

# Culture

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## Can Cultural Sociology Explain Structure?<sup>1</sup>

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What are we saying when we use common distinctions like those between gender identity and gender stratification, or between class consciousness and class, or even between socioemotional and structural aspects of small groups? Casual sociological usage would label these distinctions matters of culture and social structure respectively, and see structures as more resistant to change. But cultural sociologists are arguing more and more that social structure is profoundly cultural. An important articulation of this “embeddedness” view has been developed recently in Bill Sewell’s 1992 article, “A Theory of Structure . . . .” Although Sewell’s view is important for the way it builds agency and change into structure, I suggest here that it does not go far enough in accounting for the common intransigence of social arrangements to changes in ideas. Under certain conditions—which Sewell’s work can help specify better—we need to retain a stronger notion of social structures as patterns of relations influencing our everyday forms of thought.<sup>2</sup>

Structures are fundamentally cultural, Sewell argues following Giddens, because they are rules for generating action. The idea of rules invokes a global view of culture; rules are “all the varieties of cultural schemas[:] . . . not only the array of binary oppositions . . . but also the various conventions, recipes, scenarios, principles of action, and habits of speech and

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## Cultural Sociology and Social Criticism

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My purpose in this article is to argue that cultural sociology has an important contribution to make to contemporary social-critical debates, and to suggest ways in which we can take advantage of this opportunity. Social criticism is a genre in which claims or assumptions about the nature of our culture and society—that is, an implicit or explicit sociology—are mixed with philosophical, religious, or ethical perspectives. To make a positive impact on this genre, we need to bring the theoretical tools of our discipline to bear, pointing out where positions are based on inadequate implicit theories of culture or build unwarranted empirical assumptions into the definition of concepts. Furthermore, we need to engage in research showing what is actually happening in the links between American culture and politics, thus illuminating issues critical to these debates that are now often discussed on the basis of suppositions, hostile stereotypes, or wishful thinking. In these ways we can be important participants in discussions of basic questions about our society, exploring the capacities for peace, justice, and community in America. We can bring this off best, however, if we also learn from other disciplines; if we become more sophisticated ourselves in social and ethical philosophy, we will be able to frame issues in ways that do not misconstrue what is at stake or limit what we can discover in our research.

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## Culture Day—Saturday 19 August—and Cultural Events at the ASA Meetings in Washington

The meetings this year offer a rich array of sessions on culture, including two co-sponsored with other sections (theory; race and ethnic minorities). The sessions deal with central theoretical issues in our field, methodology, and various substantive areas of sociological research on culture, such as the arts, identity, national differences, and culture and domination. We also have a roundtable session with 14 tables and nearly 40 individual papers. Most of these sessions will be held on Culture Day, which this year is Saturday, August 19. (The specific times for sessions have not been set.)

Perhaps the most innovative part of our program is comprised by the meetings for exchange of ideas being organized by research networks within the section. We have requested a large room for 6:30–8:00 on Saturday in order to hold several of these meetings at the same time. This will probably be followed by the Section Party. In addition, the Meaning &

Measurement and Symbolic Boundaries groups will have a joint mini-conference starting the evening of August 17 and continuing through August 18. Contact people for the network meetings are listed on p. 9. Details of the mini-conference and network reports are found in the “Network News” story, on p. 10.

There will be other culture-relevant sessions as well, including the one listed under “Cultural News Beyond the Section” (p. 11) and several sponsored by the new section on religion.

Please take all this into account in making advance plans. Make sure you will be in DC for the entire first day of the meetings, since that is Culture Day. Come early if you want to attend the mini-conference. And be in touch with network contact persons, who need to know in advance who is coming and are the only sources of final information on when and where the networks will be meeting.

*Detailed listings are found inside, beginning on page 8.*

## Spillman on Culture and Structure

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gesture built up with these fundamental tools” (7-8). Structures have another dimension, too; they are also resources, and the power we usually attribute to structure is grounded in resources. Resources sustain and validate schemas, and endow them with influence. But at the same time, of course, resources are “results of cultural schemas.” Since resources are made salient by schemas, there’s nothing in Sewell’s view to explain why some schemas—and thus some resources—have more power than others. “Sets of schemas and resources may properly be said to constitute *structures* only when they mutually imply and sustain each other over time” (13), he concludes. But if resources are effects of schemas, as seems plausible, what makes structures resistant to change?

Sewell rejects the standard notion of structure as patterns of interrelations because it “lacks the original’s rhetorical force” (1). His reconceptualization is designed to capture this force while avoiding implausible determinism, but it is more successful at the latter than at the former task. At the very least, a stronger distinction seems necessary between what he labels “deep” and “surface” schemas; we need to know why schemas are hierarchically organized—why some are more constraining and harder to change than others. And if resources cannot ultimately account for the power of deep schemas, we need to go further, to re-examine how the standard notion of structures as patterns of interrelations may do so. The idea of structures as patterns of interrelations, I argue, need not lack rhetorical force; and it gives better grounding to claims about structural power.<sup>3</sup>

Structures as patterns of interrelations are powerful because they impose presuppositions in interaction. A suggestive example of Bourdieu’s makes a convenient illustration here, though he uses it to another purpose. At one point in his writing about different forms of domination, Bourdieu says “. . . it’s not by lavishing generosity, kindness, or politeness on his charwoman . . . but by choosing the best investment for his money, or the best school for his son, that the possessor of economic or cultural capital perpetuates the relationship of domination . . .” (Bourdieu 1977, 189). A generous or even an egalitarian attitude towards one’s charwoman—or even a belief that charwomen are noble and oppressed—doesn’t change the presuppositions in one’s action that maintain the relationship with her. A naive egalitarian might refuse to educate her children any differently than those of her cleaning lady; she might refuse the gifts of her parents, or try to talk investment with her subordinate. But without an elaborate accounting, this would more likely lead to a failure of communication, weirdness that would undermine mundane meaning-making. There are external conditions that impose presuppositions in successful meaning-making.

Sewell rejects as too “agent-proof” (15) Bourdieu’s use of the notion of habitus to locate the operation of structural presuppositions. But whether or not we wish to adopt the idea of habitus, there is a more situationally grounded way of thinking about how structural presuppositions are constraining. Every meaningful action takes place within social relations that transcend the individual meaning-maker. We have

taken for granted presuppositions about how things are; and we often have to operate within the limits of those presuppositions to make sense to other people. Some of those presuppositions are presuppositions about the patterns of relations within which we are acting. We might be able to say a lot of different and critical things, but there are limits to what we can say, in any given context, before we’re just too weird. Goffman (1983) has a nice term for this—he calls it “felicity’s condition” in meaning making. If we were to challenge deep interactional presuppositions in our everyday talk—like presuppositions about class or gender—we’d be violating felicity’s condition. If we violate felicity’s condition, we’ll also be making a particular sort of non-sense, or meaninglessness—contradicting presuppositions other actors hold about the social relations within which we’re communicating. This sort of structural constraint on possible meanings and values is different than the possible range of attitudes you might take; you can act either generously or contemptuously to a subordinate, for example, without violating felicity’s condition, without either action being, as Goffman puts it, a “manifestation of strangeness,” or a failure of meaning.

If patterns of social relations impose interactional presuppositions, the power of ideas is ultimately limited by patterns of social relations that transcend the thinker in quite specific ways. A lot of symbolic challenge and change happens within the limits set by interactional presuppositions, but structures often set limits to that cultural change because they impose those interactional presuppositions. So, for example, it’s much easier to challenge particular gender stereotypes than to constitute for oneself a genderless identity; in the same way, being anti-nationalistic is different from being stateless.

While retaining a notion of social structure as patterns of relations, this interpretation of culture/structure relations has rhetorical force because it locates the constraining power of patterns of social relations within meaning-making itself. It also allows for indeterminacy and creativity within that process. Other approaches, not discussed here, turn to specific historical patterns of cultural production to account for variations in meanings and values realistically available for our meaning-making; these suggest where resources are indeed important in sustaining social structures, as Sewell would argue. These approaches need not be considered mutually exclusive, but we do need to clarify the conditions under which each might be an appropriate model of relations between meanings and values, on the one hand, and patterns of social relations, on the other.

Sewell’s argument has the theoretical virtue of suggesting ways in which structures are constantly open to change. But it is an overstatement to say that structures are schemas; this argument cannot ground an account of why things don’t change. For many of us, Sewell’s argument also has the professional attraction of bringing cultural sociology to the center of the discipline. But we can do this without undertaking the overly ambitious project of re-interpreting everything else that sociologists do.

### NOTES

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Mark Chaves, Jeff Alexander, Michèle Lamont, Bennett Berger, Nina Eliasoph, Paul Lichterman, Neil Smelser, and Mustafa Emirbayer for their reactions. For the extended argument see Lyn Spillman, "Culture, Social Structure, and Discursive Fields," *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* 15 (1995): 129-54. Comments welcome at Dept. of Sociology, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556 or Spillman.1@nd.edu.

<sup>2</sup> Burns (1992) uses the label "embeddedness" for this theoretical move. To pursue this issue see Alexander (1989); Archer (1985); Berger (1991); Brain (1989); Brint (1992); Fine and Sandstrom (1993); Hays (1994); Kane (1991); Lamont (1989); Peterson (1994); Porpora (1993); Rambo and Chan (1990); Schudson (1989); and Wuthnow (1989).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Lukes (1977); Smelser (1988); and Blau and Merton (1981) on this concept of structure.

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To make the argument more specific I will introduce a conceptual distinction and then discuss three axes of social-critical debate.

*Thick and thin discourse.* In Milwaukee, a community organization called MICA, composed of 35 congregations, demands more public housing and resources for the inner city based on a biblical vision of social justice. In Cincinnati, Citizens for Community Values works with local officials to suppress all adult bookstores, theaters, and video rentals in the metropolitan area, in an effort to uphold a conservative version of Judaeo-Christian morality. In Buffalo, an Amnesty International group brings a passionate and transcendent concern for the rights and dignity of every human being to bear on issues of imprisonment and torture. Lichterman's research (forthcoming) shows a similar style of discourse among the Greens. In these and many other groups around the country—religious and secular, left and right of center politically—discourse has a "thick" quality. Values beyond immediate political objectives are brought into play, the feeling tone is "hot," commitments are transcendent even when not religious, and appeals to people outside the group are based on what are taken to be universal or at least broadly shared principles.

But simultaneously, in many voluntary associations and even social action groups discussion of the possible connections between participants' core values and public issues, or even between these values and what the group itself is doing, does not take place—in some cases, is intentionally avoided—manifesting a "thinner" style of discourse. In several groups I have observed, for instance, only the nuts and bolts of practical activities are ever discussed, while broader concerns are thought to be potentially divisive or distracting. Eliasoph (1994) describes similar phenomena in volunteer and recreational groups. Groups with thin discourse tend to define their mission narrowly, carry on discussion in instrumental terms, eschew transcendent rhetoric, and negotiate with outside groups on the basis of self-interest.

Each type of discourse carries potential contributions and dangers for our politics. Some argue, for instance, that thick discourse so muddies the currents of public debate as to diminish chances for effective negotiation of differences, or that it introduces an absolutism destructive to democracy. Others would say that thin discourse is too anemic, and that it abandons too many of the life-giving resources generated in civil society to assist our public life much. I think all such claims are essentially sociological, and need to be evaluated using empirical evidence rather than supposition.

*The relationship between politics and the cultural traditions generated in civil society.* As the examples given above show, cultural traditions generated in civil society—the values Americans articulate in private, communal, or associational settings—can be connected to or disconnected from broader social and political discourse. This variable cultural relationship between civil society and politics deserves particularly close examination right now because our society has recently manifested two divergent trends. On the one hand,

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the national political agenda has moved strongly to the right, with a vigorous reassertion of individualistic themes in relation to economic life and considerable skepticism about government. On the other, opinion poll trends (see Ferguson forthcoming) show little change in grass-roots views on most issues, and in associational life—that is, in organizations that are neither part of government nor the commercial market—Americans manifest undiminished and often remarkably strong concerns for community and the public sphere. People work in soup kitchens, enlist in civic improvement organizations, and express disagreement with much of the *Contract with America*—but they gave the Republicans an important victory and liberals in Washington are on the run. Whereas deTocqueville expected the voluntary sector of civil society to mediate between the individual and the state, now state and civil society seem headed in opposite directions.

The disagreement between the authors of *Habits of the Heart* and the philosopher Jeffrey Stout—which loosely exemplifies some of the debates between communitarians and liberals—largely hinges on the relationship between politics and civil society. A central thesis in *Habits* (Bellah et al. 1985) is that while republican and biblical traditions exist in America and are appropriated at times, the “first language” of most Americans is either utilitarian or expressive individualism. That is, Americans tend to articulate decisions in terms of what will get one ahead or express oneself (although our actions and unarticulated feelings may be richer than this). Stout (1988) disagrees, arguing that Bellah et al. misdescribe American ethical discourse. The “first languages” Stout thinks are dominant are neither individualism nor communal general social theories, but rather sphere-specific languages generated within particular social practices—occupational ethics, the operative values and norms of cultural and recreational activities to which Americans become committed, and so on. In amateur baseball, to take a recreational example, we learn teamwork and the pursuit of excellence more or less as its own reward. The situation is similar in choruses and choirs (the dominant forms of popular performing arts participation in America). As an occupational example, in sociology we espouse research ethics, and sociologists have been known to go to jail rather than violate them (a detailed and elegant description of another occupational ethics, that of medicine, is found in Zussman [1992]). The languages learned within such social practices contain non-individualistic and non-utilitarian frameworks, but do not constitute overarching ethical or social theories.

All this is convincing. But Stout says little about how these languages might connect with more general social or political discourse. If they operate in isolation, one might easily argue that while robust ethical languages exist in spheres that are non-governmental and non-market, the central public spheres of economy and politics still evoke dominantly individualistic discourse from most Americans. So we need to ask: to what extent and with what implications do the ethical languages generated in social practices help Americans think and talk about what we consider just and unjust, or want to preserve and change, in our society? And how do such languages encourage or discourage public involvement?

The debate between Stout and the authors of *Habits*, in short, cannot be resolved without empirical evidence on the sources, nature, and implications of compartmentalization and integration between the cultural resources generated in civil society and those used in politics—evidence that Stout does not give us and *Habits* provides only in part. Here is a job for cultural sociology.

This debate also indicates how important it is for cultural sociologists to be philosophically sophisticated. Stout argues that in *Habits* much of the interviewing and analysis took place within an implicit philosophical framing that demanded that respondents have a set of foundational principles. This forced them into inappropriate theoretical boxes: either a general social analysis that was individualistic or one that was communal. Although the authors were not foundationalists, Stout says, they proceeded in ways manifesting foundationalist habits of thought. Thus, the use of problematic social-philosophical frames in the course of research can become a basis for theoretical and methodological critique.

*The role of religion and other cultural traditions with transcendent frameworks and imputations of sacredness.* The philosopher Richard Rorty argues strongly in favor of keeping not only religion, but any kind of perspective involving ultimate or metaphysical commitments, out of politics. He advocates what he calls “banal” politics (1992)—what I would call very thin discourse. In such politics, public life is based on negotiation while attempts to construct moral communities are confined to private life (1991c). As a pragmatist, Rorty rejects natural rights rhetoric and communitarianism with equal vigor. We should, he says (following Putnam 1988), seek “toeholds” for specific improvements, rather than “skyhooks.” Many of his philosophical perspectives seem plausible, but there are problems in his implicit sociology. He acknowledges (1991b) that the potential for hard-heartedness in his position has to be rescued by particular traditions of caring that we have in America, and that these are largely based on religion. But instead of treating religious ideas as a large proportion of our “toeholds” in America—that is, a deposit of cultural traditions indispensable to both conservatives and the left—he leaves them a black box. Thus he wants religion to be excluded from discussions of public policy, but brings it in, as a random factor, to fill gaps in his account of how we can have life-affirming politics. Politically he is more or less a social democrat, but his implicit sociology makes it hard to analyze systematically the contributions that groups such as the one I observed in Milwaukee, or the social teachings of the Catholic church, can make to social democracy. He also assumes, without evidence, that the use of religion as one basis for public discourse inherently and consistently has anti-democratic, absolutist, or divisive implications. In short, in Rorty’s analysis the role of religion in American political culture is undertheorized and described non-empirically, and this makes some of his social-critical arguments unpersuasive.

Similar problems arise in Rorty’s analysis of passionate and transcendent but secular commitments, such as the kind of human rights rhetoric found in Amnesty International or the ACLU. The rhetoric of such organizations expresses well

Durkheim's classic (1973) formulation of an individualism that makes the rights and dignity of the individual in general the central principle of modern society. Such an individualism can exist in a culturally diverse society and presupposes no adherence to any traditional religion, but infuses *la personne humaine* with sacredness. Human rights rhetoric is blatantly foundationalist and would make any good pragmatist cringe, and yet the cultural tradition it expresses is an important resource—in good part because of its thickness and its invocation of passion and sacredness—for the preservation of democracy. In fact, it may well, as Durkheim argues, serve this goal (which is central to Rorty) better than the cooler, more instrumental approaches Rorty finds more congenial. A well-theorized and empirically informed evaluation of the actual nature and impact of human and individual rights rhetoric, as used in local social movement groups, is required to address this issue. Just as in his treatment of religion, Rorty uses an implicit theory of culture that conceptually rules out adequate attention to the role that transcendent, passionate, or foundationalist rhetoric actually plays in our society.

**Universal versus local legitimation.** This third axis of social-critical debate comes up in the disagreements between Habermas and Lyotard. One core issue they disagree on is the degree to which legitimation outside of particular social practices and cultural enclaves is possible. Habermas, who sees modernity as an unfulfilled project that still deserves our loyalty, thinks that bases for resisting oppression and supporting social justice can be found in universal, inherent characteristics of communicative rationality (1984). Lyotard (1984), taking Habermas on directly, argues that in a postmodern, decentered cultural situation all genuine legitimation is local. Many analyses of the problems of American culture have a similar tone. Lyotard says that he favors continuing to pursue justice (but not consensus) in the postmodern situation. Yet how this can happen if all legitimation is local is not clear.

In practice, non-dominant groups struggling for justice have often made—and have needed to make, in order to have any chance of success—appeals to principles that if not universal at least transcend the boundaries of particular groups and social practices. The classic example in America is the civil rights movement, which used a mixture of democratic and Judaeo-Christian language that was strongly supra-local. Some social movements, to be sure, repress all cultural particularities, frame issues as narrowly as possible, and deal with groups outside solely by negotiation. But others try to find *cultural* meeting points with different groups, tapping shared elements in cultural traditions and engaging in active, thick cultural work (Snow et al. [1986] describe some strategies for such work). The congregation-based group I observed in Milwaukee intermingled thick and thin discourse in this regard. Its consultants and staff constantly emphasized the idea that city government and local corporations would be influenced only by power and negotiations based on their self-interest, but in practice the group frequently used supra-local appeals, such as the idea that “housing is a human right.”

Furthermore, our cultural situation is hardly fully postmodern or decentered. Americans show a striking de-

gree of allegiance to various metanarratives about our country (for instance, the story line about how we have gradually included more and more categories of human beings as full and equal citizens), and to overarching cultural code structures embedded in terms such as democracy (see Alexander and Smith 1993). In other words, Americans use a mixture of local and supra-local legitimation strategies, and the ways in which this happens and the implications for our political life need to be better theorized and empirically studied.

**Conclusions and implications.** By bringing the conceptual tools and research strategies of cultural sociology to bear on describing the varied forms of American public discourse—as it actually takes place in the particular contexts that Americans inhabit—and the consequences of these varied forms for our society, we can make an empirical and sociological contribution to current debates within social criticism and social philosophy. There is already a considerable amount of work manifesting this agenda, including *Habits*, depth interview studies of American political values by Reinerman (1987) and Hochschild (1981), Alexander's (1993) description of the structure and influence of the “democratic code,” my book (1992) on how rank and file Christians connect religious traditions to economic justice issues, and research on social movements and associational contexts by Snow et al. (e.g., 1986), Ginsburg (1989), Fantasia (1988), Lichterman (forthcoming), Jasper (1992), Williams (forthcoming), and Eliasoph (1994).

In continuing such research and theory-building, I think we need to pay considerable attention to social movements and the life of voluntary associations—supplementing and complementing, but certainly not displacing, approaches based on interviews on one side or textual analysis on the other. Most Americans forge connections between ethical discourse and social or political discourse, if at all, not in isolation but within organizational contexts where such connections are evoked and nurtured. In such contexts, cultural traditions become templates for practical activities rather than abstract resources occasionally used in response to public debate, and people make statements in response to peers rather than sociological interviewers. Social movements, in particular, are laboratories within which to observe the workings of American public discourse. But in looking at them, we can learn more by thinking of the discourse that happens in such organizations as a crystallization and continuation of cultural processes that also happen in other settings, and not in terms of whatever differences there may be between social movement discourse and that found elsewhere. Mixtures of local and supra-local legitimation, for instance, are found in discussions of the problems of our society that take place around water coolers, in church groups, and at neighborhood bars, as well as within social movement organizations.

In studying voluntary associations and social movements, one needs to understand the discourse in terms of the importance of pre-existing cultural traditions, which provide patterned sets of cultural codes that are both resources and constraints for the group (as Sewell [1992] describes). One must also study the active culture-making process by which these traditions are selectively appropriated, interpreted, transformed, and applied in the life of the organization. Much

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social movement research, when it deals with culture at all, shortchanges the former (for a critical review, see Hart [1993]), while analyses of American culture not based on grass-roots data typically ignore the latter. Substantively, we can examine the ways in which discourse in a given group does or does not connect cultural traditions to politics, invokes passion and sacredness or stays “cool,” and uses local or universalizing legitimation strategies, and what implications all these choices have for the kind of contribution the group makes to American public life and discourse.

In the end, such research and theory building can speak to central issues in social criticism and social philosophy, illuminating the debates among communitarians, modernist liberals, postmodernists, neoconservatives, and pragmatists, for instance. As cultural sociologists, we can probe potentials in American cultural life for discussions of the direction we want our nation to take and the values we want to live by as a community, and delineate ways in which more life-affirming directions might emerge if the right kind of connections between cultural traditions and public issues can be forged.

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#### Books of Note (continued from back cover)

aesthetics of American automobile design. Gartman argues that American workers demanded stylish and continually improving cars in compensation for the deprivations of mass production work.

Classen, Constance, David Howes and Anthony Synott. *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*. Smelling is a natural sense, though nasal acuity varies widely from individual to individual. But the evaluation of odors is entirely cultural, as the authors show in their analysis of the nation, race, class, and gender-based evaluations of scents.

Garber, Marjorie, Jann Matlock, and Rebecca Walkowitz, editors. *Media Spectacles*. Authors focus on specific recent major news stories from the Gulf War to the Thomas/Hill controversy, from the Kennedy rape trial to Hurricane Bob, as spectacles with

scripted scenarios in which elements of the events that don't fit the plot are simply edited out to fit the narrative script of choice.

Rose, Tricia and Andrew Ross, editors. *Microphone Fiends: Youth Music and Youth Culture*. The authors describe a wide range of contemporary youth music scenes found around the world.

Delamont, Sara. *Appetites and Identities: An Introduction to the Social Anthropology of Western Europe*. This is an introduction to Western Europe seen through an anthropological perspective, not an introduction to anthropology *per se*.

#### Ashgate's Three

Moore, David. *The Lads in Action: Social Process in an Urban Youth Subculture*. This is a study of Australian skinheads based on long-term participant observation. The focus is on the meanings of their expressive activity.

Whittle, Stephen, editor. *The Margins of the City: Gay Men's Urban Lives*. The authors look at the changing characteristics of gay communities around the world during the past 25 years.

Rietveld, Hillegonda C. *This Is Our House*. The urban dance music style, developed in Manchester and quickly disseminated to Rotterdam, Chicago, New York, Amsterdam, etc., and its associated culture are described and analyzed.

#### Five from Rowman & Littlefield

York, Michael. *The Emerging Network: A Sociology of the New Age and Neo-Pagan Movements*. New Age and Neo-Paganism have spread rapidly in the 1990s. York looks at these new religious forms and profiles the Church Universal and Triumphant, Nordic pagans, and the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans.

Fogo, Fred. *I Read the News Today: The Social Drama of John Lennon's Death*. Fogo

analyzes the print media reaction to John Lennon's death as ritual and drama, suggesting that present day conflicts may be understood by examining the way the sixties generation has made sense of its collective experience.

Higley, Stephen R. *Privilege, Power, and Place: The Geography of the Upper Class*. Basing his geographic display on the *Social Register*, Higley pinpoints the 132,515 upper-class American households. He then characterizes Lake Forest, IL, a representative upper-class suburb. Higley also characterizes the second, third, and fourth homes of the wealthy. Finally, he shows how the wealthy shape and control land-use ordinances, often in the name of ecology and beautification.

Carney, George, editor. *The Sounds of People and Places: Readings in the Geography of American Folk and Popular Music*. These studies focus on aspects of the geographic range and diffusion of gospel, country, jazz, and rock from their points of origin.

Cosby, Camille. *Television's Imageable Influences: The Self-Perception of Young African-Americans*. Cosby presents a revealing examination of the pervasive negative images of the culture of young African-Americans that are regularly portrayed on TV.

### Three from Harwood Academic Publishers

Stagl, Justin. *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550-1800*. Using the voluminous travel literature written between 1550 and 1800, Stagl shows the perfection of the three methods fundamental to anthropology: ethnographic travel, surveys, and the collection of significant objects. He sees this as the paradigm of the inquisitive/acquisitive spirit of the West.

Crick, Malcolm. *Resplendent Sites, Discordant Voices: Sri Lankans and International Tourism*. Crick shows the "shady" activities that grow up in the "informal sector" providing personal services on the margins of the international tourist trade. Inquisitive/acquisitive still.

Friedman, Jonathan, editor. *Consumption and Identity*. The anthropological essays in his volume explicitly understand consumption as part of social identity formation and control. They see culture as continually constructed in the social practices of consumption.

### Sage's latest fifteen

Dines, Gail and Jean M. Humez, editors. *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Text-Reader*. With this book, created for classroom use, the authors show how to understand popular culture by following the analytical styles of numerous well known critical writers.

Kaid, Lynda Lee and Christina Holtz-Bacha, editors. *Political Advertising in Western Democracies*. The authors show the similarities and differences in the political advertising in recent elections in England, France, Israel, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, and the United States.

Crane, Jonathan Lake. *Terror and Everyday Life: Singular Moments in the History of the Horror Film*. Terror films today, Crane argues, are more violent than the films of an earlier era, mirroring higher levels of violence in society. Alternative explanations are scrupulously avoided.

Friedman, Jonathan. *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. Friedman here argues that societies cannot be understood in their own terms as the cultural relativists insisted, but must be seen as part of an increasingly singular set of global processes and structures. He has reinvented Wallerstein's "world system" model, but as an anthropologist, he sees it more from the perspectives of the periphery.

Burman, Stephen. *The Black Progress Question: Explaining the African American Predicament*. Burman questions the usual assumptions about progress as a pathway to racial assimilation. He questions whether assimilation is possible or desirable and suggests a number of other alternatives.

Costa, Janeen and Gary J. Bamossy, editors. *Marketing in a Multicultural World: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Cultural Identity*. For a change of ethical pace, these authors show the various strategies used to market products to ethnics, how to market ethnic products, and the strategies of ethnic niche marketing vs. multicultural marketing.

Min, Pyong Gap, editor. *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*. The authors present a useful country-by-country review. They are long on demography but short on culture.

Weitzman, Eben and Matthew B. Miles. *Computer Programs for Qualitative Data Analysis: A Software Sourcebook*. This useful work gives detailed reviews of 24 software programs in five major categories. These include text retrievers, textbase managers, code-and-retrieve programs, code-based theory-builders, and conceptual network-builders.

Reason, Peter. *Participation in Human Inquiry*. The focus of this practical methods book is on research *with* and *for* the people being researched not *on* them.

Hamelink, Cees. *The Politics of World Communication*. Hamelink focuses on the many recent international agreements that regulate the flow of information, data, creative work, and ideas. The laws that were established to protect the creative efforts of individuals are now being transformed to protect the rights of multi-national corporations to control creative efforts for their own profit.

Campbell, Christopher. *Race, Myth, and the News*. This is a perceptive analysis of the forms of racism, both overt and covert, that are encountered on local evening news across the country.

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Cultural Criticism: A Primer of Key Concepts*. Here is a popular de-construction of the vocabulary of contemporary cultural criticism by a master of demystification.

Cagle, Van. *Reconstructing Popular/Subculture: Art, Rock, and Andy Warhol*. This is about the New York scene that united gifted

(continued on page 8)

## Culture, Media, and the Classroom

We are interested in starting a new, interactive newsletter feature concerned with the use of media (film, video, music, books, etc.) in teaching cultural sociology. This would be an occasional column, a little like *Books of Note* but going beyond books and concentrating on materials that are or could be used in teaching (not, however, just ones developed for that purpose). There would be one or more coordinators responsible for collating information, but most of the contributions would have to come from other section members, writing in about resources they had

encountered or their experiences using them. Once such an account was published, other members also might contribute divergent, or confirming, experiences; for instance, somebody might write, "That may have worked fine in a small group but it didn't go over well in my large lecture class."

Paul Lopes has agreed to be a preliminary contact person for the development of such a feature. If you would be interested in working with him, or have ideas about how this feature might best be done, or have items you would like to contribute for use in such a column, write Paul at Department of Sociology, Tufts University, Medford MA 02155, or email to [plopes@pearl.tufts.edu](mailto:plopes@pearl.tufts.edu).

self-promoters in art and popular music in the 1960s and 70s. The title of a seminal group, the Velvet Underground, says it all.

Denzin, Norman. *The Cinematic Society*. Denzin asserts that the cinematic gaze reflects the machinery of surveillance and power that regulates social behavior in contemporary society. The cinema turns the

audience into voyeurs who eagerly follow the lives of screen characters as if they were real. Did Homer do anything different?

Wilson, Clint and Félix Gutiérrez. *Race, Multiculturalism, and the Media: From Mass to Class Communication*. Focusing on film, TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, advertising, and public relations [but sadly not music], the authors show how the mass media have become ever more class/racial targeted.

The focus is on Hispanics, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans.

### Erratum

In noting *Dress Codes: Meanings and Messages in American Culture* in the last issue Ruth Rubinstein's name was misspelled. Also the "image of seduction" should have been described as distinct from the "image of power." I am sorry for these errors.

## Convention Information

### Culture Section Sessions

#### **Cultural Theory: Defining Core Controversies (cosponsored with the Theory Section)**

Toward a Strong Program in the Sociology of Culture: "Textuality" in Institutions and Interactions. Jeffrey C. Alexander, University of California-Los Angeles

Theories of Culture: Institutional vs. Actor-Centered Approaches. John Meyer, Stanford; John Boli, Emory; Francisco O. Ramirez, Stanford; and George M. Thomas, Arizona State

Meaningful Interests/Interested Meanings. Roger Friedland, University of California-Santa Barbara

Discussants and Organizers: Steven Seidman, SUNY-Albany and Ann Swidler, University of California-Berkeley  
Presider: Steven Seidman, SUNY-Albany

#### **Culture by the Numbers**

Developing Indicators of Long-Term Cultural Change, 1900-1990. Marlis Buchmann and Manuel Eisner, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

What Can Survey Data Tell Us About Conflict and Consensus? Paul DiMaggio and Bethany Bryson, Princeton

Alternative Measures for Cultural Patterns. Roger M. Kern, Vanderbilt  
Alternative Measures of Symbolic Boundaries Among Artists. Michele Ollivier, Carleton

Event History Analysis of Authors' Reputations. Kees van Rees and Jeroen Vermunt, Tilburg University  
Organizer and Presider: Richard A. Peterson, Vanderbilt

#### **Identity: Cultural and Institutional Contexts**

Identity Work is Hard Work: Majority and Minority Identities in Contemporary Canada. Jane Jenson, Université de Montréal

Multiplying Identities: Identity Elaboration in San Francisco's Lesbian/Gay Organizations, 1964-94. Elizabeth Armstrong, University of California-Berkeley

Identity and Elite Philanthropy: Context, Continuity, and Change. Francie Ostrower, Harvard

Death Becomes Them: Commemoration, Biography, and the Ritual Reconstruction of Professional and Organizational Identity. Wendy Espeland, Northwestern and Terrence Halliday, American Bar Foundation

Discussant: Ronald Jepperson, University of Washington-Seattle  
Organizer: Yasemin Soysal, Harvard

#### **Culture and National Difference**

The Origins of Japanese Civility: The State-Market Interaction Hypothesis. Eiko Ikegami, Yale

Constructing Communities and Negotiating Identities: Moslem Immigrants in France and Germany. Riva Kastoryano, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Internationales, CNRS, Paris

Cultural Differences in the Abortion Discourse of the Catholic Church: Evidence from Four Countries. Michele Dillon, Yale  
National Identity and National Boundary Patterns in France and the United States. Michèle Lamont, Princeton  
Discussant and Presider: Lyn Spillman, Notre Dame  
Organizer: Ann Swidler, University of California-Berkeley

#### **New Trends in the Sociology of the Arts**

Loser Wins: Outsider Art and the Salvaging of Disinterestedness. Julia S. Arderly, University of Kentucky

W.A. Mozart's *The Magic Flute*: An Analysis of the Arias. Barbara W. Altizer, SUNY-Stony Brook

Sieves, Funnels, and Pumps: Understanding the Effects of Organizations on Art. Victoria Alexander, Harvard

Cultured Objects and Cultured People: Photography and the American Middle Class. Marshall Battani, University of California-Davis  
Discussant: Anne E. Bowler, University of Delaware-Newark  
Presider: Vera L. Zolberg, New School for Social Research  
Organizers: Vera L. Zolberg and Anne E. Bowler

#### **The Politics of Culture: Race, Ethnicity, Domination, and Resistance (cosponsored with Race and Ethnic Minorities)**

Brown Skinned White Girls: Class, Culture, and the Construction of White Identity in Suburban Communities. Francine Winddance Twine, University of Washington-Seattle

Frontlines and Borders: Experiences of Latinas and Arab American Women at the University. Laura Lopez and Frances Hasso, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Better Hindu than Black? Narratives of Asian Indian Identity. Arvind Rajagopal, Purdue

The Burden of Not Being Black: A Comparative Analysis of Brazilians and Americans of African Descent. Jonathan Warren, Fulbright Fellow, University Federal do Rio de Janeiro

A Collision of Sport, Race, and American Ideology: The 1968 African American Olympic Protest Movement. Doug Hartmann, University of California-San Diego

Presider: Paul Lopes, Tufts  
Organizers: Paul Lopes, Tufts and Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard

#### **Author Meets Critics: The Fabrication of Labor: Germany and Britain, 1640-1914 by Richard Biernacki**

Panel: Ronald R. Aminzade, University of Minnesota; Sonya O. Rose, University of Michigan; and William Sewell, Jr., University of Chicago

Author: Richard Biernacki, University of California-San Diego  
Presider: Neil Fligstein, University of California-Berkeley  
Organizer: Ann Swidler, University of California-Berkeley

### Culture Section Refereed Roundtables

Organizers: Michele Dillon and Joshua Gamson, Yale

#### **1. Public Space and Urban Cultures**

Suburbs in U.S. Visual Art. Judith Friedman, Rutgers  
Downtown: A Channel of Mass Communication. Sherril Horowitz Schuster, Rutgers

## 2. *Religion and Religious Transformations*

The Politics of Secularization: On Religious Products and the Political Contexts that Enhance Their Appeal. Carl W. Roberts, Iowa State  
The "Personal as Political": A Study of Confession in History, Catholics, and in "Coming Out" and "Outing." Rita Melendez, Yale  
Fundamentalism, Consumer Identity and Image-Based Politics. Arvind Rajagopal, Purdue  
Religiosity and Pop Cultural Heroes. Douglas Porpora, Drexel

## 3. *Medicine and Culture*

Informed Consent to Medical Procedures: Cultural Perspectives on the Gap Between Principle and Practice. Lisa Bonchek, Rutgers  
Traditional Medicine, Social Control, and the Ecuadorian Indian. Nancy M. Claycomb, Texas A&M

## 4. *Popular Music*

Making Music Popular: An Analysis of Structural Constraints on Music Programming in Commercial Radio. Jarl Ahlkvist, Johnson State College  
South Texas Border Culture: Narrative Themes in Conjunto Music. Jeffrey Halley and Avelardo Valdez, University of Texas-San Antonio

## 5. *Conceptualizing the Self*

Towards a Cultural Social Psychology of Identity. Todd A. Hechtman, University of California-Santa Barbara  
The Multivocality of the Subject: A Phenomenological Ontology of the Individual in the Contemporary American Public Sphere. Jason A. Kaufman, Princeton

## 6. *Professional Identities and Professional Cultures*

Lawyers On Line: Professional Identity and Boundary Maintenance in Cyberspace. Debra Schleef, Northwestern University  
Between Objectivity and Moral Vision: How Evangelical and Catholic Journalists Manage the Boundary Between Profession and Religious Subculture. John Schmalzbauer, Princeton

## 7. *Collective Memory*

Race and American Collective Memory Since 1960: Creating and Changing Institutions of Knowledge. Joseph T. Rhea, Harvard  
Social Memories: Steps to Sociology of the Past. Eviatar Zerubavel, Rutgers  
Socio-Historical Reflections on the Concept of Collective Memory. Sachiko Takita-Ishii, University of California-Los Angeles

## 8. *The Construction of Collective Identities*

Show Me Yours: Organization and Identity in Lesbian and Gay Film Festivals. Joshua Gamson, Yale  
Projecting Democracy: The Formation of Citizenship Across Youth Networks in Brazil. Ann Mische, New School for Social Research

## 9. *Racial and Ethnic Boundaries*

Communication, Solidarity, and the Cultural Dynamics of Integration and Separation: The Discourses of African-American Community, 1790-1970. Ronald N. Jacobs, University of California-Los Angeles  
Defining Jewishness in Post-Holocaust Germany: Moral Boundaries and the Making of Ethnicity. Lynn Rapaport, Pomona  
A Sociocultural Model of Reproduction of Ethnic Identity. Kathryn Dietrich, Texas A&M

## 10. *Public Culture and Public Discourse*

The Fascination of Firearms for Men. Johnnie Spraggins, University of Michigan  
Traditions, Transcendence, and Tocqueville: Search for the Golden Mean Between Temerity and Totalitarianism. Francis LeAnne Haynes, Texas A&M

## 11. *Political Culture*

Perceptions of Justice: Gender Differences in Postcommunist Eastern Europe. Pamela Davidson, University of Massachusetts  
Continuity and Change in the Festivals of Post-Soviet Uzbekistan. Laura Adams, University of California-Berkeley

## See Your Dissertation Title in Lights!

Are you working on a PhD dissertation (or have a student who is)? Even (in fact, especially) if it's at an early stage, you and others could benefit by publishing a description of it in *Culture*. Dissertation descriptions were published in the last issue and will be again in the next one.

To submit, send the following to the Editor by e-mail no later than June 15: (1) the dissertation title; (2) a description (maximum 60 words); and (3) (in this order, please) your name, institution, postal address, phone number (optional), and email address. The description should indicate (not necessarily in this order) the central issues being addressed, the kind of methods used, and the stage your work is at. See the last issue for examples.

## 12. *Popular Culture: Film and Television*

Working On and Off the Set: Comparing Women's Occupations in the Television and U.S. Labor Force. William G. Holt III, Yale  
*Comtsotsi*: Politics and Crime in South African Cinema. Mark Beittel, Università degli Studi di Trento

## 13. *Cultural Theory*

The Emergence of Culture from Community. Loren Demerath, Indiana  
Constructing a Sociology for an Icon of Aesthetic Modernity. Robert Witkin, University of Exeter  
The Internet as a Post-Modern Culture. Allan Liska, University of Maryland and Ilana Grune, HKU, Netherlands

## 14. *Meaning and Measurement*

Wolfflin vs. Panofsky: Is Meaning Independent of Form in Art? Albert Bergesen, University of Arizona  
Method Choice in Museum Studies. Adam Bickford, Smithsonian Institution

## —Research Network Meetings—

The Meaning and Measurement Network (contact Ann Swidler: swidler@uclink2.berkeley.edu) and the Symbolic Boundaries Working Group (contact Michèle Lamont: mlamont@pucc.princeton.edu) will have a mini-conference the day before the ASA meetings. See the "Network News" story (p. 10) for full information. In addition, the following networks are planning to meet in Washington. Some of these meetings may be on Saturday at 6:30 (in a single room, so that it will be possible to attend more than one), but none of the times have been definitely set. Please be sure to contact the person listed below in order to receive information on when and where the Network will meet.

*Culture and Gender*. Sharon Hays: sh2q@virginia.edu  
*Culture and History*. John Mohr: mohr@alishaw.ucsb.edu  
*Culture and Theory*. Anne Kane: 512/471-1122 or aekane@jeeves.la.utexas.edu. Please contact Anne no later than May 15. If you haven't already done so, send a statement (see the Winter issue for details) regarding your specific work and theoretical issues you would like to explore via the network.  
*Political Culture*. Nina Eliasoph: eliasoph@ssc.wisc.edu. Please write by June 30.  
*Race and Culture*. Craig Watkins: cwatkins@astro.ocis.temple.edu  
*Religion and Culture*. Rhys Williams: willrhys@siucvmb.siu.edu

## Network News

Three Culture Section research groups are reporting in this issue. See the last for reports from four others (Culture and History, Culture and Theory, Political Culture, and Culture and Gender). Most of the groups are having gatherings at the ASA meetings this summer; see the Convention Information story for details.

### *Race and Culture Network*

The Race and Culture research network has initiated an e-mail conference group entitled "RaCultur." The purpose of the network is to create a space to encourage and facilitate informative dialogue about the complex relationship between race and culture. As of now there are no topical constraints; hence, we can discuss, for example, books and articles of interests, teaching, dissertations, current research projects, popular culture, and arranging informal meetings during the ASA.

A primary goal of the email conference group is to share and exchange valuable information about how the study of race and the sociology of culture intersect in numerous ways. While it is difficult to forecast the precise structure and thrust of the email conference it is our hope that it will stand out as an invigorating and insightful way to maintain and extend the sociology of culture community.

The network is open to undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and independent researchers. Like most email conferences RaCultur is an opportunity to establish critical dialogue about emergent issues across campuses and disciplinary boundaries. To subscribe to the network simply type: *Listserve@vm.temple.edu*; in the body of the text then type: *sub RaCultur [your name]*; to send a message, type: *RaCultur@vm.temple.edu*; to sign off type: *signoff RaCultur*.

If you have suggestions for how the research group should proceed please contact the organizers: Mitchell Duneier, Dept. of Sociology, University of California–Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA 93106; *duneier@alishaw.ucsb.edu*; or Craig Watkins, Dept. of Sociology, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122; *cwatkins@astro.ocis.temple.edu*.

### *The Working Group on Symbolic Boundaries Moves Ahead*

The Working Group on Symbolic Boundaries held its first workshop during the meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society. Seventeen cultural sociologists from a number of universities inside and outside the Eastern district met at the University of Pennsylvania to share their work in progress. Members of the group explore symbolic boundaries in race and ethnicity, class, gender, arts and culture, work and organizations, law, religion, politics, marketing, public policy, identity, and community. They also are diverse in their theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches. These differences provided the impetus for a lively and productive discussion of the ways different approaches to symbolic boundaries can inform each other. Through discussion, we identified a list of theoretical issues pertaining to symbolic boundaries (see below). Members of the group will write short statements on substantive and methodological issues pertaining to the study/measurement of these issues. These statements will be used as a basis for future discussions. Our next meeting will take place during the Meaning and Mea-

surement meeting on the day before ASA's Culture Section Day in Washington. It will be hosted by Mark Jacobs and the Cultural Studies Program of George Mason University. Rooms will be available at a uniquely affordable rate for the night of August 17th.

The Working Group on Symbolic Boundaries is open to anyone interested in symbolic boundaries. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy of the working statements and/or to attend the August meeting should contact Bethany Bryson, who will distribute information about the group's activities. She can be reached at *bpbryson@princeton.edu*. Individuals wishing to have more general information about the group should contact Michèle Lamont at *mlamont@princeton.edu*. We look forward to seeing you in August.

Preliminary statements on the study/measurement of various issues concerning boundaries: Rigid/Fluid Boundaries (Mark Jacobs, George Mason); Objective/Subjective Boundaries (Mary Blair-Loy, Univ. of Chicago); Positive/Negative Boundaries (Bethany Bryson, Princeton); Visible/Invisible Boundaries (Richard Williams, Rutgers); Embedded/Transportable Boundaries (Art Stinchcombe, Northwestern and Kim Wittenstrom, Rutgers); Multiple/Conflicting Boundaries (Michèle Lamont, Princeton and Lyn Spillman, Notre Dame); Contextual/Representational Boundaries (Nina Eliosoph, Univ. of Wisconsin–Madison); Explicit/Taken-For-Granted Boundaries (Maureen Waller, Princeton and Doug Holt, Penn State); Levels of Analysis (Art Stinchcombe, Northwestern).

Other participants in the March workshop included: Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, CUNY–Graduate Center; Paul Lichterman, Univ. of Wisconsin–Madison; John Schmalzbauer and Brad Wilcox, Princeton; Kate Kelly and Greg Guagnano, George Mason.

PS: We wish to thank the Department of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania for putting at our disposal physical facilities and Mabel Berezin for her assistance in the matter; we also want to thank Gaye Tuchman, President of the Eastern Sociological Society, for making room for two productive sessions on symbolic boundaries during the Philadelphia meetings.

### *Meaning & Measurement/Symbolic Boundaries One-Day Mini-Conference, August 18*

On the day before the ASA meeting, George Mason University's Cultural Studies Program will host a one-day mini-conference. The Symbolic Boundaries Working Group (which met already at the ESS meetings) and others interested in meaning and measurement (many of whom met at the ASA last August) will meet the evening of August 17 and all day on August 18. We will then be driven by van from George Mason to the Washington Hilton (and other convention hotels) on the evening of August 18, ready for the Culture Section day at the ASA which, this year, will be the first day, August 19.

We will work out details of the one-day conference once we have a better idea who is coming. A suggestion is:

*Thursday evening, August 17:* A dinner for all conference participants, with reports from the Boundaries group on their progress and by the other group (tentatively called the "Systematic Measurement Group") for the next day's activities.

*Friday, August 18:* Morning and afternoon working sessions. The Systematic Measurement Group would start developing pilot research instruments, based on the ideas that came out of our discussions at last year's ASA. (During the summer, those planning to attend can use our email network to begin developing ideas and perhaps setting up some preliminary subgroups, task forces, etc.). The Symbolic Boundaries Working Group would continue the discussions, sharing of papers, and comparison along common theoretical lines that they have already begun.

During a long lunch session, the two groups could share results of their morning's activities, trade suggestions, and seek advice. Those who wished to work for a period with the other group could move around.

In the evening, perhaps after an early dinner and wrap-up session, we would head back to Washington by van.

*Practical arrangements:* Through the kind offices of Mark Jacobs at George Mason, 26 dorm-style beds have been reserved, \$18 for a shared room and \$26 for a single (there are only two). If there are more than 26 participants, those with more money can be housed in a nearby historic inn for \$95 per night. Inexpensive meals are available on campus. George Mason is located in Fairfax, Virginia, a \$25.00 cab ride from either Washington-National or Dulles Airports (we can arrange shared rides if we know when people are arriving).

Right now, would those interested in attending contact either Ann Swidler (swidler@uclink2.berkeley.edu) or Michèle Lamont (mlamont@pucc.princeton.edu), letting us know that you are interested in attending? Later, when we know who is interested, whether there is a room shortage, etc., we will ask for a small deposit to hold rooms.

*Note on transportation arrangements:* When you make your plans for the ASA, arrange to arrive by late afternoon on August 17th. The mini-conference should be a very interesting (fun) get-together at a very reasonable price. (Apparently there are very good Indian and Chinese restaurants nearby). The hope is that with a whole day of concentrated work we may make substantial progress on shared problems.

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## Cultural News Beyond the Section

### —Another ASA/DC Session of Interest to Culturalists—

#### *Modernity and the Meanings of Community: Autonomy and Solidarity in Theory and Practice*

Moral Individualism, Republican Virtue, and Willed Community: The Quest for Community and Its Transformations. Jeff Weintraub, Williams

Labor, Liberty, and the Foundations of Community: The Challenge of Karl Polanyi. Maurice Glasman, European University Institute  
Community, Regulative Liberty, and the Making of Modern Citizenship. Margaret Somers, University of Michigan

Indirect Relationships, Imagined Communities, and Democratic Theory. Craig Calhoun, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill  
Presiders: Jeff Weintraub, Williams and Joseph Soares, Yale  
Organizer: Jeff Weintraub, Williams

### —Catch a Movie in DC—

*Black Is . . . Black Ain't*, Marlon Riggs' last film, will tentatively be jointly screened by the Sex/Gender and Race/Ethnic Minorities sections. This is a much acclaimed documentary exploration of identity.

### —Two Calls for Papers—

Thelma McCormack invites papers on *Hate Lit: Content, Consumers, Law, and Legislation* for a volume in the JAI series on communication. Comparative studies are particularly welcome. Manuscripts should be original, not published elsewhere, and not over 10,000 words. Closing date: January 1996. Send submissions to Thelma at Institute for Social Research, 266 ASB, York University, 4700 Keele St., North York, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada.

The American Name Society will have its annual meeting in Chicago on December 27-30, 1995. It is an interdisciplinary organization with participation from almost all of the social sciences (including sociology) and the humanities dealing with various aspects of names. Articles from these fields have also been published in the quarterly journal *Names*. You are invited to present papers dealing with some aspect of names. Deadline for submission of abstracts for papers: September 15, 1995. For further information, contact Sheila Embleton, Program Chair; embleton@vm1.yorku.ca.

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## About the Section and Newsletter

*Section leaders:* The chair of the Culture Section is Michèle Lamont, Princeton University; email lamont@pucc.princeton.edu; phone 609/258-4538. The chair-elect (also Program Chair for the 1995 meetings) is Ann Swidler of University of California–Berkeley; email swidler@uclink2.berkeley.edu; phone 510/644-0858.

*Culture* is the official newsletter for the Sociology of Culture Section of the American Sociological Association. All articles and columns are copyrighted by their authors. *Culture* is indexed in *Sociological Abstracts*.

*Deadline for Spring 1995 issue:* June 15. Unsolicited contributions are welcome in all content categories (articles, announcements, section news, dissertation descriptions, comments on previous articles, letters to the editor). They should be sent to the editor by email 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 email. Keep in mind that this is a newsletter, not a journal. Aim for a length of 1,500 to 2,500 words. Submission of material to *Culture* constitutes permission for abstracting and indexing of one's material. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions. See "Books of Note" for information on getting books covered. Address all other inquiries to the editor:

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**Editor's note:** Are you unhappy that your book hasn't been mentioned in Books of Note? If we haven't heard of it, we can't cover it. Send information on your book to Richard Peterson at the Department of Sociology; Box 1635, Station B; Vanderbilt University; Nashville, TN 37235; bitnet: petersra@vuctrvax.

Rosengren, Karl Eric, editor. *Media Effects and Beyond*. London: Routledge. The character, causes, and consequences of mass media use among some 5,000 Swedish youth have been followed since 1975. In addition data have been collected from parents, teachers, observational studies, and archival material. The authors use these data (part of an ongoing University of Lund study) to show clearly that the media are indeed powerful agents of socialization, influencing day-to-day interaction, long term aggressive tendencies, educational attainment, and plans for work careers.

Heide, Margaret. *Television Culture and Women's Lives: thirtysomething and the Contradictions of Gender*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Based on her own reading of episodes from the TV series *thirtysomething* and interviews with forty "baby-boomer" women, Heide challenges theories that women passively absorb mass media messages. Rather, women viewers reinterpret the program's conservative view on gender roles as a protest against real dilemmas women face as they try to integrate career and family.

Harper, Douglas, editor. *Cape Breton 1952: The Photographic Vision of Timothy Asch*. International Visual Sociology Association, Department of Sociology, University of Kentucky: Lexington, KY. Harper does an excellent job of presenting these compelling ethnographic photographs by Timothy Asch, both in the context of the photographer's early development and in the fisher/farmer lives of Cape Breton forty-odd years ago.

Smith, Frank. *Whose Language? What Power?: A Universal Conflict in a South African Setting*. New York: Teachers College Press. Smith presents a vivid account of the political and educational conflict surrounding the development of language and thought in South Africa.

Biklen, Sari Knopp. *School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press. This book examines teaching as a gendered occupation. Biklen also examines ideas about teachers that circulate in the culture through fiction, biography, and talk.

Silin, Jonathan. *Sex, Death, and the Education of Children: Our Passion for Ignorance*

*in the Age of AIDS*. New York: Teachers College Press. Silin explores the dramatic changes that have taken place in our perception of young children as a result of the AIDS epidemic, and the tragic stasis in education and culture that has blocked teachers, parents, and the public from taking effective steps within our schools and culture to save children from this terrible disease.

### *Twenty from Routledge*

Aronowitz, Stanley. *Dead Artists, Live Theories, and Other Cultural Problems*. In a series of essays Aronowitz suggests that art and popular culture don't simply mirror experience, but help to produce it. He argues that aesthetic theories have helped to justify and perpetuate cultural and economic privilege.

Ruddick, Susan. *Young and Homeless in Hollywood: Mapping the Social Imaginary*. Ruddick examines the emergent service network for homeless youth in Hollywood, CA—the place—as a prism for investigating contemporary struggles over conceptions of youth, delinquency, dangerous classes, and State intervention.

Wright, Susan, editor. *The Anthropology of Organizations*. Challenging the idea of "organizational culture" as too facile, the authors illustrate the range of anthropological concepts and perspectives that can usefully be applied to studying organizations.

Feagin, Joe R. and Hernan Vera. *White Racism: The Basics*. The authors analyze a series of racial incidents—public and private—which reveal this "dirty secret of American life" to be deeply embedded in culture, law, punishment, the shape of cities, international relations, and the rhythm of daily life.

Adorno, Theodor. *The Stars Down to Earth*. This is the first published collection of Adorno's essays dealing with irrational and popular culture. Though written a half century ago, they have relevance for understanding contemporary "New Age" cults and neo-fascism.

Plummer, Ken. *Telling Sexual Stories*. Using three examples (rape stories, coming-out stories, and sexual recovery stories) Plummer examines the development and meaning of emerging sexual narratives in an explicitly gendered participatory political culture.

Morell, Carolyn M. *Unwomanly Conduct: The Challenges of Intentional Childlessness*. Grounded in her own experience as a non-mothering woman, a social worker, and a feminist activist, Morell "wrote the book [she] wanted to read," offering a vibrant account of the experience of childlessness and the dependency of the idealization of motherhood on the negative counterpoint of childlessness.

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano, Grace Chang, and Linda Rennie Forcey, editors. *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency*. Based on studies of a wide range of ethnic and class situations, the authors show the diverse structurings of expectations surrounding mothering.

Finerman, Martha Albertson and Roxanne Mykitiuk, editors. *The Public Nature of Private Violence: Women and the Discovery of Abuse*. The authors argue that, to be understood, domestic violence must be seen in cultural and social context rather than simply within the psychological domain of the family.

Gabriel, John. *Racism, Culture, Markets*. Case studies consider the role of contemporary media and popular culture in debates over racism as seen in the Gulf War, the Rushdie affair, domestic violence, Third World tourism, etc.

Davis, Kathy. *Reshaping the Female Body: The Dilemma of Cosmetic Surgery*. Davis argues that like many other practices in contemporary society, cosmetic surgery is both a solution and a symptom of a problem. For most women, cosmetic surgery, like braces on the teeth, is less about beauty than about being ordinary, a way of refusing to suffer beyond what is fair.

Zatz, Marjorie S. *Producing Legality: Law and Socialism in Cuba*. This is a detailed account of the construction of a socialist legal system in Cuba.

Merelman, Richard M. *Representing Black Culture: Race and Cultural Politics in the United States*. Merelman looks at the role of black culture in contemporary race relations, particularly the projection of so many musical and performance styles, singers, and other performers into the mainstream.

Allen, Theodore W. *The Invention of the White Race, Volume One: Racial Oppression and Social Control*. When the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619 there were no "white" people there, nor would there be for another sixty years. Allen carefully shows how, when, and why the colonists of various European ethnicities were amalgamated under a single label denoting race.

Wright, Erik Olin. *Interrogating Inequality: Essays on Class Analysis, Socialism, and Marxism*. Wright maps a range of alternative conceptions of inequality in the social sciences and rearticulates a distinctive Marxist class-based view of inequality. He finishes with a discussion of what it means to remain a Marxist scholar in the present era.

Gartman, David. *Auto-Opium: A Social History of American Automobile Design*. A comprehensive history of the profession and

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