## A Message From the Chair
### Barry Schwartz
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Does perspective limit what observation tells us about reality? Do the very methods we use to engage reality predetermine our understanding? Is reality, in truth, socially constructed? The answer to all three questions is yes, *to a degree*, but the questions themselves are puzzling.

At a time when geysers of new information about society are erupting and methods of unprecedented power and accessibility abound, influential men and women are spending their best years asserting that no knowledge can be objectively warranted, that, at best, we can only know what influential people want us to know. Historian Alan Munslow speaks for many when he says: "The reality of the past is the written report, rather than the past *as it actually was . . .* The past is not rediscovered or found. It is created or represented by the historian as a text." Munslow's statement appears in an article on The Historical Society, founded by historian Eugene Genovese and dedicated to renewing a profession increasingly emancipated from the reality of its own sources (Keylor 1999). No such movement exists in sociology, but no one can deny that challenges to constructionism and its role in sociology's politicization are multiplying rapidly (Glazer 1994; Horowitz 1993; Imber 1999; Lipset 1994). If constructionists are to meet these challenges, their arguments must be strengthened.

Reacting to traditional ideas about culture "determining" "molding" and "shaping" institutions and action (Kroeber [1923] 1963: 60-64), social constructionism is based on a simple premise: since the social world is a product of human agency (Berger and Luckmann 1967), and since information

### Also in this issue. . .

## Against Closure: Amplifying the Semantic Richness of the Section's Culture
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The very success of the Culture Section in its first decade poses a special challenge for the decade ahead: how to sustain the initial burst of intellectual excitement and creativity. Although scientific organizations can facilitate the development of their fields, they can also (as Bernard Barber demonstrates) retard it as well. In the terms introduced by the social psychologist Milton Rokeach, belief systems develop in conjunction with disbelief systems; it is not hard to find instances of those latter systems—including scientific ones—creating resistance to scientific discovery. The quantity, quality, and influence of culture studies that we witness today validate our efforts over the past decade to seek convergence among the many diverse working conceptions of culture. But perhaps this is the right point in the section's natural history to protect against the dangers of intellectual closure, by appealing to the classic arts of rhetoric and dialectic.

### The "Crisis" of Multiple Voices

We take for granted that culture is a site of moral and cognitive contestation among diverse groups over such issues as race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationality. The mid-century philosopher Richard McKeon (perhaps wishing to avoid the moral connotations attaching to such terms as "traditionalists" and "progressives") in effect contextualized contemporary discussions about the "culture war," by tracing back to ancient Greece repeated "battles of the books" between "paleoterists" and "neoterists" (1967). We should expect no less contestation within the culture of the Culture Section. As Raymond Williams claimed, just a few years before the section's founding:

> Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. . . . mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought (1983).

The issue before us is how to realize the productive potential of intellectual contestation—how to turn disputation to dialogue.

about the world is mediated by interest-laden institutions, knowledge can only be produced, never discovered. This second premise follows politically, not logically, from the first. Emphasizing the malleability of social order, constructionism resonates with reformist agendas.

Not all social scientists are constructionists, or even reform-minded, but their number, if not dominant, is evident in the power of their root metaphors "by means of which a given thinker describes, by *analogical extension*, some domain to which [his] ideas do not immediately and literally apply" (cited in Turner 1974: 26). Sociologists, thus, analyze their subject matter--from gender, aging, race, and ethnicity to nation, community, tradition, and history--in terms of its "invention," "fabrication," "manufacture," "production," "reproduction," "making," "remaking," "creation." Recent review topics in the "Ideology and Cultural Production" section of *Contemporary Sociology*, including the production of consumption, reinventing the sexes, fabricating authenticity, and reinventing American Protestantism, show what "cultural production" means and how contagious are its metaphors. A recent title under *Contemporary Sociology*'s "Cognitions, Emotions, and Identities" section tells about "inventing ourselves." Even social problems, the staple of sociology's reformist strain, appear to be "produced" by the media reporting them--as if moral panics and false crime waves were the principal forms of deviance.

Root metaphors spread precisely because they distort reality. New representations of Christopher Columbus epitomize the dilemma. When war against Great Britain erupted in 1775, Americans condemned John Cabot as the shadowy agent of an English King and honored Columbus as the true discoverer of their country. They built statues of Columbus, wrote multi-volume biographies about him, named colleges, cities, and counties after him, put him in the curriculum, and named America itself "Columbia." Of course, the story of Columbus is a construction, but constructions assume different forms. Columbus's story could have been constructed in at least four senses: (1) invented out of thin air in defiance of known biographical facts; (2) patterned on established facts, some of which are exaggerated, muted, or altered in sequence; (3) patterned after solid facts, but so selectively as to distort reality; (4) patterned after erroneous inferences from Columbus's conduct. How, then, are we to regard Columbus? Is he an invention? If so, what has been invented? An exaggeration? What precisely is the overstatement? A selective perception? Which parts of his story have been retained; which left out? An inference imperfectly drawn? What is the erroneous deduction and what led to it? Separated from real accomplishments and faults, defining Columbus as a construction is meaningless.

Constructionism, in either its strong form, which de-emphasizes reality, or its weak form, which overemphasizes the significance of reality's cultural frames, is cynical. We

cannot transparently map reality to observation, but observation is powerfully shaped by reality. Thus, while Christopher Columbus's image *is* constructed, saying this alone emphasizes his image's social roots at the expense of his historical significance. What better way to disparage any historical figure than to define him or her as a projection of present interests and troubles?

Constructionist research is useful when it clarifies historical developments otherwise ignored, including Columbus's harmful exploits, but this research has been inconsistent. Presenting Columbus's (and the nation's) sins as matters of fact, constructionists define Columbus's (and the nation's) virtues as "myths," "meta-narratives," and "constructions" concocted by a privileged majority determined to secure its domination over marginalized minorities. Constructionist scholars are actually positivist on the vices of American history while they dismiss its virtues as politically mediated "representations."

We cannot say which part of Columbus's image biases reality unless we have a more accurate, better constructed description of what reality is. As this simple fact becomes evident, reactions against constructionist excesses grow in volume and become increasingly pointed (Schudson 1997). Even Kenneth Gergen, the constructionist's constructionist, has called for a truce. Many scholars have gone overboard, he admits in his (1999) review of Ian Hacking's (1999) *The Social Construction of What?*, but still "the sciences can benefit by participating in dialogues on the politics of knowledge, the culture lodgement of truth, and multiple ways of seeing the world" (p. 107). Gergen's truce terms are hardly acceptable, for they take for granted the autonomy of cultural lodgement itself. True, observations are meaningless until embedded in cultural frames; but these frames remain irrelevant until embedded in facts. Trapped in the maze of his own logic, Gergen forgets that the "cultural lodgement of truth and multiple ways of seeing the world" are to be demonstrated, not presumed.

Reducing objects to projections of cultural frames is no more extreme than conceiving them as faithful representations of their properties; yet, the two fallacies carry unequal weight. To take the world at face value is merely to be naive; to deny the facticity of the world is to deny the difference between science, which seeks to free itself from all cultural framing, and bias-ridden common sense. Might we seek then, to overcome rather than celebrate "multiple ways of seeing the world"? Positivism and empiricism have become dirty words in parts of our discipline, but with no effort to know reality as it actually is, our work will count for little beyond our own circle. Saying this, I may be dismissed as a crank; but the issue is consequential. Whether we experience the world as it is processed through the categories of thought, as Kant believed, or directly, as if our minds were *tabula rasa*, as Locke insisted, is no longer debatable. We know all perceptions are constructed; the issue is how to adjudicate among competing constructions. Will we face this difficult

## (Schwartz, continued)

problem, as have our intellectual forebears, or will we continue to rationalize the claim that multiple standpoints yield multiple truths and that we are all entitled to our own? Will we cling to stale ideas about the social construction of reality, or will we formulate a new constructionism properly aligned to the world?

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## Jacobs: Against Closure, continued.

Our colleagues in the Theory Section have proclaimed a "crisis" in the discipline; the differing characterizations of that crisis mark perhaps its most distinctive feature. Just three years ago, Donald Levine (*Visions of the Sociological Tradition*) and Charles Lemert (*Sociology After the Crisis*) published masterful, though antithetical, summative narratives about the history of theory. For Levine, the crisis of sociology is one of intellectual fragmentation and paralysis: "*established forms no longer provide orienting frameworks for intellectual communities*" (p. 290, italics in the original). He advocates a renewed and deepened dialogue with the classics, works that have powers to clarify and expand the community of reasoned responses to questions of enduring significance. For Lemert, by contrast, "sociology now faces the terrifying work of admitting that it did . . . [its] critical work largely from within the culture it was critiquing" (p. 208). For Lemert, as opposed to Levine, postmodernism has destroyed the very possibility of conceiving universal standards of knowing on which integral social or intellectual communities could be built. He advocates instead "a transformation of the deeper sensibilities, including those determining how and what we feel and do no less than how we think" (p. 10). Sociology "will lose its voice among the coming generation of young people if it fails to relinquish its rigid adherence to the traditional disciplinary standards" (p. 206).

Is the break between modernity and postmodernity so abrupt and so complete that we can no longer think across it? Is the "dark secret" of exclusion and exploitation so central and so poisonous to the classical traditions of sociology as to invalidate them entirely as guides to the future, even as those traditions are themselves transformed (as traditions inevitably are) in the new generation? Applying Erik Erikson's conception of developmental (or "ontogenetic") crisis to communities of discourse rather than to individuals, I prefer to see the current crisis of sociology not as one of imminent catastrophe, but rather as an occasion for working through an inevitable challenge, on the way to discovering (or is it constructing?) a collective identity. In normal science, we routinely encounter substantive (or "factual") contradictions that lead to the further elaboration of existing theories. Ours is a time, instead, of perspectival contradictions—a clash of values and basic assumptions, as exemplified by the debate (never, tellingly, explicitly joined) between Levine and Lemert.

These issues, of course, extend to the debates of our own section. In effect, Lemert makes the strong case for Cultural Studies—in its literary variant, at that. (Here I have to confess, as the founding director of the first interdisciplinary doctoral program in Cultural Studies in the United States, that I don't find the case convincing in its strong form.) This argument echoes, for example, in Steven Seidman's tempered contribution to Elizabeth Long's anthology about Cultural Studies and cultural sociology:

> Relativizing sociology allows us to frame it as a social practice and to reflect upon the social interests that shape its formation and, in turn, shape the formation of the social. Relativizing sociology makes possible a genealogy of this discipline, an inquiry aimed at exposing its social and political unconsciousness. . . . Cultural studies places struggles over meanings, identities, knowledges, and the control of discursive production and authorization on an equal footing with struggles over the distribution of material resources (54-5).

Seidman's own work in queer theory incorporates this perspective. While acknowledging the value of this work, Karen Cerulo is hardly alone in sounding a cautionary note: "At present, the cultural studies position appears somewhat trapped in a singular conclusion that locates the constructed nature of culture in the sole service of power. Further, such works frequently frame social action as a process that is fully culturally constituted (401)."

There are of course many other perspectival contradictions involved in such issues before cultural sociologists as constructivism/ post-constructivism (see this issue's "Message from the Chair"), individualism/ collectivism, and cognition/ morality. In our postmodern mode of celebrating intellectual difference, is it possible to cultivate play among these contradictions instead of trying to eliminate them, while heightening (rather than relaxing) our attention to standards of argumentation? This is to invoke, once again, the arts of rhetoric and dialectics.

## Take Music, For Example

By means of a musical example, I want to suggest how a particular sort of dialogic vision evokes the ability of different traditions to inform each other, in a manner that transcends all of them. This is the form of dialogic vision that Levine (extending the model of his mentor Richard McKeon) adopts in his narrative of social theory. It involves articulating the diverse semantic presuppositions of opposed intellectual (or esthetic) positions, in preparation for generating new insights into each position from within the presuppositions of the others. (I use the word "semantic" in its broadest sense, of "meaning-creating.") This heightened rhetorical awareness opens up spaces for mutual discovery and prevents dialogue from devolving into dogmatic disputation. McKeon's schema of semantic presuppositions included variations of voice, method, and intention. (For a fuller description of this schema than I can provide here, consult McKeon 1952 and Watson.) McKeon recognized the "reciprocal priority" of diverse sets of semantic presuppositions, ensuring respect for all of them, while reserving judgment about their fit with particular analytic purposes. His approach thus achieves a principled pluralism, avoiding the paired blinders of relativism and absolutism.

Imagine listening to performances of four diverse musical texts: Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, a breakthrough into classical harmony; Bud Powell's "Bud on Bach," a breakthrough into bebop; Stravinksy's *Rite of Spring*, a breakthrough into modernism; and Schoenberg's *Opus 11*, a breakthrough into serialism.

To recover the meaning—as embodied in vocabulary, syntax, and organization—of each musical text, it is necessary to recognize the particular question at its core. For Bach, the question is how to bring the different hands into harmony. For Bud Powell, the question is why his music is not valued as highly as Bach's. For Stravinsky, the question is what kind of new world order will arise from the ashes of the old. For Schoenberg, the question is how to create music without tonality.

These questions—musical "research problems," if you will—express different motivating intentions, and call forth an entire range of methods, each appropriate to the nature of the inquiry it guides. Bach wrote the *Well-Tempered Clavier* for his son, as a sequence of piano drills, each requiring greater dexterity than the last. The two books of *Well-Tempered Clavier* comprise 48 pieces, one for each major and minor key. Bach's intention is *elemental*, to identify the basic building-blocks of musical composition, and his method is *logistic*. Bud Powell switches, halfway through "Bud on Bach," from a recital of Bach to an improvisation on a Bachian theme. With the evident intention of inspiring *reflexivity* about musical categories as well as his own status as a musician, Powell's method is *problem-focused*: if his improvisation is manifestly of a piece with Bach, and requires even greater dexterity to perform, why is his work not considered to be as "high" as Bach's? Stravinsky writes amidst the collapse of the old order, shortly before the outbreak of the first world war. His intention is *comprehensive*, to herald the birth of a whole new world, and his method—explicit in the musical conflict between death and rebirth, winter and spring—is *dialectical*. Schoenberg's intention is to produce something even more *creative*, by pursuing an *agonistic* method, a thorough and abrupt repudiation of the past. As Schoenberg wrote to a friend in 1909, "What I am striving for is total freedom from all forms, from all symbols of context and logic. In other words, away with 'motivic writing.' Away with harmony . . . away with pathos! Away . . . away . . . "

Each musician adopted a musical voice appropriate to his question, intention, and method. Bach's voice is *objective*, composing in a calculated manner with mathematical precision. Bud Powell's voice is *disciplinary*. He literally speaks through the history of the music. Schoenberg's voice is *personal*, as befits his repudiation of every established influence. Stravinsky's voice, by contrast, is *revelatory*, even prophetic. Indeed, Stravinsky claims not to have deliberately composed *The Rites of Spring* at all, but rather merely to have recorded a musical vision that came to him in a dream: "When I think of the music of other composers . . . how much more *theoretical* it seems than *Le Sacre*. . . . Very little immediate tradition lies behind *Le Sacre du Printemps*, however, and no theory. I had only my ear to help me; I heard and I wrote what I heard. I am the vessel through which *Le Sacre* passed."

## A Schema Good to Think With

What makes these four musical compositions good to think with, then, is not primarily their special beauty, but rather the range of semantic choices (as summarized in table 1) they legitimately express. Any set of works that express a full range of semantic possibilities provides a productive focus for dialogue. Music makes particularly clear the dialogic basis of recovery and invention. Learning from one's predecessors and contemporaries (even—and in some ways especially—those who embrace contrasting styles) is obviously crucial to the process of musical invention. Stravinsky, for example, derived conscious inspiration from American jazz, while Schoenberg needed to master Bachian principles of composition before explicitly undertaking to oppose them. Similarly, listening seriously to all these different compositions together enhances an audience's appreciation for each one of them individually: the process of recovering

the meaning of a particular work largely depends on familiarity with the entire musical conversation of which it forms a part.

Table 1. *(Abridged) Semantic Matrix (after Watson, p. 151)*

|  | VOICE | METHOD | INTENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Schoenberg | personal | agonistic | creative |
| Stravinsky | revelatory | dialectical | comprehensive |
| Powell | disciplinary | probl. foc. | reflexive |
| Bach | objective | logistic | elemental |

Presenting the semantic schema in the form of a matrix does not do full justice to the flexibility of the rhetorical and dialectical inventions it suggests. (For the purposes of this article, I have simplified the matrix; McKeon himself also considers a fourth set of variables, concerning the author's or artist's interpretation of reality.) The matrix should not be read to indicate that particular choices of voice, method, and intention necessarily entail each other; indeed, the many permutations of those choices indicate much greater variation in the range of potential orientations to thought, taste, and action than just the four variants I have discussed thus far. The very meanings of these categories are not fixed, but rather constantly expanding through a process of amplification (a concept I shall explain shortly.) Above all, the schema is only a heuristic device for bringing divergent arguments into dialogue, not a rigid set of ideal categories to which actual arguments must be forced to fit. It can also be used as a heuristic device for generating sets of opposed intellectual or aesthetic positions. I would claim that the particular set of categories presented in the matrix proves to be surprisingly robust, broadly capable of guiding recovery and invention within and among the various disciplines. I will however leave it to the reader to test this claim for herself; the proof is in the pudding.

A musical example makes the schema's purpose and power more readily apparent, because musical belief systems do not as readily engender disbelief systems. It is easier to get fans of Stravinsky to appreciate Schoenberg (despite the theoretical differences and professional rivalry between those musicians), than to promote productive dialogue among proponents of different sociological positions about the sources and conditions of social inequality. Yet my immediate purpose is of course to demonstrate that cultural sociologists in particular can obtain these same benefits of pluralistic self-edification by using the schema. Relating sociological claims to the contexts of their semantic frames demonstrates the strengths of each position while clarifying the differences among them, enabling the parties in dialogue to help each other generate insights and discoveries without abandoning their respective core beliefs. Part of Bud Powell's genius is his ability to make his case by reframing his own ideas through Bach's musical perspective—even though Bach was a court musician, while Powell always struggled for respect, dying in a mental hospital as the eventual outcome of police brutality. Sociologists can similarly strengthen their own positions by opening themselves more

fully to competing perspectives. In its semantic profile, the position of a Donald Levine is roughly analogous to that of a Bud Powell, while the position of a Charles Lemert is analogous to that of a Schoenberg. (An attitudinal survey researcher might be the rough sociological analogue of a Bach, while a world-systems theorist might be that of a Stravinsky.)

The collective benefit generated by semantic analysis is the amplification—iterative expansion and refinement—of the concepts (in rhetorical terms, "commonplaces") which provide the focus for dialogue. In much the same way that Barry Schwartz ("Message from the Chair," this issue) identifies and refines ambiguity in our concept of historical representation by bringing into dialogue the antithetical positions of essentialism and constructivism, McKeon would claim that the dialogue within and across musical generations from Bach to Schoenberg creates and refines ambiguity about the meaning of musical beauty. "Beauty" and "representation" are the rhetorical commonplaces that undergo amplification through these dialogic processes.

### Clarity Of Warrant: In Pursuit Of Productive Ambiguity

Whatever the precise interrelation of culture and social structure, culture is at the core of our current dramatic social change. It stands to reason, then, that the Culture Section should represent a wide variation of semantic possibilities. Our section is where the action is, and its semantic richness is among the section's strengths. The "crisis" of perspectival contradictions requires us to cultivate that richness with special care. This requires us to be especially reflexive about our application of methods, even as we amplify our conceptions of methodological standards. In terms suggested by Eviatar Zerubavel, we need to develop flexibility of mind, while avoiding fuzziness. Dialogic ambiguity can produce either flexibility or fuzziness; the former facilitates the amplification of commonplaces, while the latter impedes it. This distinction implies a clear methodological injunction. As opposed to substantive contradictions, which are more likely to involve issues of claim and evidence, perspectival contradictions are also likely to involve issues of warrant, the link of relevance between evidence and claim (Booth et al., part II). Effective dialogue across differences of semantic presupposition requires us explicitly to identify our warrant, and to qualify our claims so that they do not exceed the warranted evidence.

Consider, for example, the highly charged exchange between the Thernstroms (Abigail and Stephen) and Joe Feagin in a thematic session about race at this month's ASA meetings. The Thernstroms cited GSS survey data to claim that racial tolerance was increasing in American society; Feagin cited chilling in-depth interviews to claim the opposite. (It was understandable in terms of the stakes of the discussion, but nonetheless revealing and disturbing, that part of the large audience abandoned norms of civil decorum to jeer the Thernstroms at various points in the discussion period.) Lacking from the debate was the careful attention to issues of warrant that could have helped the opposing parties refine each other's arguments—and their own. We know

that survey respondents often disguise their true feelings, especially about delicate topics. The GSS data showing increasing acceptance (in principle) of residential integration or intermarriage do not constitute warranted evidence of growing racial tolerance, but only of a change in respondents' sense of what attitudes are proper to report in public. Although narrower than the Thernstroms' claim, this finding is still significant. Conversely, accounts of a relatively few in-depth interviews provide rich evidence of the actual feel of racism, but they do not provide warranted evidence of the pervasiveness of racism in the general population. "Backstage" conversations such as those recently revealed in the secret tapes of racism among Texaco executives may also reflect a perverse process of "sounding" rather than those executives' better natures (note, again, that this is still a significant finding). Even without the further research needed to explore the contradictory claims about changing racial attitudes, we can learn from bringing these claims into dialogue that racial formations have public as well as private faces that may well coexist in paradoxical ways, and that our evidence may speak more to the dynamics of impression-management than to trends in tolerance.

There is a deeper methodological issue at stake here: like Lemert, Feagin's motivating intention seems to be "a transformation of the deeper sensibilities, including those determining how and what we feel and do no less than how we think." This is an important presupposition, which deserves to be stated—and debated—explicitly. Divergent semantic positions will, of course, continue to generate contradictions and paradoxes, both theoretical and practical. The positions are, after all, analytically distinct. Each position is—in its own terms—self-contained and all-encompassing. Each position contains its own distinct grounds of justifying, validating, and verifying its claims. Every position can subsume each of the others within the frame of its own semantic presuppositions. And since each position is appropriate to its own purposes, there are no a priori grounds

for valorizing any position over any of the others (this is McKeon's principle of "reciprocal priority"). But at the least we can combine all the different positions into a common dialogic space, by connecting them through a matrix of semantic transpositions broad and discriminating enough to channel with full range and minimal distortion the dense texture of our polyphony.

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# Reflections on *A Cultural Turn II* (February 1999)

### Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Swarthmore

There are moments in academic life when one wishes that Mary Douglas were sitting in the next seat, pointing out the various boundaries at work as well as tapping into that energy that lives in the margins and unstructured areas. The second *Cultural Turn* Conference at UCSB was one of those moments for me. As with the first *Cultural Turn* Conference two years ago, this thematic intellectual gathering brought academics from a wide range of disciplines (sociology, anthropology, literature, architecture, religious studies, political science) together to engage issues of culture, power and meaning.

Thus I want to articulate the sense I got of boundaries at work, as sociological commentators addressed the work of their cross-disciplinary colleagues. While all participants, presenters and commentators alike, were ostensibly focused on the same issues, they did so with very different vocabularies of understanding and different truth claims. The sociologists consistently evoked structures, archetypes, and variables as they recalibrated and responded to both the fluidity of some of the presentations (Mick Taussig on "Nature in a State of Siege" and M. Christine Boyer on "Crossing CyberCities" for example), and the hyper-structure of others (Katherine Hayles on "The Power of Simulation: What

Virtual Creatures Can Teach Us"). I found the last two main speakers, Orlando Patterson ("American Dionysis: Images of African American Men at the End of the 20th Century") and James Scott ("Why the State is the Enemy of People Who Move Around") to be perhaps the most unencumbered by boundary problems, partly because of Patterson's own sociological typology, and Scott's very focus on the interplay of images of fluidity (moving populations) and images of structure (the State).

One, perhaps not traditionally sociological, way of looking at these boundary issues and trying to figure what shape that Douglasian marginal energy might have been taking is to think about the different ways that the issue of aesthetics came up at the conference as a not entirely anticipated focal point. In my own marginal notes on the program I find "aesthetics" written at several points. Anthropologist Mick Taussig, in his attempt at explaining his own "non project" made a point of stressing the story-telling aspects of his writing and his desire to "counter reactionary stories with other stories." Religious historian Bruce Lincoln ("Theorizing the Relation between Culture and Religion") referred to the "unmediated conflict between ethics and aesthetics…in the absence of a Kierkegaardian ranking of life's stages." Literary critic Kathryn Hayles showed videos of virtual creatures moving in alternately aesthetically pleasing or unpleasing ways in a kind of strange dance of virtual evolution, part of a project she referred to as 'emotional computing'. Architectural theorist M. Christine Boyer showed a myriad of matrix-based images to the audience from the world of publicity and advertising, images that short-circuited this viewer's sense of both coherence and the pleasing. Political scientist James Scott, in his book seminar (*Seeing Like a State*) referred to the ultimately problematic "geometric aestheticism" of state spatial organization. Finally, sociologist Orlando Patterson engaged an archetypal, interpretive form of analysis in his talk to create a typology of images of African American men in contemporary American culture.

Yet, while aesthetics seems, ex post facto, to have been everywhere, I'm not convinced that anything nearly like a comprehensive, cross-disciplinary vocabulary emerged that could handle the myriad ways in which it appeared or could make the necessary connections among aesthetics, ethics, politics, power, and meaning as these issues came and went in the talks and discussions. Here, perhaps, is a project for a future *Cultural Turn* Conference.

Ultimately, I want to stress what a pleasure and a privilege it was to participate in this conference and how much I enjoyed the various modes of intellectual discourse (formal talks, book seminars, ad hoc conversations). Much credit is due to Roger Friedland and John Mohr for organizing these stimulating *Cultural Turns* (thanks as well to Krista Paulsen for her epic coordinations). And how divine to swim outdoors in February!

*Chandra Mukerji, UC San Diego*
The second *Cultural Turn* Conference, organized at Santa

Barbara, was in many ways the opposite of the first. The original one was sponsored in part by the culture section of the ASA, and was organized explicitly to consider problems in the sociology of culture and their relation to cultural analyses in other fields. The event started with a plenary session of papers that tried to articulate the state of current work in the sociology of culture. An important theme in the talks was consideration of what sociologists could contribute to and how they could benefit from cultural studies more generally. In subsequent days— apart from a very challenging lecture critiquing the field by Nancy Frasier, panels of sociologists presented papers, which were commented upon by cultural analysts from different disciplines. It was a very balanced combination of reflections on the limitations of sociological analyses and exemplars of good work in the field.

This year's *Cultural Turn II* was a much more demanding, confusing, and stimulating event. It was organized around presentations by five outstanding scholars who were invited for their credentials as non-sociologists analyzing culture: Christine Boyer (Princeton, architecture), Katherine Hayles (UCLA, English), Bruce Lincoln (Chicago, Religion), James Scott (Yale, political Science), and Michael Taussig (Columbia, Anthropology). Stellar sociologists were then asked to comment on their approaches to cultural analysis, once again setting up a debate between the sociology of culture and other fields, but making the sociologists the critics, not the main speakers. The point of this event was to consider models of innovative cultural analysis from a range of disciplines outside sociology that might be of interest to sociologists. The unfortunate effect of the structure was, as Robin Wagner-Pacifici has pointed out, to intensify the sense of boundary between sociologists and others. What the "others" had in common was not being sociologists. And there were no orienting sessions on the sociology of culture around which to reflect on their "otherness." There was no conceptual introduction by the organizers to explain their criteria for choosing the main speakers. So, the result was a kind of confusion of purpose that encouraged the participants to reify their disciplinary allegiances and/or rogue identities.

The problem with this situation was (at least at first) the predictability of the results. The realism-relativism debate, which has so stultified both science studies and cultural studies, once again was deployed. Was cultural analysis simply a matter of personal interpretation or an opportunity for acquiring real knowledge? This quite familiar technique for tracing a boundary often between science and non-science, but in this context, between the social sciences and humanities had predictable results. Everyone thought about the boundaries instead of the shared interests (and contested standards of work within different fields) that in principle could have drawn the participants together. The debate careened toward the academic equivalent of the lowest common denominator: the highest level of abstraction. Given that the group was unlikely to solve the problem of knowledge implicit (or explicit) in the realism-relativism debate, this was not a helpful direction to take. But fortunately, it did not undermine the intellectual foundation of the con-

ference. The five main speakers were indeed very stimulating, and they seemed to me to address a central common problem in cultural analysis these days: the limits and possibilities of discursive analysis and more generally – the linguistic turn.

This was a conference about culture and communication. It seemed to work from the assumption that human social life depends on communicative processes, and that cultural analysis should pay attention to how, when and why this communication takes place.

Michael Taussig spoke on recent fieldwork, elaborating a language of cultural analysis from story telling rather than a reified theory. He told a story of pilgrimage, how faith was mundanely enacted in movement and social allocations of space; he described how those he studied narrated their own perceptions and actions, and around what cultural stakes he had a bad confrontation with local authorities. He explored how anthropologists (himself as the first subject) move and narrate their experiences how they often erase the mundane aspects of fieldwork, such as entanglements in local politics, rather than think about them. The purification of the sacred through mundane action by those he studied was mirrored by anthropological efforts to extract pristine social forms from lived lives. Language was crucial to telling stories, but could never capture the full complexity of experiences. So, part of the ethnographer's job was to explore language forms and categories to rework the communicative limitations of disciplines.

Kathryn Hayles used videotape of computer-designed robots to discuss cognition and communication. The robots were virtual creatures made with different kinds of limbs, which gave them distinct patterns of motion. The computer program developed for their design was a learning system. The effectiveness of the robots in moving through a virtual landscape was used to modify their forms. The point was to model natural selection in machine development. The result was an experiment in exteriorizing thought and problem solving. The cultural task of making a material world that effectively addressed human problems (designing robots to go to dangerous sites instead of humans, for example) was made both social and technological by giving the problem to a machine. Hayles explained the process in terms of theories of distributed cognition and social learning, arguing that thinking is not necessarily interior cognition, grounded on internalized linguistic structures, but can have a kind of public life.

Christine Boyer looked at the public aspects of cultural forms more extensively. She showed how the visual field in modernist design floods experience with grids and gradients, giving those moving through built environments a sense of the order of things. Space, in her work, was defined less as physically constraining than conceptually ordering. A city may direct traffic in certain ways with its streets, but it also defines a cognitive order with its forms. Thought, from this perspective, is made social not only by language categories

and discursive practices, but by the order and physical construction of visual fields and the visual practices of cultures. Interestingly, Boyer pointed to the formal qualities of modernist design that seem to link measurements to culture. Sociologists do not so often consider the role of numbers in social life, but the few good scholars of counting systems have certainly made this aspect of calendars and censuses seem crucial for cultural analysis. Directing this kind of analysis to the built environment was a helpful reminder. The same grids organizing cities are used to organize data, and the variations of objects within categories. Measurement principles themselves can be part of the visual lexicon. The result is a social world that materially instantiates not simply discourses, but ordering systems like numbers.

Bruce Lincoln, James Scott, and Orlando Patterson spoke in more traditional languages of social science, but nonetheless tried to address those aspects of culture least contained within language-based experience religious belief, the political effects of sedentary lives or migration, and racial imaging. They stimulated the most conversation because they articulated themes in ways that made sense to a social science audience. They made comparisons of different religions, groups with different relations to the land and the state, and different forms of representation of race. By thinking comparatively, they seemed to further the traditional social science project of linking the general to the particular. But they did so using themes that actually played off ones in the earlier and more demanding papers. They addressed belief, experience and place, and social knowledge just like Taussig, Hayles, and Boyer. Unfortunately, these connections between the papers were not explored in the formal events. They came up in the discussions by participants before and after the lectures, making them all but invisible to the audience.

I consider the *Cultural Turn II* to have been a difficult but very exciting event. The very unstructured nature of the task of the participants forced speakers to ask one another why they had been invited to the conference, what thought they were doing with their work, and what they imagined they had in common with one another. If the formal events contributed to the demarcation of boundaries, these informal moments did just the opposite. And the result was a discussion of culture that did not get reduced to the usual differences between disciplines, or even fights between those who saw culture as discursive or not. The culture put on stage at this event was too complex to be so easily contained within the standard categories for analyzing culture in any field. And so the problem of studying culture was made extremely interesting at this *Cultural Turn*.

I think it would benefit the organizers of the next *Cultural Turn* to set up events that did not aggravate differences, but make the difficulties of studying culture a matter of common concern to people of different fields. They should also make the intellectual issues at stake in the conference more explicit. I am confident that the result will once again be enormously stimulating, and I look forward to attending *Cultural Turn III*.

*Culture*

# Studying Culture: Departments that Emphasize the Sociology of Culture

## Rutgers University

http://sociology.rutgers.edu/

One of the fastest growing components of the Rutgers sociology department, Culture and Cognition became a formal part of its graduate program a decade ago and is currently one of the strongest areas of concentration within it. Indeed, culture is quite central to the research as well as teaching of many of the department's faculty and students.

The program is quite unique among cultural sociology programs anywhere in its theoretical as well as empirical concentration on the relationship between the social and the mental. On the one hand, it revolves around the study of the cognitive aspects of social life (and, thus, the relation between cognitive and social structures). At the same time, it also focuses on the examination of the social underpinnings of mental life. As such, it offers students interested in cognition the opportunity to study fundamental aspects of our thinking that are almost totally missing from the current philosophical, psychological, neuroscientific, and linguistic work on the mind.

The program emphasizes several substantive areas: (a) the social foundations of mental processes such as perceiving, attending, classifying, framing, sequencing, symbolizing, time reckoning, and remembering; (b) the construction of identity (centered around individuals, groups, objects, places, or events); (c) the formal analysis of belief systems; (d) symbol systems and symbolic interaction; (e) mass media, technology, and communication; (f) the social structure of the past and the future; and (g) the phenomenology of everyday life. The program is highly eclectic both theoretically and methodologically, and students interested in culture are trained in diverse methods ranging from fieldwork, through statistical analysis, to comparative (cultural, historical, and subcultural) analysis.

The Rutgers sociology department has remarkable strength in cultural sociology. Karen Cerulo (*Identity Designs, Deciphering Violence*) studies the social foundations of symbol systems (literary scripts, visual images, music, and scent). Her work examines the ways in which aspects such as social ties, stability and disruption, power structures, and economic conditions influence the content, form, meaning, and effectiveness of symbolic communication. She is also interested in communication technologies. Recent works explore the way in which emerging channels have changed perceptions of social groups, interpersonal bonds, and forums of social action. John Martin ("The Myth of the Consumption Economy and the Rise of the Desiring Subject," "Entropic Measures of Belief System Constraint") studies the formal properties of belief systems and the ways

in which social institutions and networks help shape them. He is also interested in the numerical analysis of qualitative data and in the relation between economic change and sexual decision-making. Richard Williams (*Hierarchical Structures and Social Value*) studies the social construction of identity and is particularly interested in the way group identities have been shaped within specific historical periods as well as in the macrosocial structures that help shape the cognition of identities. He is ultimately concerned with the ways in which populations identified by categories such as race, ethnicity, or academic discipline rely upon taken-for-granted notions when transforming specific interpretations of social symbols into seemingly universal ones. Eviatar Zerubavel (*The Fine Line, Social Mindscapes*) studies sociocultural rhythms and time-reckoning systems, the social construction of mental entities and distinctions, and sociomental mapping. He is currently working on the social construction of the past (applying previous work he has done on calendars, social classification, and social semiotics to the study of history and collective memory) as well as on the sociology of denial (drawing on his earlier work on the social organization of attention).

The culture-and-cognition program also draws on faculty strength in other Rutgers areas of concentration, such as gender, religion, economic sociology, and medicine and mental health. Jozsef Böröcz, for example, studies economic knowledge, Ira Cohen the construction of the modern self, Judy Friedman the interface between cultural and visual sociology, Judy Gerson gender and immigrant identities, Cathy Greenblat sexuality and the body, Allan Horwitz the cognitive foundations of psychiatric diagnosis, Ellen Idler the relation between religion and health, Paul McLean the framing of economic action, Ann Miche the temporal structure of future projects, Sarah Rosenfield gender and selfhood, and Ben Zablocki the organization of new religious systems.

The Rutgers culture-and-cognition student "lineup" is equally deep. Over the last few years, many Rutgers students working on culture and cognition have successfully single-authored articles in top journals such as *Sociological Theory, Sociological Forum, Gender and Society, Sociological Inquiry,* the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* and *Symbolic Interaction.* Those articles have addressed a wide variety of substantive topics such as the cognitive foundations of identity attribution (Jamie Mullaney), the socio-cognitive construction of sexual identity (Wayne Brekhus), the everyday construction of national identity (Katharine Jones), classifications of in utero development in medical texts (Nicky Isaacson), stereotypical iconography on television (Shawna Hudson), the socio-cognitive construction of safety and danger (Ruth Simpson), visual meaning in children's art (Jane Carlson), the socio-cognitive organization of the menstrual cycle (Johanna Foster), the social construction of comparability in sports (Kristen Purcell), cogni-

## (Studying Culture, con't.)

tive scripting and sexual identification (C. Carr), the framing of virtual reality (Mary Chayko), secularization and religious competition (Rick Phillips), the socio-cognitive construction of identity in the world of drumming (Geoff Curran), and the social semiotics of wedding announcements (Sherry Schuster). Over the past three years, five of those articles have also won Rutgers culture-and-cognition students the Best Student Paper Awards of the ASA Culture (Wayne Brekhus, Kristen Purcell), Social Psychology (C. Carr), and Theory (Wayne Brekhus) sections as well as of the Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (Rick Phillips).

Training opportunities for Rutgers students interested in culture and cognition are numerous. First, there is large number of regular courses specifically addressing related issues: Cognitive Sociology; Culture, Symbols, and Social Interaction; Sociology of Identity; Networks and Culture; Time, History, and Memory; Symbolic Boundaries; and Sociology of Science. Yet students working in cultural sociology are also likely to have interest in several related courses such as Social Psychology, Human Sexuality, Sociology of Age, Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Religion, Gender and the Self, and Sociology of Art. They can also take courses in neighboring departments such as anthropology, geography, and political science (not to mention the Princeton sociology department, which is also strong in cultural analysis and with whom Rutgers has a formal exchange program), as well as draw on the many resources of the Rutgers cognitive science community. Beyond their course work, students also have three separate opportunities to work on particular projects on a one-on-one basis with faculty through the Rutgers qualifying paper system. The graduate program's distinctive curricular structure, which requires students to enroll in a writing seminar as well as complete three article-equivalent qualifying papers before they begin their doctoral dissertations, results in many student presentations in national and regional professional conferences as well as in numerous scholarly publications.

Aside from the Rutgers sociology department's weekly colloquium series, many of the talks within which revolve around cultural issues, there is also a culture-and-cognition workshop that meets several times a year to discuss early versions of current work-in-progress generated by students and faculty in this area. In addition, the Rutgers culture-and-cognition community organizes every year and a half with its counterparts at Princeton a conference featuring current cultural sociological work of faculty and students in the two departments. It is also very active in the ASA's Culture Section — Eviatar Zerubavel is the section's current chair-elect, and Karen Cerulo is the editor of its newsletter. This coming fall (November 12-13), we will also be hosting a national two-day conference entitled "Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition," which will include both formal panels and informal discussion sessions and will feature many of the leading scholars in cultural sociology today.

--Eviatar Zerubavel

***Editor's Note:*** *Would you like your department featured in this column? Please contact me at cerulo@rci.rutgers.edu*

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# BOOKS OF NOTE                    *Richard A. Peterson, Vanderbilt Univ.*

Ferrell, Jeff and Neil Websdale, editors. *Making Trouble: Cultural Constructions of Crime, Deviance, and Control.* Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter. The authors trace the intertwined practices of the mass media, criminal justice agencies, deviant subcultures, and political power holders in constructing deviance and social control.

McChestney, Robert W. *Rich Media, Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press. McChestney argues that the media have become a significant anti-democratic force in the United States. He traces the corporate media explosion and the corresponding impovrishment of public life in this "information age."

Sanders, Clint. *Understanding Dogs: Living and Working with Canine Companions.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. Based on a decade's research in vet clinics, obedience classes, and dog guide training schools, Sanders shows how every-day dog owners come to understand their animal companions as social, thinking, emotional and responsive individuals.

Cawelti, John G. *The Six Gun Mystique Sequel.* Bowling Green, OH: Popular Press. Here is Cawelti's thorough updating of his classic study of Western films.

Bailey, Dale. *American Nightmares: The Haunted House Formula in American Popular Fiction.* Bowling Green, OH: Popular Press. Tracing the haunted house tale from its origins in English gothic fiction, Bailey shows how this threat to domestic safety shows everything that has gone wrong with the American dream.

Harding, Jennifer. *Sex Acts: Practices* of Feminity and Masculinity. London: Sage Publications. Harding reviews to debates over hormone determinism and the social construction of gender, homophobia, and gender-bending.

Cubitt, Sean. *Digital Aesthetics.* London: Sage Publications. Beginning by asking why computers have typewriter keyboards and look like TV sets, Cubitt seeks a use for computers in forging genuine democracy in this free-market, global corporate world.

***Editor's Note:*** *Are you disappointed because your book has not been reviewed in Books of Note? Send your information to Richard Peterson. During the 1999-2000 academic year, he can be reached at:*

*r.a.peterson@leeds.ac.uk.*

*More Books of Note in the next issue!*

## Best Book Award (Co-Winners)

### Wendy Nelson Espeland

#### The Struggle for Water: Politics, Rationality, and Identity in the American Southwest

**University of Chicago Press, 1998**

Nearly fifty years ago, the Bureau of Reclamation proposed building a dam at the confluence of two rivers in Central Arizona. While the dam would bring valuable water to this arid plain, it would also destroy a wildlife habitat, flood archaeological sites, and force the Yavapai Indians off their ancestral home. *The Struggle for Water* is not only the fascinating story of this controversial and ultimately thwarted public works project, but also a study of rationality as a cultural, organizational, and political construct.

In the 1970s, the three groups most intimately involved in the Orme Dam—younger Bureau of Reclamation employees committed to "rational choice" decision making, older Bureau engineers committed to the dam, and the Yavapai community—all found themselves and their values transformed by their struggles. Wendy Nelson Espeland lays bare the relations between interests and identities that emerged during the conflict, creating a contemporary tale of power and colonization, bureaucracies and democratic practice, that asks the crucial question of what it means to be "rational."

### Joshua Gamson

#### Freaks Talk Back: Tabloid Talk Shows and Sexual Nonconformity.

**University of Chicago Press, 1998**

Using extensive interviews, hundreds of transcripts, focus-group discussions with viewers, and his own experiences as an audience member, Joshua Gamson argues that talk shows give much-needed, high-impact public visibility to sexual nonconformists while also exacerbating all sorts of political tensions among those becoming visible. With wit and passion, *Freaks Talk Back* illuminates the joys, dilemmas, and practicalities of media visibility.

"This entertaining, accessible, sobering discussion should make every viewer sit up and ponder the effects and possibilities of America's daily talk-fest with newly sharpened eyes."—*Publishers Weekly* "Bold, witty. . . . There's a lot of empirical work behind this deceptively easy read, then, and it allows for the most sophisticated and complex analysis of talk shows yet."—Elayne Rapping, *Women's Review of Books* "Funny, well-researched, fully theorized. . . . Engaged and humane scholarship. . . . A pretty inspiring example of what talking back to the mass media can be."—Jesse Berrett, *Village*

*Voice.* "An extraordinarily well-researched volume, one of the most comprehensive studies of popular media to appear in this decade."—James Ledbetter, *Newsday*

## Best Article Award

### Orville Lee
### Northwestern University

#### "Culture and Democratic Theory: Toward a Theory of Symbolic Democracy."

*Constellations* Volume 5, Number 4, 1998.

This paper provides the foundation for a theory of symbolic power that will become required reading for scholars concerned with questions about democratic societies, processes, and practices. Cultural sociologists have long noted the missing "cultural dimension" in political theory. Lee takes us beyond this impasse, demonstrating the constitutive role of the symbolic field in the areas of social justice, power, and political identity. His paper opens up the space to consider how what has typically been treated as epiphenomenal, the symbolic world and the various practices that reproduce it, is vitally important for understanding the formation of political hierarchies and categories, and social relations.

This paper is especially impressive for Lee's ability to bring together seemingly disparate theoretical models and treat them in a way that is rigorous, sophisticated, and highly readable. On the one hand, he clarifies a crucial problem in critical theory — that the lifeworld is not just the source of all things egalitarian and consensual. On the other hand, he clarifies a crucial problem in analyses of symbolic power that leave no room for the good that can come of democratic deliberation. By bringing these two critiques together, Lee arrives at the beginning of a theory that can critique symbolic power with an eye toward opening it up to democratic scrutiny. The argument is both original and compelling. Lee has made a significant contribution to cultural sociology and contemporary democratic theory.

## Best Student Paper

### Kari Lerum
### University of Washington, Seattle

#### "Twelve-Step Feminism Makes Sex Workers Sick: How the State and the Recovery Movement Turn Radical Women Into 'Useless Citizens'"

In "Twelve-Step Feminism Makes Sex Workers Sick", Kari Lerum presents an analysis of the contemporary and historical production of institutional knowledge of sex

workers in the United States. The paper's greatest strength is in showing show how certain discourses (e.g., feminism) get adapted for state use, and how this process tames the discourse. Lerum shows us how the "fit" between medical understandings of social problems, the bureaucratic nation-state, the ascendancy of the twelve-step recovery movement, processes of institutionalizing knowledge, and a climate of increased tolerance for "victims" constrains understandings of sex workers such that, regardless of sympathetic or feminist intentions, experts often view sex workers condescendingly.

The production of knowledge about sex workers as a social problem illustrates how a particular constellation of cultural discourses and institutional constraints has had the (for some) unintended consequence of transforming ideas about "problem situations" into actions directed at "problem people." Overall the paper is exceptionally well-crafted and a lively read. Lerum's theoretical set up that focuses on the wide-spread jurisdiction of scientific discourse, processes of institutionalization, and the production of knowledge is tightly integrated with a contemporary case study of women sex workers as well as analysis of the historical transformations of institutional and cultural frames that have emerged for understanding the social problem of women who work in what some have called the "sex industry."

Ms. Lerum's paper sheds light on a particular social problem while making an important contribution to sociology by bringing a cultural analysis to bear on advances in the study of organizations and institutional processes and the study of the social construction of social problem*s*.

*Congratulations to the winners and thanks to the committee members for their hard work!*

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|---|---|
| *Best Book Award:* | Doug Hartmann (Chair); Chandra Mukerji; Yasemin Soysal |
| *Best Article Award:* | Anne Bowler (Chair); Nina Eliasoph; Craig Watkins |
| *Best Student Paper Award:* | Marshall Battani (Chair); Amy Binder; Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi |

## Section Awards -- 2000

Section Chair Barry Schwartz has just announced the award committees for the year 2000. Please take note of this information.

All members are encouraged to nominate scholarly works that they believe deserve peer recognition. (Self nominations are welcomed.) If you wish to nominate a work, please send three copies of the piece to the appropriate committee chair. (Check *Footnotes* for submission deadlines.) *Good luck to all!*

*Best Book Award:*
CHAIR: Wendy Nelson Espeland, Northwestern Univ.
ADDRESS: Dept. of Soc., Evanston, IL 60208

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Calvin Morrill, Univ. of Arizona
Dennis Wrong, New York University

*Best Article Award:*
CHAIR: Magali Sarfatti-Larson, Univ. of Urbina, Italy
ADDRESS: send manuscripts c/o Barry Schwartz
Dept. of Soc./Baldwin Hall, Univ. of Georgia,
Athens, Georgia 30602-1611

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Eli Anderson, University of Pennsylvania
Mark Schneider, Univ. of Illinois at Carbondale

*Best Student Paper:*
CHAIR: Lyn Rapaport, Pomona College
ADDRESS: Dept. of Soc/Anthro, Carnegie Bldg.
Claremont, CA 91711

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
James Dowd, Univ. of Georgia
Gary Marx, Univ. of Colorado at Boulder

## ASA 2000 -- Culture Section Sessions

The Chair-elect, Eviatar Zerubavel, has announced the program for "Culture Day" at ASA 2000. Additional information and submission instructions will be available in *Footnotes.*

*Language and Social Life*
Organizer: Jonathan Rieder, Barnard Colege

*The Social Organization of Identity*
Organizer: Wayne Brekhus, University of Missouri

*The Culture of Everyday Life*
Organizer: Gary Fine, Northwestern University

*Symbols and Power*
Organizer: Lynn Chancer, Barnard College

*Social Structures and Mental Structures*
Organizer: Eviatar Zerubavel, Rutgers University

This year, Culture day falls on the first day of the meetings, so mark your calendars now. And plan to arrive early. Barry Schwartz and Mark Jacobs are organizing a mini-conference to be held immediately before the ASA meetings. Details will appear in the winter issue of *Culture.*

## Do you know about The Center for Arts and Culture?

The Center for Arts and Culture provides independent research, policy analysis, and informed dialogue on policy choices facing arts and culture in a changing world. The center embraces diverse meanings of "culture," from the creative life of individuals and communities to the works sustained by cultural institutions, to the ways that people make sense of their lives. Based in Washington, DC, the center examines issues at the local, national, and global levels. The Center provides research and communications on policy-relevant issues in three general areas: 1) Policy options in art and culture; 2) The changing shape of the cultural sector; and 3) Culture in everyday life.

The Center has established a confederation of twenty-eight colleges and universities across the country drawing on scholars from a range of disciplines. The Center works with this Cultural Policy Network to build academic resources for the study of culture and policy and to develop research projects useful to practitioners, opinion leaders, policy makers, and the general public. Any interested member of the Culture Section is urged to contact the Center at (202) 783-5277 or at *info@culturalpolicy.org*.

--Vera Zolberg

## Building Bridges with the *European Sociological Association*

A new network has been formed under the auspices of the *European Sociological Association*. Its key aim will be to promote collaboration and scholarly exchange between European-based scholars of the arts and non-European scholars whose work encompasses the arts in Europe, past or present. The group shares a common conception of the arts as active ingredients in the making and remaking of social life. This concern has heightened salience in Europe where, on the eve of the millennium, the arts are increasingly employed as media of government, and where, accordingly, arts sociology has grown in both scope and importance. Various network projects are already underway, including book translations, comparative and cross cultural research projects, collaborative Masters Degree programs, and conferences. The group will convene in Helsinki for the next ESA congress in 2001 and an interim conference will be held at Exeter in 2000, (call for papers is forthcoming). For further information, please contact the network conveners:

Tia DeNora , University of Exeter
Fax: +1392-263285; Email: *T.De-Nora@exeter.ac.uk*

Anna Lisa Tota, Universita di Milano
Fax +39-2-76015104; Email: *annalisa.tota@unimi.it*

-- Tia DeNora

## Join Us on November 12-13, 1999 "Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition"

In recent years, a small but growing chorus of voices has argued for the utility of a sociology of the mind. Proponents of this agenda, a group rooted primarily in the study of culture, contend that targeted sociological work on cognition would significantly enhance the existing literatures addressing human thought.

In order to firmly establish a coherent sociology of culture and cognition, I am organizing a two-day national conference designed to engage this topic. This conference, along with a series of post-conference materials, are intended to define and "grow" the field. It is my hope that this event will launch a new network of scientific collaboration and stimulate new lines of sociological research.

The conference is entitled "Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition," and it will take place on November 12-13, 1999. The event will be held on the Rutgers University campus. The conference will consist of both formal panels and informal discussion sessions. In this way, participants will have the opportunity to engage in lively and in-depth discussion of issues.

A complete conference schedule is available at our web site:

http:/sociology.rutgers.edu/conference/

The site also provides information about registration, lodging, and directions to the campus.

Should you have further questions or require additional information, please contact me at (908) 317-9727 or at *cerulo@rci.rutgers.edu*.

--Karen A. Cerulo

## Memories at the Millennium

How long have you been a member of the Culture Section? Were you a part of the early organizational meetings? Have you been one of the many who has been captured within the section's exciting and rapid growth? Or are you a newcomer still navigating through the rich intellectual ground that the section has to offer? Whatever your role, I am inviting you to share your memories with other section members. The millennium is here, and it is time to "take stock" of where the section has been and where it is going. In particular, it is time to document the rich history of a place that has provided so many of us with an intellectual home. Please send your memories and reflections to:

Karen A. Cerulo, Rutgers University
c/o 343 Spruce Avenue, Garwood, NJ 07027
or to *cerulo@rci.rutgers.edu*

Submissions should be 500-1000 words and follow the specified format for newsletter articles (see pg. 14). I will publish as many submissions as possible in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

## From the Editor, Jennifer Lehmann
### Current Perspectives in Social Theory

*Current Perspectives in Social Theory* invites submissions for Volume 20, the 2001 volume. *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* is an annual journal dedicated to publishing signitificant articles across the spectrum of perspectives within social theory, conceived of in a broad and interdisciplinary sense.

To submit a manuscript, send five copies and a one page abstract to

Professor Jennifer M. Lehmann, Editor
*Current Perspectives in Social Theory*
Department of Sociology
741 Oldfather Hall
The University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68588-0324

*The deadline for volume 20 submissions is January 31, 2000.* Any manuscript received after Jan. 31 will not be considered for the 2001 volume. Manuscripts for future volumes may be submitted throughout the year.

## From the Editor, Karen A. Cerulo
### Culture

Are you interested in submitting an essay, a critique, or a commentary to Culture? Would you like to reply to a previously published author? The editor considers submissions year round. Send your work to:

Karen A. Cerulo
Rutgers University
c/o 343 Spruce Avenue
Garwood, NJ 07027

I am happy to discuss any ideas prior to submission.

Articles as well as comments and announcements must be submitted in one of two forms:

1) Hard copy version AND a 3.5 floppy disk version of the work readable in Microsoft Word -- IBM versions only

2) Microsoft Word email attachments -- IBM versions only. (Please . . . please, check your files for viruses before submitting them!)

Questions on submissions can be directed to the editor at (908) 317-9727 or at *cerulo@rci.rutgers.edu.*

## From Editors Settersten and Owens
### Advances in Life-Course Research:
### New Frontiers in Socialization

Manuscripts are being sought for Volume 7 of *Advances in Life-Course Research*, a research annual published by JAI

press. Volume 7 will be devoted to the topic of socialization during specific periods of life or across the life course. The editors are especially interested in manuscripts that address the adult years, as well as experiences within one or more social settings (e.g., family, work, educational, medical, neighborhood, peer and friendship). Papers might relate to the processes that occur in these settings, the primary agents of socialization, the content of socialization messages, or the consequences of these experiences for individuals, groups, or society. This volume will contain both invited and self-initiated contributions. All manuscripts must be original. Potential contributors are encouraged to submit abstracts by April 3, 2000. The due date for full manuscripts is September 1, 2000. For complete submission guidelines, write to Richard Settersten at Case Western Reserve University (*ras2@po.cwru.edu)* or Timothy Owens at Indiana University, Indianapolis (towens@indiana.edu).

## Know Your Section Officers

### *Officers*

| | |
|---|---|
| Chair: | Barry Schwartz |
| Chair Elect: | Eviatar Zerubavel |
| Secretary-Treasurer: | Bethany Bryson |

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| Victoria Alexander | Anne Bowler |
| Nina Eliasoph | Paul Lichterman |
| John Mohr | Robin Wagner-Pacifici |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Network Coordinator: | Karen A. Cerulo |

Individual Network Leaders:

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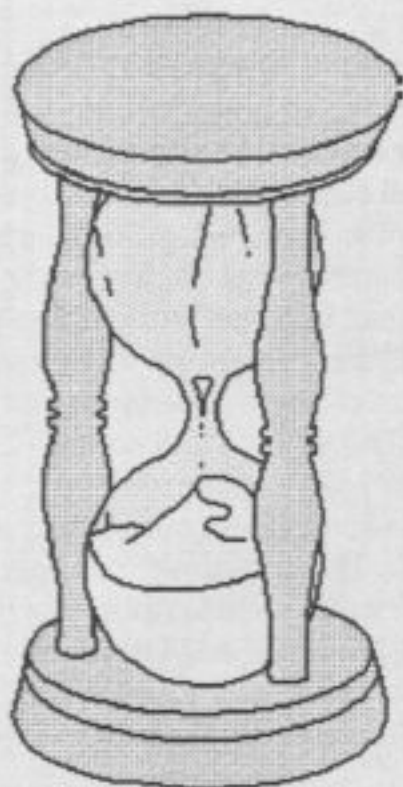
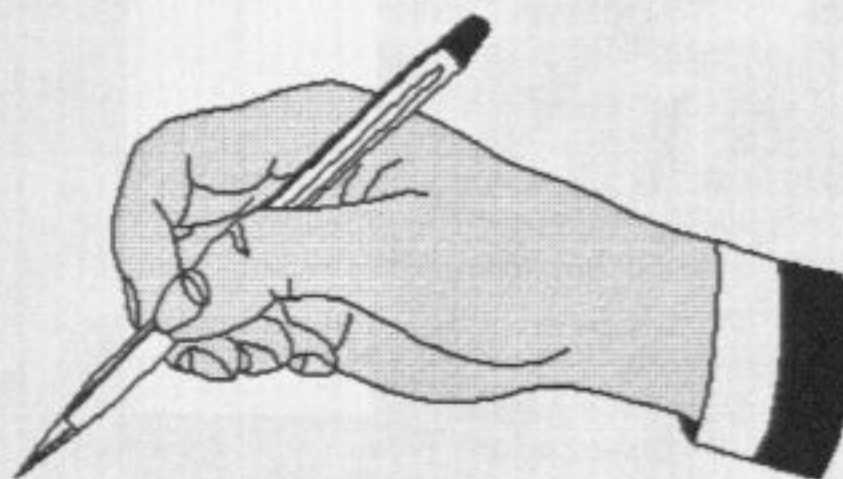# Renewed your membership yet?

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