers with respect to every relevant alternative outcome for all resources. And, with this, welfare economics puts a capstone on the logic of a purely structural order, one that avoids any reliance on cultural consensus, tradition, or shared values. It is the best order, a thoroughly modern order of individual freedom and control. All that remains is to work out a theory of market failures.

Aside from the fact that markets always do fail—it is only a matter of degrees—the problem with this model of order that disregards culture is that such an order shows up in the end-product only because it has been built into the assumptions. If influence and complexity are introduced into the moment of choice, if we also introduce an interest that people have in the choices others make (an externality with profound implications), the iron logic connecting choice and welfare is broken and the free-market Pareto optimum is revealed as a practical irrelevancy. Even if it were accepted by one and all as the right standard for a best outcome, it would be made irrelevant by market failures; but the deeper irrelevancy comes because only economists and their minions are known to actually hold this standard, and at that, only when they are writing or lecturing. (The same is true for any standard introduced *a priori*.) Markets still produce an order, to be sure, but there is nothing establishing it as a best or even a pretty good order. What is lacking is a common standard against which to compare the outcome.

Here, with the problem of standards, is where the cultural issues flood in. For, how is it possible to conceive of a standard that will be agreed upon? "Out of the frying pan and into the fire," if the problem now becomes the presence or absence of a cultural consensus. It is well known that, in a reaction to Parsons and similar theorists who emphasized normative order, a profound skepticism over the sharedness of value standards, and in general over the sharedness of meanings, gave rise to many of the gyrations and permutations of postwar theory, including cultural theory (Alexander 1987).[2] This doubt, if validated, makes the project of welfare economics impossible. Then we are back to a condition of automatic market forces,[3] only this time without any invisible hand, the grounds for agreement revoked, no possibility of a collective standard for best outcomes—in effect signaling a triumph of structure over meaning, unintended outcomes over intended ones.

What is it, however, that needs to be held in common in order to establish a common standard? If consensus means agreement over everything, we can give up right away. Parsons, of course, was only talking about consensus at the "level" of values, values that have a generality of reference that tends to expand as more and more divergent particular interests are brought together. That was the brilliance of his conception, the mixture of sameness and difference at different levels of abstraction. To define a best allocation, however, attention is also due to the sym-

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bolic structures linking specific outcomes with general outcomes: that is, "pasta," "pianos," "playing cards," and "pornography" with an idea such as "plenty." That is a micro-macro link in the realm of meaning.

This question of the sharedness of culture continues to be either the central problem or a key presupposition of cultural theory. If Parsons short-circuited the question by an oversimplification of values and norms as he brought them into his social-structural framework (see Alexander, 1990)—a criticism that now seems obvious, following the revolution in micro-level analyses of interpretation and intention—it cannot be said that the question of consensus was resolved in the negative. On the contrary, the resolution appears to be more complex: sharedness is always and by everyone doubtable in principle. How it is resolved in particular circumstances—Are we agreed or not?—is determined by the nature of the human purposes that give rise to doubt in the first place. We owe Mead, Wittgenstein, Schütz, and Garfinkel for this insight. It means that science is saddled in a permanent way with this doubt over the sharedness of standards, because doubt is essential to our purpose; but looking outside of science, science can, within the limits of its doubt, say whether or not people *are doubting that meanings are shared.* That is a distinction we can work with! Cultural theory can say what people are doing in a symbolic sense, provided it has a set of analytical categories that captures the symbolic code used to do things such as doubt—or approve of an allocative outcome. That sends us to look for consensus of use within the details of a cultural structure. We need a hermeneutics of welfare, a semiotics of welfare, a narrative or rhetorical theory of welfare.

When standards are cultural, when they are not, in the manner of economists using their Pareto optimum, artificially introduced as *a priori*, exogenous criteria, economic welfare becomes a pattern of symbolic associations made by and of some group, between representations of the material outcome of allocation and representations of approval or disapproval. A best outcome, as a system of ideas that people hold, refers to the way goods are attended to. Important kinds of improvement on outcome are opened to consideration. Improvement can come about by a reallocation of material goods that people notice, or by a reallocation of noticing without any reallocation of material goods. Some will read this as a fast track toward pie-in-the-sky palliatives; but I do not want to make policy, only the point that palliatives, good reasons, symbolic distraction, interpretive revenge and other moral accounts of outcome are not only possible but ever-present and consequential.

A cultural theory of welfare consists of several parts: (1) a set of analytical structures that define the general ways that culture exists, for example as signs, associations, binary oppositions, rhetorical forms, language games, purposes, etc.; (2) an account of the more particular ways that allocation and approval are represented, including (a) the structural possibilities for representing goods, forms of control, and controlling parties, and (b) a more empirically informed (i.e., as of yet undiscovered) account of the patterns of attentional shifting, the "structures of relevance" that pertain to allocation and associations of approval or disapproval; and (3) most crucial, a theory of the combinatorial logic that defines a best outcome. The goal is to identify conditions for maximal approval of allocation, given a complexity of interests and more generally of perspectives that makes disapproval likely.

To this end, I believe I can identify some of the most important parameters within which the combinatorial logic works. First of all, there are the cultural signs and forms that call out *agreement and disagreement* as relevant ends in themselves, structures that link the situation of seeing an outcome to the self and to solidarity, and which incidentally produce such possibilities as "agreeing but disagreeing," agreeing with reservations intoned, or disagreeing for spite. These bear on the formation of consensus.

Second is the cultural availability of *insight* into human purposes, a portion of the cultural code that identifies why it is that people have and want things—what they want things for, including uses, projects, and biographical reasons for the wanting. Next, and closely related, there are the signs and forms of *privacy* and *tolerance*. In the Parsonsian lexicon these are values; but in a more deeply cultural sense they are patterned ways of bringing symbols together or holding them apart, of shifting perspectives, of symbolically abasing self to create a meaning, and the like. Together these three parameters, insight, privacy, and tolerance, bear on the domain of allocation attentions that are open to approval or disapproval. It is also helpful to conceive of their obverse, the aspects of allocation that are unattended to, and further, to distinguish between *structured inattention*, when attention is possible but undesirable or simply taken for granted, and *unstructured inattention*, when the cultural code is altogether silent. There is meaning in avoiding a representation; when the representation is void there is no meaning, but the boundary between what can and what cannot be represented is in itself important.

The final parameter I can identify is the *generalization/specification* distinction mentioned earlier, which addresses how much of the world is brought to attention, or made closely relevant, within a situation of noticing allocation. Approving or disapproving a specific outcome, within a situation, involves less of a moral "by-your-leave" than a categorical judgment. The availability of generalized significance, i.e., the relative amount of work involved in bringing out the broader meaning of an allocation, and in controlling the meaning of having made a generalized reference, bears on the movement of attentions within the attentional event. The generalization of meaning is dangerous from the standpoint of agreement, but the rewards are greater insofar as the standards embodied in the event organize more of reality, and make other allocations, past, present, and future, more fully recognizable.

The relevance of these parameters to best outcomes is not clear until they are fit together into a set of interrelationships. At this time I can only suggest a few:

1. The more attention paid to allocation outcomes, the greater the problem of agreement. Inattention avoids the problems of agreement or approval.

2. The more numerous the claims of insight into purposes, the greater the problem of agreement. Lack of insight—either structured or unstructured inattention—reduces the problem of agreement.

3. Insight is a symbolic vehicle for generalization, which increases the relevance of approval or disapproval for an outcome. Lack of insight limits the kinds and scope of generalization that can be made.

4. Insofar as they substitute for insight, the signs and forms of tolerance and privacy reduce the problem of agreement.

5. The signs and forms of tolerance and privacy serve as a generalized basis of approval. There is a trade-off, however, in that a more specific level of disapproval can readily coexist with them, which can have its own alternative directions of generalization. This is a limit on the capacity of tolerance and privacy to reduce the problem of agreement.

This combinatorial logic is just part of a cultural theory of economic welfare. It presupposes a more detailed account of themes and forms of attention to allocation. This is where links to more social-structural theories are located, especially when accounting for "reality" in the symbolic formation of purposes.

If I am right, however, a fuller understanding of these relationships, and probably a longer and somewhat altered set of parameters, would establish one set of conditions for a best outcome; i.e., a "consensus" of "approval" for an outcome. They are not standards in the usual sense of a set of rules for ordering already identified preferences. They are standards that order the circumstances within which preferring is done. As in economics, they do not define in a specific way what it is that people want but only how what people want can be arranged differently—now, though, not a material rearrangement but a symbolic one.

I believe that sociology can make such claims without adopting any normative position of its own. This is brazen, because economics, early on, took the same view of its Pareto optimum, then had to retreat. Still, the norms in this cultural theory of best outcomes are all norms of the group in question. Not that everything in the theory is within the awareness of the group. There are unintended patterns among the attentions, regulated by a cultural logic that is inherently collective, surpassing awareness and escaping efforts at control. But these unawares elements are not prescriptions that the theory makes. I have tried to be careful to use passive verbs when discussing changes in outcome. Change is an abstract possibility: the point here is not to advocate policies of change. That does not contradict the earlier injunction to be helpful but I am not arguing for a "rational reconstruction of society." Crude institutional changes are imaginable—laws regulating advertisement are an example. The attentional consequences of instrumented change are notoriously unpredictable, however, particularly because the instrumentation itself has meaning that must be, yet often cannot be, controlled.

It is because of complexity that a *theory* of these cultural standards is needed; it is because consensus in the straightforward sense is not present that the elaborate structure of shifting attentions becomes relevant. The only possibility of having complexity and also good outcomes is that, in the elaborate dance of noticings, approval will come out to be the predominant theme. This is to be a theory about why that might occur, and about what, in a cultural sense, might prevent it from occurring.

NOTES

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[1] The exception, perhaps, is Habermas's ideal speech situation.

[2] For a discussion of some of these permutations in cultural theory, see Rambo and Chan 1990.

[3] Another possibility is dictatorial control. But how is *that* coordinated without a standard among the powerful?

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White on Language and Culture

(continued from page 1)

portrays through discourse among and about some very New York culture types (including a nude male hustler). Perhaps also networks and their local culture are shaped in and by the particular registers of speech and grammars of reference.

A Paradigm Shift

I see three changes that surely combine into a paradigm shift in linguistics. Let me sketch them. Then I shall work through three case studies of language networks in socio-cultural change, to complement Guare's brilliant evocation of cosmopolitan change and language networks.

Change I. Pragmatics of socio-cultural action replace the semantics of reference as central. Interactive discourse, the daily use of language, written and spoken—surely over

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White on Language and Culture (from page 7)

97% of the total—replaces the formal set piece, be it oration or essay, so beloved as focus by the grammarian of old. Sociability is the prime concern in discourse, and its prime use, according to the great burst of sociolinguistic research of the 1980s. That former cynosure, the sentence, is displaced by chunks of language both shorter or longer (cf. Gumperz 1982; Halliday *et al.* 1964; Halliday 1978).

Change II. Grammaticalization replaces grammar as probe beneath the endlessly irregular surface patterns of language. Convolutions frozen in cross-sections give way to a few incisive processes of re-articulation. Language is seen to deepen itself as a system for representing and also constituting action over time, but only with much leaching of referential meaning. For example in English 'do' and 'will' and 'while' and 'of' and a host of other words become mere lexical items, indicators for structure of much greater sophistication (cf. Hopper and Traugott 1993).

Change III. Multilingualism describes a socio-cultural battlefield in a political economy rather than merely an objective mapping of ingrained habits. France tries to count but one language within itself (Lodge 1993), whereas the Cameroons acknowledge 200 or so. Dialects shade into languages. And persons use discourse above all as a way to construe and endlessly reconstruct reality (Garfinkel 1968; Stryker 1990). Collectively and individually we are endlessly committed to making sense of all discourse, and we carry this over into daily multilingualism (cf. Gal 1979; Milroy 1987).

Sociability is paradoxical and, as a result, discourse is and must be ambiguous. Speech is for assertion of identity, and thus speech is used to achieve inclusion into a social identity shared as a form of speech in common. But speech is thereby one's own property, which is also for exclusion by secrecy of others from own speech. Yet one's identity shapes speech with claims about precedence and honor vis a vis others during discourse. The resulting ambiguity of discourse makes it all the more valuable in providing indicators and measures of social organization and change.

These perspectives fit into a new overall approach. First, viewed cross-sectionally, society and language each reflect a particular mixture of modes of discourse which are distinguished by their social strandings: these are REGISTER of occupational enclave, STYLE of social class, DIALECT of generalized neighborhood. Language emerges from and changes through their cumulations, whose interactions get summarized over time in the form of grammars.

Then second, when the new approach is considered diachronically, abrupt disjunctions and ratchets are found to be crucial along with previously emphasized smooth evolutions (cf. Gould 1977). Live utterances do come as much from strategic ploys by actors as from habits (cf. Grimshaw 1990). Honor counts as much as convenience, and both give way to assertion and discovery of identity. So strategy shapes and is shaped in grammars, including larger syntactic and textual regularities, as well as in lexicon and accent.

Case Studies

Turn now to extended examples.

Oberwart discourse. Anthropologist Susan Gal (1978: 135) reports a matrix array of speech used by 32 men and women in a bilingual community in Austria, whom she interviewed during intensive 1974 fieldwork. I turn to this bilingual study because a much greater effort is required to pin down distinctions among registers and styles than among languages or even dialects, even though the new sociolinguistics argues that analogous results will be found in monolingual communities.

Each entry of H in the matrix is for use of Hungarian in the situation reported in that column, by the speaker reported in the row), and similarly for German. Essentially all the town residents are bilingual, though Hungarian is the predominant ethnicity. The rows and columns have been repeatedly permuted and switched around so as to bring out a clear pattern of variation across the whole matrix array. The resulting pattern is close to a perfect Guttman scale. It induces a line-up of speakers, rows, roughly in order of increasing age, from 14 to 74.

The columns designate not particular individuals as hearers, as the rows do speakers, but rather the types of interlocutor situation. The column array from left to right proves to be in increasing order of social distance and formality. Leftmost, not surprisingly, is God (as object of prayer and meditation), then the grandparents and their generation, then parents and their generation, and on through pals, siblings, spouses and on to children's generation and finally, in the right-most column, the doctor for this village on the Hungarian border. In inferring increasing formality, and in noting the rough ordering by age, one is hypothesizing a great deal about this culture and its possible change over time—or sociocultural effects of age.

In going across a row, the more socially distant the interlocutor, the more German is used. In going down a column, the older the speaker, the more Hungarian is used. These points help establish the greater prestige of German, its modernity in the eyes of all, with Hungarian being for peasants. There is choice between the two languages only in certain cells, cells which reliably tend toward the middle both of that row and of that column.

These mixed cells are the occasions for choice, for strategy and maneuver. Where it is children being interlocuted by parents, typically the language of discipline is German. The third column reports black-market discussions (not Mafia style, rather regulation and tax evasion in an informal economy of trading favors). Here 11 of the twelve who indulge, do so exclusively in Hungarian.

I now focus on the rows for G (Janos Vonatos) and for U (Sandos Acs). Both are of Hungarian ethnicity, aged about 40, employed as foremen, with wives not working, and they are also similar in other major social attributes such as education. Both are bilingual but choose entirely

differently. Only with his grandparents does Janos use Hungarian exclusively, and he makes it an option only with his parents out of the full range of eleven sorts of interlocutors (columns). By contrast Sandos uses Hungarian exclusively except for, sometimes, with his children (indeed when hectoring them).

The explanation is the difference between the respective networks of social ties in which they build their lives. Sandos and his wife live close to active peasants, including in-laws and Sandos frequents a pub and shops where Hungarian discourse and peasant concerns bulk prominent. Janos, by contrast, lives far from in-laws, is proud of his skilled work with the State railroad and talks German even with his Hungarian colleagues there. He doesn't enter the network of informal, illicit black-market, off-the-records trading of goods and services in which Sandos is active. Fellows in networks exert more control over each others' linguistic presentation of self than do abstractions like social class.

Variation in New York. William Labov, in his pioneering Columbia thesis from three decades ago (see Fishman 1972; Gumperz and Hymes 1986), showed that Manhattanites shared a folk theory of speech as being an indicator of social class. Labov showed how their Manhattan speech was a composite of dialects special to particular social fractions who yet shared overall valuations of the different grammatical forms, as well as accents, even as they differed in comfort and skill in using them. Labov diagrams the decline in percentage of one pronunciation of a consonant according to the social class of the speaker, even though the social context is kept the same.

Labov shows variation by class of speaker, which is a complement to Gal's results for variation in language by context. His findings on grammar in speech can also be illustrated in other settings (Lieberson 1970) and by studies of personal writing (cf. Shuman 1986).

Multilingualism and creoles. We can look at a whole continent as a case study of multilingualism. In Australia some two thousand Aborigine languages evolved over ten thousand years on their own. Dixon and his co-workers (1983) have recently shown us the persistence of overlapping Aborigine languages-dialects in remote corners. Bands of a few hundred people coalesced for a while in campsites in one region have a distinct dialect, which they proudly claim as their property. Yet each takes wives from some other distinct band, and the resulting children use one parental language for a period and then change to the other parent's. There is an etiquette for visiting with in-laws, which sounds like what Gal reports for Hungarian and German in that sleepy border town (and see Braun 1988). Somewhat parallel results are reported for Africa (cf. Brenzinger 1992), overlapping disjunctions in space.

Disjunction in language over time is best illustrated on a large scale by the formation of creoles. The best studied are the Atlantic creoles as byproduct of the enslavement and forced transfer of Africans by Europeans to the Americas (Holm 1988). Typically persons from diverse and even remote language groups were enslaved together. The eventual results have been an enormous array of creole languages that reflect universal fresh-start language formation, arguably, as well as European lexicon(s) and mixtures of substrate grammars. Much in the distribution and structure of the array of creoles reflects various cultural and social contexts (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985).

But pidgin seems the more likely context in which to find strong causal impetus from language form to sociocultural pattern. Pidgin can be defined as a language which is no one's mother tongue. It may lead to ensuing formation of creoles among children, or it may start and remain a trade jargon, or it may graduate into a full-fledged language as in Papua New Guineau (Holm 1988).

Conclusion

The seismic changes that ushered in modernity in the West a few centuries ago also ushered in the social sciences as part of efforts to understand and cope with the changes. These changes can now be formulated as a new topology for interpenetration among social networks, and among language registers, as new grammars of language and society describing newly sophisticated social organization, organization which offers enhanced mobility and flexibility. Careful measurement and analysis thus are needed. To the social network side (cf. Boyd 1991; Freeman, White and Romney 1989; Hummon and Doreian 1989; Pattison 1993; Wasserman and Faust 1993; Wellman 1992) is now added a new power in linguistics and semiotics (cf. e.g. deJoia and Stenton 1980; Dowty 1979; Duncan 1972; Harris 1991; Higgins 1982; Johannson and Hofland 1989; Krauss 1981; Scherer and Giles 1979). We seek to trace how individual ties form localities within larger, complex situations. My own current research seeks such a recasting: I am tracing how new patterns and types of disjunction in speech and action go with and into distinctive patterns of modernity in identities and their realities.

Artificial, clean new languages, for computers or cryptographers or the like, are very unlike natural discourse in language which relies and builds on ambiguities. What we perceive as language and society are each but a shimmering envelope cast up by concrete processes of writing and speech. Language and society are revealed as but dual ideologies, each enabling the other.

NOTE

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Books of Note

Richard A. Peterson, Vanderbilt University

Griswold, Wendy. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. A well-written text rich in examples that shows the strengths of both the ethnographic and the humanities-rooted, the value-free and the distinction-making, definitions of culture. Questions of meaning, creativity, production, reception, definition-of-situation, cultural organizations, boundary-making, technology, and global culture are all fairly discussed.

Brummett, Barry. *Rhetoric in Popular Culture*. New York: St. Martins. Thoughtful introduction to "reading" the taken-for-granted artifacts of culture all around us. Good development of concepts and alternative theoretical-ideological schemes for interpretation; rich with comprehensible illustrations and suggested exercises. Examples are drawn from everyday activities, movies, tv, local [Milwaukee] race relations news, advertisements, but not, alas, from music.

Kalberg, Stephen. *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology*. University of Chicago Press. While the whole of Weber's sociology, Kalberg argues, can be seen as an effort to keep culture central in sociological analysis, recent comparative-historical sociologists from Moore to Skocpol have largely ignored the force of culture. He shows Weber's multi-causal conception of comparative-historical analysis.

Hart, Stephen. *What Does the Lord Require? How American Christians Think About Economic Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press. Using surveys and 47 extensive interviews with Christians, Hart shows that equally authentic appropriations of Christian faith are used to support liberal, radical, and conservative economic views on economic issues. Religious traditionalists are not more economically conservative than modernists, but Christian values are less conservative on economic issues than are secular values.

Stivers, Richard. *The Culture of Cynicism: American Morality in Decline*. New York: Blackwell. The pursuit of the mystical values of success, happiness, and health, Stivers argues, has produced a pervasive corrosive culture of cynicism. Everyday life is reduced to an empty struggle for power and satisfaction leading to boredom, anxiety, addiction, divorce and susceptibility to religious cults. Stivers asserts that neither liberal or conservative commentators on America's moral decline have grasped that American morality itself is the source of this decline.

Sacks, Howard L. and Judith Rose Sacks. *Way Up North in Dixie: A Black Family's Claim to the Confederate Anthem*. Blue Ridge Summit, PA: Smithsonian Institution Press. Move over White Ice, move over Elvis, move over Paul Whiteman. The authors trace the evidence showing that an Ohio African American family, the Snowdens, created "Dixie," the song that was to became the anthem of the Confederate Sates of America and the center of controversy since.

Gibson, James William. *Warrior Dreams: Paramilitary Culture in Post-Vietnam America*. Kirkwood, NY: Putnam Publishing Group. The shame of defeat in Vietnam, the waxing of feminism, and minority group claims gave birth in the 1970s to a reactionary new war culture designed to make America "well again." Gibson shows the importance of the appearance, in 1975, of the magazine *Soldier of Fortune*. It provided technical information, helped consolidate a value system, and provided a point of contact for persons wanting the services of hitmen and military adventurers. Gibson discusses paintball, combat pistol shooting, techno-fix weaponry, Government use of paramilitary groups, gun-control as symbolic politics—all an agenda for a North Presidency.

Lubell, Winifred Milius. *The Metamorphosis of Baubo: Myths of Woman's Sexual Energy*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press. Lubell recounts the story of this pivotal mythological character, who she finds in a surprising variety of cultural settings. Baubo's distinctively bawdy pattern of joking and gesturing represents a universal expression of fundamental female energy, graphically symbolized in the vulva, and the power to restore order and balance to nature. Men, fearing her power, used their control of religious mythmaking to reconfigure Baubo as a witch.

Santiago-Valles, Kelvin A. *"Subject People" and Colonial Discourses: Economic Transformation and Social Disorder in Puerto Rico, 1898-1947*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. Critically drawing on recent theorizations of post-structuralism, feminism, critical criminology, subaltern studies, and postcoloniality, Santiogo-Valles draws on evidence from Puerto Rico's past to show how colonial subjects are represented as subordinate. The key concept is "otherness."

Kohn, Al and Bob Kohn. *The Art of Music Licensing*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Law and Business. This is an eloquent 1,126 page discourse on how to ensure that song in its ever more diverse formats becomes corporate property.

The French Journal of Communication. London: John Libbey and Company, Ltd. Yes, this is a journal and not a book, but worth noting nonetheless. It provides in English a selection of the best articles from the French Journal of Communication, *Reseaux*.

Westwood Becomes a Major Player in Culture

Gross, Larry, editor. *On the Margins of Art World*. The authors of these well researched articles explore the basic question, what is art and who gets to decide?

Hoynes, William. *Public Television for Sale: Media, the Market, and the Public Sphere*. Things are no better on the "public" channel. Because programs need commercial underwriting and funders demand large audiences, public television is increasingly falling prey to privatization. Hoynes' bases his assertion in a careful comparison of PBS's McNeil/Leher NewsHour and ABC's Nightline.

Assiter, Alison and Avedon Carol, editors. *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures: The Challenge to Reclaim Feminism*. The authors critique pornography-effects studies, anti-pornography politics, and the construction of women as weak and in need of censoring protectors.

Griggin, Gabriele, editor. *Outwrite: Lesbianism and Popular Culture*. The authors analyze books, movies, and singers that are enjoyed by large lesbian audiences to show how lesbians encode and interpret texts.

Rubenstein, Ruth P. *Dress Codes: Meanings and Messages in American Culture*. A semiotics of clothing that reveals images of power, gender, seduction, youth, health, and the political hierarchy. Rich with images.

Jacobson, Michael and Laurie Mazur. *Marketing Madness: What Commercialism is Doing to Our Culture*. The authors show that commercialism is pervasive (the British Boy Scouts sell ad space on their merit badges) and effective (sales of Reeses Pieces increased 66% after being gobbled by the lovable movie alien ET). They are less clear on what it is doing to our culture.

Savigliano, Marta. *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion: From Exoticism to Decolonization*. Beyond dance, music, and lyrics, tango is seen as a world view that has moved from the brothels of Buenos Aires to the "shako dansu" clubs of Tokyo. What began as resistance to Catholic prudery has become a third-world motif of resistance to Western universalism.

O'Barr, William M. *Culture and the Ad: Exploring Otherness in the World of Advertising*. Over a hundred images help to illustrate how "natives" have been conceptualized as "other" from advertisements in the 1929 *National Geographic* to contemporary tourist brochures.

Gerbner, George, Hamid Mowlana, and Herbert Schiller, editors. *Invisible Crises*. The authors show that the mass media purposefully ignore or distort major human issues including the corruption of the electoral process, promotion of dangerous products, the drift toward ecological suicide, and the emasculation of public education that, if portrayed, would pose unacceptable challenges to the structures of cultural power.

Andersen, Robin K. *Consumer Culture and TV Programming*. Andersen questions the efficacy of democracy in a society in which all mass-media disseminated information is tampered with by commercial interests.

Acland, Charles Reid. *Youth, Murder, Spectacle: The Cultural Politics of "Youth in Crisis"*. Acland shows how a new generation of "wasted youth" is constructed in network news, TV talk shows, and contemporary movies. What about the self-destruction of rock-stars?

Jowett, Garth S. and Ian Gordon. *The Funnies and Beyond: Critical Essays on the First Hundred Years of Comics in America*. The "Yellow Kid" first appeared on the

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Books of Note (from page 11)

pages of the *New York World* just a hundred years ago. Ranging across this wide span, the authors focus on selected issues of genre formation and reformation, censorship, war, propaganda, gender, ethnicity, family, and the like.

Seventeen from Routledge

Jenks, Chris. *Culture*. Jenks defines culture in the context of idealism and materialism, locating it in relationship to the notion of social structure. He also discusses high vs. low culture, cultural reproduction and culture in the context of post-modernism.

Baudrillard, Jean. *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*. All distinctions are blurred in the age following what Baudrillard calls the "orgy" of the 1960s. The sexual revolution has lead, he argues, not to human liberation but to a reign of transvestitism in the Frankensteinian appeal of Michael Jackson.

Gane, Mike, editor. *Baudrillard Live: Selected Interviews*. Like so many of France's leading intellectuals, Baudrillard, the "father of postmodernism," resolutely characterizes himself as an outsider. These interviews, set in an easy flowing style, help to illuminate Baudrillard's often difficult prose.

Rojek, Chris and Bryan Turner, editors. *Forget Baudrillard?* To the book title's question, the authors answer, "No chance!" Baudrillard is celebrated as "unquestionably the biggest phenomenon in sociology and cultural studies in the last five years."

Aronowitz, Stanley. *Dead Artists, Live Theories, and Other Cultural Problems*. Aronowitz touches a number of interesting points in this series of essays. Along the way he argues that aesthetics serves to preserve a hierarchal system of cultural and economic privilege. He also insists that even "bad" literature can provide insights into everyday life better than many social science studies because art does not more or less "represent" the life-world. It is constitutive of it.

Apple, Michael W. *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age*. Apple sees a powerful rightist resurgence in American education. He details the incursion of business interests into the public school curriculum.

Weinstein, Deena, and Michael W. Weinstein. *Postmodern(ized) Simmel*. The Weinsteins illustrate the myriad ways in which Georg Simmel's ideas can inform current work by linking it to the work of Derrida, Levi-Strauss, and Foucault.

Turner, Stephen and Dirk Kasler, editors. *Sociology Responds to Fascism*. The authors explore the extent that sociologists of various stripes, including members of the Frankfurt School, participated in the Nazi regime. The book examines the historical record of sociology in Germany, Austria, Italy, Hungary, the US and the UK.

Synnott, Anthony. *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society*. Seeing the human body as a cultural construct, Synnott shows how it has been reconceptualized in each passing age.

Kennedy, Elizabeth Lapovsky and Madeline Davis. *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community*. The authors trace the evolution of the working-class lesbian community of Buffalo, New York from the mid-1930s through the early 1960s.

Hockenos, Paul. *Free to Hate: The Rise of the Right in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*. Based on his interviews with leading young Eastern European communist right-wingers, Hockenos shows the need for a thorough reworking of our conventional Western notions of "right" and "left" political theories.

Feinberg, Walter. *Japan and the Pursuit of a New American Identity: Work and Education in a Multicultural Age*. Feinberg explodes the fashionable notion that Japanese ways of working and education are appropriate models for the U.S.

Craik, Jennifer. *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion*. Focusing on supermodels, cosmetics, and men's fashons, Craik examines the many-faceted "beauty" industry.

Coats, A.W. *The Sociology and Professionalization of Economics*. In this major set of essays in the sociology of economics, Coates shows the cultural assumptions underpinning "the dismal science."

Jenks, Chris, editor. *Cultural Reproduction*. Critics have generally seen Bordieuian "reproduction" in a negative light, but the authors pursue alternative possibilities for regeneration and synthesis through reproduction.

Chaney, David. *Fictions of Collective Life: Public Drama in Late Modern Culture*. From public hangings and royal processions to sporting events and tourist attractions, Chaney distills English national culture.

Lewis, Lisa A., editor. *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*. The articles contain many detailed descriptions of the autoproduction of culture.

Rutgers: Pick Your Decade Starlovers

McCann, Graham. *Rebel Males: Clift, Brando and Dean*. 1950s drive-in rebels without causes.

Jezer, Marty. *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel*. The made-for-TV news 60s model. A cautionary tale for both left and right.

Jeffords, Susan. *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era*. From *Rambo*, *Lethal Weapon*, *Die Hard*, *Robocop*, *Back to the Future*, *Star Wars*, the Indiana Jones series, *Mississippi Burning*, *Rain Man*, *Batman*, and the *Unforgiven*, Jeffords shows the evolving image of masculinity in the 1980s.

Smodin, Eric. *Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era*. And for the 30s, and without the inconvenience of human actors. . . . Smodin's analysis of movie cartoons and his discussion of Walt Disney and the Disney studio's close ties to conservative elements in the U.S. government show the place of cartoons in US political and cultural life.

Seiter, Ellen. *Sold Separately: Parents and Children in Consumer Culture*. Barbie and her male "action toy" counterparts, Seiter argues, allow children to create and control a social world beyond themselves and in the process to learn gender roles and the American way.

Franklin, H. Bruce. *M.I.A. or Mythmaking in America*. Franklin traces the role of Ross Perot and the Reagan administration in fostering the idea that many Americans are still being held prisoner in Vietnam. Read on.

Gruner, Elliott. *Prisoners of Culture: Representing the Vietnam P.O.W.* Elliott examines how POW mythology emerged from American legends going back to the colonial period, and how the media and the government have portrayed prisoners of war in the past, and how the Vietnam war POW, in particular, became a prisoner of agendas set by others for their own political and economic purposes.

Ten Penguins

Galbraith, John Kenneth. *A Short History of Financial Euphoria*. Reviewing financial bubbles of the past three centuries, Galbraith shows how the lessons of history might help us avoid financial calamity and, in the process, he demonstrates that money and intelligence are not necessarily linked.

Kempers, Bram. *Painting, Power, and Patronage*. Kempers shows why and how the status of the professional artist arose in Renaissance Italy.

Ashe, Arthur R. Jr. *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete in One Volume*. Ashe traces the evolving position of African-American athletes, their role in attaining human rights, and the emancipation of their fellows athletes.

Barret-Ducrocq, Francoise. *Love in the Time of Victoria: Sexuality and Desire Among Working-Class Men and Women in Nineteenth-Century London*. This work provides unprecedented access to the sexual attitudes of poor working women and their efforts to cope with pregnancy and motherhood.

Kramer, Peter. *Listening to Prozac: A Psychiatrist Explores Anti-Depressant Drugs and the Remaking of the Self*. The title tells it all, and it's not funny!

Rifkin, Jeremy. *Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture*. Yes, this is about culture in both senses, as cultivation and as a symbol system. Rifkin argues that cattle culture creates environmental degradation, economic exploitation, and cruelty to animals.

Abrahams, Roger D. *Singing the Master: The Emergence of African American Culture in the Plantation South*. The book traces the evolution of improvised songs that praised hard work and team spirit while satirizing whites.

Arlen, Michael. *Thirty Seconds*. Arlen traces the two years of work, millions of dollars, and 10,000 feet of film that went into making a thirty-second TV commercial for AT&T.

Stanley, Lawrence A., editor. *RAP, the Lyrics: The Words to Rap's 175 Greatest Hits*. For what it's worth, here are the words stripped of beat, inflection, accent, gestures, and look. Yo.

McNeil, Alex. *Total Television: A Comprehensive Guide to Programming from 1948 to the Present*. Each of over 4,700 series receives from one paragraph to several pages.

Sage's Four

Gannon, Martin J. *Understanding Global Cultures: Metaphorical Journeys Through 17 Countries*. Designed to be the perfect primer for the globe-trotting omnivore exec. There are chapters on German symphony, Russian ballet, Belgian lace, Turkish coffeehouses, Spanish bullfights, Chinese family altars, etc.

Faure, Guy Olivier and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, editors. *Culture and Negotiation: The Resolution of Water Disputes*. Case studies of fights over rights to water and waterways drawn from Europe, Africa, the Near East, and Asia show the wide range of culturally structured expectations about the process of negotiation.

Fineman, Stephen, editor. *Emotion in Organizations*. This anthology explores the ways in which issues of emotion permeate central themes of organizational analysis.

Hofstede, Geert. *Uncommon Sense about Organizations: Cases, Studies, and Field Observations*. A major foray of ethnographic anthropologists into complex organizations.

John Libbey's Three

Tabernero, Alfonso Sanchez. *Media Concentration in Europe: Commercial Enterprise and the Public Interest*. Television which until recently was controlled by national public monopolies is being privatized and internationalized. As Tabernero shows, a few multinationals are now using the strategies of vertical and horizontal integration to gain control of this vast European market, transforming TV and with it public discourse in Europe.

Mitchell, Jeremy and Jay G. Blumler, editors. *Television and the Viewer Interest*. This is a comparative analysis of how TV broadcasters take into account the needs and interests of viewers, what governments require, and how broadcasters respond. Chapters are devoted to each of 12 countries.

Pragnell, Anthony, editor. *Opening up the Media 1983-93*. The authors examine the changing role of radio and television in a number of European countries facing the challenges of deregulation, commercialization, and competition.

Five from the University of Illinois

Smith, Ronald A., editor. *Big-Time Football at Harvard, 1905: The Diary of Coach Bill Reid*. Don't laugh. Bill Reid, then 26, was enticed to Harvard by a salary higher than that of any faculty member. His mission: beat Yale. He kept a diary detailing how he went about his task: entries reveal inducements to promising recruits, spying on other teams, requiring students to cut classes, providing tutors, pressuring faculty to give passing grades, hiding the severity of injuries to keep players on the field, etc. What, no product endorsements?

Morgan, William J. *Leftist Theories of Sport: A Critique and Reconstruction*. Morgan proposes a post-leftist critical reevaluation of the place of sport in American society centered in the logical integrity of sport itself and of the "sporting practice communities."

Weisman, Leslie Kanes. *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment*. This is an account of the force of male dominance in the architecture and the built environment. Weisman offers ways of redesigning space to foster gender equality.

Cook, Susan C. and Judy S. Tsou. *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*. The authors suggest how gender has helped to shape compositional forms and musical genres. Cecilia was a fifteenth-century Christian martyr since considered the patron saint of music.

Wright, John. *Traveling the High Way Home: Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional Bluegrass Music*. In a series of chapters devoted to interviews of people who have known Ralph Stanley over the years, Wright shows the character and working style of the man who, along with Bill Monroe has anchored the traditional end of acoustic commercial country music.

Three from University Press of America

Fogo, Fred. *I Read the News Today: The Social Drama of John Lennon's Death*. Fogo suggests that present day conflicts can be understood as the sixties generation's way of making sense of its collective experience.

Green, Arnold W. *The Nature of Morality*. Back to basics. Green argues that stan-

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Books of Note (from page 13)

dards of conduct can be inculcated only in the context of the traditional family.

Rojek, Chris. *Ways of Escape: Modern Transformation in Leisure and Travel.* Rojek sees how leisure and pleasure have been managed since the Middle Ages.

Seven from Bowling Green State University Popular Press

Chen, Ann Cooper. *Games in the Global Village.* Chen reports a 50-nation study of the forms and content of game-shows on television around the wold. This simple format is amazingly diverse in content.

Curtis, Sandra R. *Alice and Eleanor: A Contrast in Style and Purpose.* Curtis focuses on two cousins who played crucial roles in the two Roosevelt administrations. Alice Roosevelt Longworth was Teddy Roosevelt's daughter and close confidant who regularly reported to him from the Senate gallery. While Alice was vivacious and outgoing, the shy and bookish Eleanor came to politics from her concern for social justice.

Hummel, Richard. *Hunting and Fishing for Sport: Commerce, Controversy, Popular Culture.* Hummel shows the evolving standards of "fare play" in "sport" hunting and fishing as technologies for locating and killing have burgeoned while the stock of quarry has diminished.

Robinson, Douglas. *No Less a Man: Masculinist Transformations in Post-Feminist Popular Culture.* Robinson explores the profeminist men's movement and its emancipatory ideology. Following Joseph Campbell's three stages of the hero myth, form Herbert Spencer through Rambo to Bruce Springstein. Go figure.

Cunningham, Patricia A. and Susan Voso Lab. *Dress in American Culture.* Not to be confused with the editors 1991 *Dress and American Culture*, this volume focuses on the ways in which early American clothing was adapted both to the pressing constraints of the environment and to the political, cultural, religious, and ethnic beliefs of early groups of settlers.

Kassel, Michael. *America's Favorite Radio Station: WKRP in Cincinnati.* Kassel chronicles the program makers' uphill struggle to obtain prime-time success and explores the reasons why the program went on to become a classic TV sitcom and syndication cash-cow.

Moore, Jack B. *Skinheads Shaved for Battle: A Cultural History of American Skinheads.* Moore shows that what began as a minor element of 1970s Brit punk became, with media facilitation, a major American movement in the 1980s.

Three by Aldine de Gruyter

Zey, Mary. *Banking on Fraud: Drexel, Junk Bonds and Buyouts.* Fascinating study of the industry structure and values that make Michael Milikens predictable.

Sanders, William B. *Gangbangs and Drivebys: Grounded Culture and Juvenile Gang Violence.* An ethnographic study twelve years in the making shows the dynamics of contemporary youth-gang life.

Sapir, Edward. *The Psychology of Culture: A Course of Lectures.* Sapir has been dead for over fifty years but his ideas on linguistics are still influential. This volume, gleaned from twenty-two sets of student notes, brings together for the first time the central elements of his work.

From the Chair: *Paul DiMaggio*

(continued from back cover)

Historians and other humanists are less inhibited than we sociologists about characterizing the grand sweep of social change. I organized my seminar around three popular unifying themes: the emergence of cultural hierarchy, "consumer culture," and postmodernism. Work by historians in the first two areas and books on postmodernism by other humanists (as well some first-rate sociological treatments, of which I've found Scott Lash's *Sociology of Postmodernism* especially helpful) is effective in getting undergraduates to think critically about American culture and society. It also provides an occasion to teach students about social-scientific standards of reasoning, clarity, and evidence. I've spent much of the semester on three issues: periodization, thematicization, and levels of analysis.

Of these, historians have addressed the first most explicitly, and I've benefited from work by Jean-Christophe Agnew, Martin Sklar, and Steven Skowronek on the topic. In seminar, however, the students and I have had to make our own calls. Take the notion of consumer culture. Most historians view it as related to the emergence of mass production, especially Fordism, increasing wealth and educational expansion, and the rise of mass media and advertising. Technological change, so the story goes, made possible a new phase of capitalist accumulation that relied on faster circulation of money and goods and increased earning power, and entailed the commodification of both cultural objects (the rise of the middlebrow in some versions) and persons themselves (as the vocabulary of personality replaced that of character as the argot for talking about the self).

The problem is that the pieces of the puzzle fell into place at different times and not necessarily in the correct order. Historians who focus on production and distribution tend to find consumer culture emerging a little earlier, around 1910, than those who emphasize the role of advertising and the media; and some students of working-class culture date consumerism's onset later still. Historians who emphasize new forms of personal uncertainty and changes in the self tend to place these changes (which others treat as results of institutional change) earlier, in the late Victorian era, preparing the ground for institutional developments. A recent essay in the *American Historical Review* by Lori Merish finds the roots of consumerism in ante-bellum religious revivals, earlier still. And, of course, once one crosses the Atlantic, all bets are off. Sociologist Chandra Mukerji, defining consumer culture somewhat

differently in *From Graven Images*, convincingly places its origin in Europe several centuries before the American Revolution.

Thinking about periodization requires us to clarify what we mean by consumerism, which leads us to the second problem, that of thematicization. Many historians (and some sociologists) like to see history unfold as a sequence of themes. Postmodernists who criticize this kind of thinking (often while engaging in it themselves) write of the need to deconstruct grand narratives. Sociologists have been deconstructing grand narratives for years in our own way, except that the process, far from negating the possibility of historical generalization, clarifies the terms of debate and yields more sophisticated and nuanced historical generalizations that account for phenomena that were previously anomalous.

My students and I have been doing a kind of multistage deconstruction of the themes that structure the curriculum. First, break down each theme into its component assertions. (For postmodern theory these include erosion of boundaries of all kinds and especially between high and popular culture, preoccupation with spectacle, decline of the avant-garde, privileging of images over words, "depthlessness" of everyday life, and a host of others.)

Second, evaluate each of the components: can one restate each assertion in operational terms, subjecting it to disconfirmation? And, if one can, are the assertions consistent with the weight of evidence? (For example, in the case of post-modernism, Lash's arguments about dedifferentiation are more translucent and testable than assertions about, e.g., the decentering of the subject, that feature prominently in other versions of postmodernism.)

This accomplished, one can trim the theme of unnecessary baggage and get on to the next stage, which is to explore its ideal-typical properties. Do components appear together, either simultaneously or in the order suggested by the argument. If so, is their co-occurrence more than a chance conjuncture?

This takes us to the third problem that my students and I have confronted, that of levels of analysis. Note that characterizations of the postmodern assert change at the level of the self and expressive interaction, at the level of art worlds and cultural production systems, and at the level of regional and national economies and the world system. Are regularities across levels or realms more than chimerical consequences of the deployment of metaphor? Does the "erosion of boundaries" really mean the same thing when one talks about boundaries between aesthetic genres, between social roles, or between enterprises in an economy? Is there any reason to think that dedifferentiation should occur simultaneously in all spheres?

These are the kinds of question sociologists always ask about thematic treatments of social and cultural change. But their familiarity should not keep us from recognizing that humanists ordinarily do not operate this way, and that we sociologists have a unique, indispensable role to play in multi-disciplinary teaching and discourse.

One prominent difference between sociology and the humanities is that the latter are far more object-oriented. Teaching in a humanities program has emboldened me to use objects to help students understand the worlds our readings have described, and I've found the technique exciting and effective. When we studied the emergence of modern advertising, I brought in a 1920s poster ad for a savings bank (an idyllic painting of a child playing with a collie) and we discussed the creator's rhetorical strategy and use of symbolism to evoke and equate financial and parental insecurity. When we studied canons, I used some Famous Authors card games from the turn of the century, and Elbert Hubbard's beautifully produced series, *Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great Composers*, which at once demonstrated canon creation, exemplified the contributions to printing of the arts and craft movement, and demonstrated a "consumer-culture" approach to the arts some years before the supposed emergence of celebrity biography and middlebrow culture. During the unit on postmodernism, I played a series of arguably postmodern musical pieces (a rap tune by Digital Underground, They Might Be Giant's self-referential sci-fi remake of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," a number by Sun Ra's Astro-Infinity Arkesta, and the ultra-eclectic world music of 3 Mustapha 3). These provided the basis for a useful discussion of what "postmodern" musical pieces have in common or, more accurately, what leverage the notion of postmodern culture gives us in understanding and appreciating a range of contemporary work.

Interpreting objects doesn't permit one to resolve empirical claims. But objects give students an immediate sense of the look and feel and even the sound of the past, helping them to understand better and to evaluate the utility of thematic generalizations, and even generate their own hypotheses about them. (If you are a pack rat, using objects in teaching also lets you to redefine the piles of chatchkees your friends have always derided as American Material Culture.)

A News Item

The 1994 General Social Survey (GSS) of the National Opinion Research Center contains a special module on multiculturalism. It includes questions on ethnic identification, ethnic stereotypes, group rights, immigration, assimilation, bilingualism, government assistance to immigrants and minorities, affirmative action, and related issues.

The design of the multiculturalism model was headed by David Sears, University of California, and Jack Citrin, University of California, Berkeley. James A. Davis, Harvard University, and Tom W. Smith, NORC and University of Chicago, are principal investigators of the GSS. The 1994 GSS data should be available in the Fall of 1994.

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From the Chair: Paul DiMaggio (from page 15)

Farewell

As this is my last column as chair, I'd like to use a paragraph of it to say how much I've enjoyed the chance to serve the section in this way. There are too many thank yous to say them all, but, with apologies in advance to those I leave out, I want to thank the following for the unstinting collegial generosity that has kept the Culture Section among the ASA's most active and exciting: past chair Elizabeth Long, chair-elect Michèle Lamont, nominations chair Wendy Espeland, membership chair John Ryan, publications chair Pete Peterson, teaching/curriculum chair Magali Sarfatti Larson, prize award chairs Judith Blau, Tom Gieryn, and Francie Ostrower, and working group chairs Chandra Mukerji, Ann Swidler, and Rhys Williams, who have made especially stellar contributions on special Section initiatives. Finally, a special thanks to newsletter editor Steve Hart, who, as is evident from this, his second issue, has taken an imaginative, creative editorial role in keeping this Section's newsletter unequalled as a source not only of information but of substantive discussion and debate.

REFERENCES

Swinburne, Algernon Charles. n.d. *Structure, Agency, and Seasonality: Towards a Multidimensional Theory of the Temporal Dimension of Weather*. Shiretonshire, UK: Fallen Flowers Press.

Convention Information

(continued from back cover)

——Culture Section Sessions——

Cultural Analysis Across Disciplinary Boundaries (Tuesday, August 9 at 8:30)

Cultural History. William Sewell Jr., University of Chicago
Reading Architecture. Magali Sarfatti-Larson, Temple University
What is Cultural Justice? Andrew Ross, New York University
Deep Play on a Shallow Playing Field: Social Theory and Cultural Studies. Michael Schudson, University of California-San Diego
Discussant and Organizer: Michèle Lamont, Princeton University
Presider: James Jasper, New York University

Race, Class and Culture (cosponsored with the Race and Ethnic Minority Section; Tuesday, August 9 at 12:30)

National Forgetting as Social Meaning and "the Stranger" in the American Dilemma. Susan Pearce, New School for Social Research
American Indian PowWows in Utah: A Case Study in Oppositional Culture. Bonnie L. Mitchell, University of Texas-Austin
Aiming the Canon: Who Supports Multicultural Literacy? Bradford Verter, Princeton University
Culture and Poverty: Symbolic Resources and Income Generation in Two Low-Income Communities. Daniel Dohan, University of California–Berkeley
Discussant: Hugh Mehan, University of California–San Diego
Chair: Nicola Beisel, Northwestern University
Organizers: Joe Feagin, University of Florida; Michèle Lamont, Princeton University

Culture and Theory (cosponsored with the Theory Section; Tuesday, August 9 at 4:30)

What is Agency? Mustapha Emirbaye and Anne Mische, New School for Social Research
Meaning and "Interpretive" Cultural Studies in Sociology: Toward a Concept of Practical Meaning. Orville Lee III, University of California–Berkeley
Culture(s)'s Structure(s). Marshall Battani, David R. Hall, and Rosemary Powers, University of California-Davis
Institutions and Cultural Interlock. Jeffrey Olick, Columbia University
Discussant: Jeffrey Alexander, University of California–Los Angeles
Presider: Desley Deacon, University of Texas–Austin
Organizers: Michèle Lamont, Princeton University; Theda Skocpol, Harvard University

Scientific and Interpretive Knowledge (cosponsored with the Section on Science, Knowledge and Technology; Sunday, August 7 at 10:30)

Oenology, Viniculture, and the Cult of Dionysius. Jacques Mourrain
Cultural Processing of Technology: Two Cases of the Strength of Cognitive Ties. Barry Saferstein, University of California–San Diego
Culture—Knowledge—Fiction. Karin Knorr-Cetina, University of Bielefeld
Bureaucratizing the Ethnographer's Magic. Kenneth Dauber, Northwestern University
Discussant: Mayer Zald, University of Michigan
Presider: Peter Whalley, Loyola University
Organizers: Peter Whalley, Loyola University; Mark Schneider, University of Michigan

Strategies of Identity Construction (Tuesday, August 9 at 4:30)

Remembering the Emancipator: Ritual and Symbol in the Black Community of Memory. Barry Schwartz, University of Georgia
Icons in Identity Construction. James R. Beniger, Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California
American Indian Identity of the Birth Mother: Saint or Sinner? Beth Kosiak, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Science
Identity Management: Role Transitions, Objects, and the Self. Ira Silver, Northwestern University
Organizer: Karen A. Cerulo, Rutgers University

Author Meets Critics: Inside Culture: Art and Class in the American Home, *by David Halle (Monday, August 8 at 2:30)*

Critics: Eugene Halton, University of Notre Dame; David Brain, New College, University of South Florida; Sharpon Zukin, Brooklyn College and Graduate School, City University of New York; Howard S. Becker, University of Washington
Author: David Halle, SUNY–Stony Brook and University of California–Los Angeles
Presider: John R. Hall, University of California, Davis
Organizers: John R. Hall, University of California–Davis; Michèle Lamont, Princeton University

——Culture Section Refereed Roundtables——

(Tuesday, August 9 at 10:30)

Organizer: Sarah M. Corse, University of Virginia

1. Culture and Identity

Looking for Cultural Capital in all the "Wrong" Places: Cultural Capital in Identity Construction. Roger M. Kern, Vanderbilt University
Here Comes the Bride: Wedding Announcements and Identity Construction. Sherril Horowitz Schuster, Rutgers University
Presider: The Sources of Social Identity. James J. Dowd, University of Georgia

2. *Mass Media and Television*

Producing the News, Producing the Crisis: An Ethnographic Study of Television News. Ronald N. Jacobs, University of California–Los Angeles

Consumers, Competition, and Convention: Explaining the Lack of Diversity in Advertising. Laura Mandala, Northwestern University

The Veering of News Visuals and the Beating of Rodney King: A Taste and an Application of a New Approach to Analyzing Television News. Hannah Balter, University of California–Los Angeles

Presider: Mass Media in Action: The Public, Producers, and the Negotiation of Gender Ideology. Melissa Milkie, Indiana University

3. *Culture and Consumption*

Lifestyle and Consumer Culture in a Peripheral Society: Youth Culture in Post-WWII Greece. Mike-Frank G. Epitropoulos and Victor Roudometof, University of Pittsburgh

Presider: Beyond "Consumer Culture:" Restoring Economic Institutions to the Sociology of Consumption. Michael Dawson, University of Oregon

4. *Styles of Thought, Culture, and Knowledge*

Haudenosauneee Folktales and Native American Relationships Toward the Natural Environment. Susan H. Roschke, Cornell University

Styles of Thought Within the Green Movement. Michael E. Christopher, University of California–San Diego

The New Sociology of Knowledge: Directions from Cultural Studies. E. Doyle McCarthy, Fordham University

Presider: Toward a Sociology of Religion: Mysterium, Onus, and Elementary Contradiction. Karen M. Bettez, Raymond J. Halnon, and Paul G. Schervish, Boston College

5. *Identity, Ethnicity, and Subculture*

Strategies of Identity Construction Among Jews in Buenos Aires and Caracas, 1940s-1980s. Nelly Lejter, Brown University

Growing Up Punk: Meaning and Commitment Processes in a Contemporary Youth Subculture. Linda J. Andes, University of Illinois-Chicago

6. *Changing Identity Construction*

Strategies of Identity Construction in Historical Perspective: Social Class and the Expressive Self, 1900-1992. Marlis Buchmann, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

Presider: Etiquette Books, Discourse, and the Deployment of the Order of Things. Jorge Arditi, University of California–Berkeley

7. *Globality, the Nation, and the Construction of Identities*

National versus European Identity in the Process of European Integration. Antonio V. Menéndez, Butler University

The "Uncertain Certainty" of Nationality and Race in the Era of Coloniality: Identity as a Historical Process. Kelvin Santiago-Vallas, SUNY–Binghamton

The Latin American Cultural Condition and Globality: Transcending the Prospero/Caliban Metaphor. Juliana Martinez and Roland Robertson, University of Pittsburgh

Presider: Construction of Boundaries: Immigrant Identities in Europe. Yasemin Soysal, Harvard University

8. *Perceptions of the Arts and Artists*

Government Involvement in the Arts in Israel: The Search for Models of Relationships Between Governments and Their Arts. Ilan Ben-Ami, CUNY-Graduate School

Censoring Art: Feminist and Gay Themes in a Local Exhibit. Andrea J. Baker, Ohio University–Lancaster

Presider: Occupations and Attributions: The Case of the Visual Artist. John Ryan, Clemson University

9. *Cultural Effects*

What Determines Young Children's Reactions to Media Violence? Joseph Crum, University of Florida

Presider: People of Color are No Laughing Matter: The Role of Race in Cartoon Humor. Jacqueline C. Simpson, University of Arizona

10. *Cultural Formations and the Formation of Culture*

Salem Bewitched: The Making of a Heritage Industry. Philip Lamy, Castleton State College

Presider: Time, Place, and Modernity: Provence Mythologized. Alan Aldridge, University of Nottingham

11. *Leisure Time, Institutions, and Popular Culture*

Institutionalization of Popular Music and Modern Jazz. Paul Lopes, University of California–Berkeley

Music and Marking Social Time. Catherine T. Harris, Wake Forest University

Presider: Civil Society as a Category of Cultural Analysis: Partisan Newspapers and Popular Culture in 19th Century United States. Richard Kaplan, UC-Santa Barbara

12. *Feminism, Subversion, and Popular Practices*

Subversive Practices: Women Reading Romance Novels in Urban India. Jyoti Puri, Northeastern University

Utilizing Lexis/Nexis On-Line Data: Analyzing Post-Feminism in the Popular Press, 1981-1992. Kathryn Wald Hausbeck and Kristen V. Luschen, SUNY–Buffalo

Getting a Man or Getting Ahead: A Comparative Analysis of African-American and Euro-American Fraternity/Little Sister Organizations on College Campuses. Mindy Stombler and Irene Padavic, Florida State University

Presider: The Uses of Cultural Studies and Feminist Ethnography for Rethinking Theories of Audience Reception. Margaret J. Heide

13. *Identity and Gendered Roles*

The Popular Culture of Thinness: Give In/Fight Back? A Study of Women, Weight, and Self Esteem. Karen Honeycutt, University of Michigan

Beyond the Talking Cure: Identity, Difference, and the Regulation of Desire. Laura Grindstaff, UC-Santa Barbara

Presider: Citizen or Dependent: Negotiating Identity and Relationships Among Teen Mothers and Social Service Providers. Ruth Horowitz, University of Delaware

14. *Identity, Subculture, and Cultural Practices*

"And Then the Drummer Caught on Fire:" Storytelling, Identity, Work, and Cultural Production Among Professional Rock Musicians. Jill Stein, University of California–Los Angeles

Zines and the Politics of Underground Cultures. Stephen Duncombe, New School for Social Research

Presider: Self Concept and Ego Extension Among Grateful Dead Fans. Alan R. Lehman, University of Maryland

15. *Popular Cinema*

Female Paranoia as Survival Skill: Reason or Pathology in "Nightmare on Elm Street?" Jonathan Markovitz, University of California–San Diego

Presider: Film Noir or Bleu? Charles R. Portz, Black Hills State University

16. *Race, Class, and Identity*

Mulitculturalist Discourses: Race in Sociology, Popular Culture, and the Arts. Jennifer Eichstedt, University of California–Santa Cruz

Self-labeling in Mexican Americans: Strategies of Identity Construction. Anthony Cortese, Southern Methodist University

Presider: What's In a Name? Identity and Naming for "Minority" Americans. James Fenelon, Northwestern University

17. *Gender and Identity*

Beauty as Social Control of Women. Rachel Boba, Arizona State University

Bifurcated Consciousness: Hegemonic Discourse on Gender, Sex and Family in Lesbian Culture's Resistance to Bisexual Identity. Amber Ault, Ohio State University

Presider: The I and the Face of the Other: Ethics and Subjectivity Viewed inthe Light of Postmodernism and Feminism. Berit Bretthauer, New School for Social Research

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Convention Information (from page 17)

——Sessions on Political Culture——

Political Culture: Public and Private Sources of Political Identity (Monday, August 8 at 8:30)

Science, Democracy, and the Politics of Identity. Craig Calhoun, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

From State-Socialism to the Welfare State: The Consequences of the Changing Private-Public Divide for Political Culture and Civil Society in East Germany. B. Gregory Wilpert, Brandeis University

Voices from the Grave: Cultural Memory and Political Identity in Fascist Italy. Mabel Berezin, University of Pennsylvania

Collective Memory as Discursive Process: The Nazi Past in West German Politics 1949-89. Jeffrey Olick, Columbia University

Discussant: Lyn Spillman, University of Notre Dame

Presider: Paul Lichterman

Organizers: Paul Lichterman, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Andrea Press, University of Michigan

Political Culture: Theory and Method (Saturday, August 6 at 10:30)

Public Discourse at the Grass Roots: Cultural Traditions, Movements, and Politics. Stephen Hart, SUNY–Buffalo

Nostalgic Community and Political Silence. Nina Eliasoph, University of Wisconsin–Madison

Meaning Construction and Political Mobilization: The Ritual of the Land Meetings during the Irish Land War, 1879-1881. Anne E. Kane, University of California–Los Angeles

Political Culture and the Social Construction of "Women": Eugenics and Motherhood in Nineteenth-Century Anti-Abortion Rhetoric. Nicola Beisel and Tamara Kay, Northwestern University

Discussants and Organizers: Paul Lichterman, University of Wisconsin and Andrea Press, University of Michigan

Presider: Andrea Press

——Workshop on Meaning & Measurement——

An invitation from Ann Swidler

Following the successful Meaning and Measurement session in Miami, we are planning a workshop session on Meaning and Measurement in Los Angeles, from 4:30 to 6:30 on Monday, May 8 (room to be announced). We hope these discussions could lead to a conference and eventually a set of interrelated research efforts.

Please write (a short paragraph would be best) expressing interest in joining one or more of these discussions, indicating briefly where your interests and/or expertise lie. Address: Ann Swidler, Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. Feel free to suggest alternative foci, especially if you know others who might join you in thinking about some aspect of meaning and measurement. I will (provisionally) arrange discussion groups based on interests and expertise. We will meet for a two-hour session to brainstorm, leaving time for discussing results in the group as a whole.

Attempting to balance openness and focus, exploration of techniques with pursuit of significant questions, I propose the following possible foci for group discussions. The interests of participants will determine which groups actually form.

Two approaches seem possible: (1) we can focus on significant questions, mobilizing varied methodological skills to solve problem-driven measurement issues; or (2) we can search for innovative measurement techniques, developing those that tap theoretically significant dimensions of culture.

Substantive Questions

1. Authority, Power, and Boundaries. How can we measure what discourse is more authoritative in a given society or group? Is the link between culture and power measurable? Is there a way to measure the degree of hierarchy and the extent of boundaries in a cultural system as a whole? If one discourse dominates or drives out another, how could such processes be captured empirically?

2. Returning to the original Durkheimian conception of rules, how can we measure the constitutive rules that make up collectivities? What ways can we devise to measure collective properties? What dimensions of collectivities would it be most useful to try to measure?

3. Cultural Differentiation and Homogenization. How could we measure whether subgroups within American society are becoming more culturally assimilated or more differentiated over time? This issue arises in discussions of "multi-culturalism" and the "culture wars." Answers might depend on defining different levels or types of culture (as the old "assimilation" theories tried to do), attending to material artifacts, consumption styles, and cultural tastes, as well as to public codes or styles and such traditional matters as values and attitudes.

4. Varieties of Individualisms. Arguments about cultural differences often imply an integrated cultural system—so that basic conceptions of the self, for example, fit with the basic conception of the social group Cross-cultural studies might focus on the varied kinds of individualisms and collectivisms across different cultures, but how would one measure such attributes? Measurement might focus on public discourse, but also on social practices and institutions, public rituals, and underlying codes for defining, bounding, and controlling groups.

Measurement Techniques

5. Surveys. What innovative approaches can make surveys yield new kinds of evidence—about how people categorize things, about how they evaluate others, about their cultural practices, material objects, etc.? Can surveys of individuals also yield data about broader discourses—what people know others would say, for example?

6. Texts and Discourses. How can innovative ways of analyzing textual materials get at underlying structural properties of discourse, basic schemes of categorization, or central cultural values and ideas?

7. Aesthetic Objects, Material Culture, and Popular Culture. How can we measure the significant properties of aesthetic objects themselves, as well as of the ways people use them?

——Other Events of Related Interest——

The SSSP is offering two sessions, cosponsored by various ASA sections, both dealing with the theme: "The Freudian Left: Sex, Hate, Power, and the Reproduction of Domination." These sessions, organized by Lauren Langman (Loyola) include papers by Victor Wolfenstein, Carl Boggs, Douglas Kellner, Lauren Langman, Philip Wexler, David Simon, Jeff Haley, and Richard Lichtman, all exploring various aspects of the connections among capitalism, sexuality, hegemony, and personality.

Judith Blau alerts of us the upcoming annual meeting of SASE, the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics. This "may not sound much like culture," she says, but it "includes neo-institutional economists and other[s] who are very concerned about cultural variation and change." These are economists who seek the connections between economic life and other social and cultural factors. (Editor's note: One American publisher I am aware of that puts out a lot of books in "socio-economics" is M.E. Sharpe; this house also publishes a magazine, *Challenge,* that contains articles of the same ilk.)

The upcoming meetings, to be held July 15-17 in Paris, will feature speeches by Mary Douglas and Robert Kuttner. For more information, contact SASE, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131; e-mail SASE@bootes.unm.edu; phone (505) 277-5081.

About the Newsletter

Culture is the official newsletter for the Sociology of Culture Section of the American Sociological Association.

✶ *Deadline for Fall 1994 issue:* September 1.

Unsolicited contributions are welcome in all content categories (articles, announcements, section news, dissertation abstracts, comments on previous articles, letters to the editor). They should be sent to the editor by e-mail or on disk. Any size or density DOS disk is acceptable, as is any standard word-processor file format; disks should be scanned for viruses and will not be returned. Preliminary inquiries prior to formal submission are welcome, and can be made by phone, fax, mail, or e-mail. Keep in mind that this is a newsletter, not a journal. Aim for a length of 1,500 to 2,500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Getting a book (such as your own) covered in "Books of Note": send material describing it to: Richard A. Peterson / Box 1635, Station B / Vanderbilt University / Nashville, TN 37235.

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From the Chair: *Paul DiMaggio*

As April's warm breezes billow through my window, it is clear that the hounds of spring have overtaken winter, filling the courtyards and windy places with "lisps of leaves and ripples of rain." (Swinburne, n.d.) It is at this time of year that hard-nosed newspaper editorialists write mushy seasonal essays, and section chairs stop thinking programmatically and begin ruminating, in my case about the boundary between sociology and the humanities. If this strikes you as well-worn territory, just be glad this column isn't all about the weather.

This semester, I've taught my first humanities course, an American Studies seminar on the institutional history of U.S. culture from the Civil War to the present. The opportunity was attractive, for I was eager to read some of the new historical literature that had accumulated on my bookshelves and to revisit some old interests from an historical perspective. (American cultural history has experienced an explosive popularity in recent years. There are more good new monographs than I can mention here, but a few recent favorites are Joan Shelley Rubin's *The Making of Middlebrow Culture*, Steve Watson's *Strange Bedfellows: The First American Avant-Garde*, Kathleen McCarthy's *Women's Culture: Philanthropy, Art and Power, 1830-1930*, William Leach's *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*, Lizabeth Cohen's *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, and James Baughman's *The Republic of Mass Culture*.)

(Continued on page 14)

Convention & Related Information

This year's convention will be a rich experience for culturalists. The section itself, under the leadership of program chair Michèle Lamont, is offering six different sessions (three co-sponsored with other sections); Sarah Corse has organized our refereed roundtable session, which will have 17 tables and 49 papers. There are so many sessions, in fact, that not all can be scheduled for Culture Day. This year, it is *Tuesday, August 9*; next year we will rotate to the first day of the convention. Listings for all our sessions, and for all the other events mentioned in this summary, are found starting on page 16.

There will be various closely related sessions not sponsored by the Section. Two sessions on political culture are of special interest; these were organized by Andrea Press and Paul Lichterman, two Culture Section leaders. Lichterman and Press organized these panels to address questions about how culture creates, expands or contracts public spheres of political debate, and how it creates and sustains political communities and identities.

Furthermore, the SSSP is offering sessions that many of us may want to attend.

A more unusual event will be a workshop on Meaning and Measurement organized by Ann Swidler. This will be a truly participatory gathering, and may lead to research planning in the future. Be sure to read Ann's invitation.

Detailed session listings, information on the Meaning and Measurement Workshop, and related announcements are found inside, starting on page 16.