

Summer 2013

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Hello everyone!

The annual meetings are almost here, and we have a very full and exciting lineup in store for this year's ASA, with an impressive number of invited panels, regular and section sessions, roundtables, and special events organized for graduate students. And don't forget the awards ceremony at our business meeting on Sunday afternoon and of course the reception on Saturday night.

The Chair-elect selects the section's theme and oversees the organization of all the sessions, so please extend a huge thank you to our incoming chair, Mabel Berezin, for putting together such a stellar program. Another round of thanks goes to the organizers who planned all the terrific regular sessions, section sessions, and roundtables. Included in the list below are two wonderful events for graduate students, the Junior Theorists Symposium on Friday that runs all day at the New School and the Journal Publishing Workshop on Sunday afternoon at CUNY, that were organized by our Graduate Student Representative, Fiona Rose Greenland, of the University of Michigan. A special thanks to her for these excellent contributions to our New York program!

I'm happy to announce the Culture Section's election results.

Chair-Elect: Timothy Dowd (1-year term begins in 2013, followed by 1-year term as Chair in 2014)

Council Members: Andrew Perrin and Claudio Benzecry (3-year term begins in 2013)

Graduate Student Representative: Ruth Braunstein (2-year term begins in 2013)

Please extend a special thanks to the Nominations Committee, Laura Grindstaff (chair), Larry Isaac, Monika Sabine Krause, Neal King, and Ashley Mears for coming up with this year's fine slate of candidates.

Congratulations all!

Denise Bielby
University of California, Santa Barbara

Inside:

- Letter from the Chair, p. 1 • Four Questions For... Robin Wagner-Pacifici, p. 2
- Junior Scholar Spotlight: Daniel Winchester, p. 2 • Announcement from the Council Student Representatives, p. 3 • Culture Section Panels at ASA, p. 4 • "Culture Meets... Knowledge," by Owen Whooley, p. 9 • Amuses, p. 11 • • Junior Theorists Symposium Program, p. 12 • Culture in Brazil, p. 13 • Books of Note, p. 16

Co-Editors: [Andrew Deener](#) (UConn), [Claudio Benzecry](#) (UConn) & [Jonathan Wynn](#) (UMass)

Student Editors: Mary Larue Scherer & Trisha Tiamzon

Books of Note Editor: [Tim Dowd](#), Emory University

Four Questions For... *Robin Wagner-Pacifci*

1) How did you become interested in the study of culture? While I had studied comparative literature as an undergraduate, I had never actually considered that I was sociologically interested in culture per se. During my sociology graduate student years, I understood my work and interests to be in the general area of political sociology, focusing on violent, rupturing events with an interpretivist approach to the languages and images through which those events took shape. Of course, that understanding was rather naïve – naïve to the ways of the discipline of sociology, that is. So it wasn't until my fellow sociologists identified me as doing work in the sociology of culture that I came to think of myself in that way.

2) What kind of work does culture do in your thinking? I understand culture to be primarily about the meaningful and dynamic relationships between 'form and flow' (this may be literary theorist Franco Moretti's phrase). So form - aesthetic, discursive, political, institutional – demands analysis on its own terms. I'm always looking for the specific textures and resonance of communicative acts, specifying their capabilities as they emerge in time, space, and relational networks.

3) What are some of the benefits and limitations to using culture in this way? The benefits are that one avoids sweeping generalities about meaning and one can craft detailed analyses of the ways that historic events emerge, take shape, and move by paying close attention to their forms. This attention, close reading, and the internal knowledge of the ways that language or images, for example, conjure and intervene in our social worlds allows me to locate social and political fault lines and contradictions.

The limitations are that the interpretivist and hermeneutic skills I have don't allow me to see patterns emergent across multiple iterations of any particular cultural form. So for that I have recently turned to my "big data" focused colleagues, like John Mohr and Ron Breiger, who have the computational and formal modeling intelligence and tools to analyze massive amounts of text. We're attempting to forge a "hands across the water" research model, joining qualitative and quantitative research approaches. It is exhilarating and uncharted territory.

4) How does your approach to culture shape the types of research topics and settings? My approach has tended to point me in the direction of individual cases of rupture and then to track them through their acquired cultural forms as they take shape and have consequences for identities, social and political structures, and cultural meanings. Originally focused on language, I have come to understand that images, gestures, maps and other diagrammatic modalities of communication are active participants in the form/flow dynamic. So while the topics, per se, haven't changed that much (political kidnappings, stand-offs, military surrenders, terrorist attacks, security strategy policy) the analytical elaboration of them has.

Junior Scholar Spotlight: Daniel Winchester

Daniel Winchester is receiving his PhD from the University of Minnesota this summer and will begin as an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Connecticut in Fall 2013. Most broadly, his research focuses on the cognitive foundations of cultural power and meaning. His projects examine the concrete processes by which large-scale cultural systems come to influence the subjective thoughts, emotions, perceptions, and personal identities of social actors. Theoretically, he approaches these questions by combining sociological theories of practice and identity with phenomenological insights on human embodiment and experience.

To date, Daniel has found religion, in general, and religious conversion, in particular, to be fascinating sites through which to empirically explore these topics. He first began to develop these interests during his master's research on Muslim converts in the Midwestern United States. Through that project, he came to question the commonplace assumption that religious practices such as ritual prayer, fasting, and covering (*hijab*) were merely expressive of pre-existing religious experiences and belief states and instead showed the important constitutive work they performed in cultivating ethical dispositions and forms of religious experience. The findings and theoretical conclusions from that project were first published in the journal *Social Forces* (2008) and, more recently, in a comparative analysis of religious experience among Muslim and Orthodox Jewish converts in *Theory & Society* (2012, with co-author Iddo Tavory). Daniel's dissertation, *Assembling the Orthodox Soul*, extends these interests in religious practice and subject formation through a multi-sited ethnographic study of contemporary conversions to Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the United States. The dissertation analyzes these conversions to better understand how practices central to many religious and secular subcultures – such as autobiographical narratives, body-focused rituals, and the use of material objects and environments – work to reshape aspects of self-experience in culturally prescribed ways.

As a faculty member at UConn, Daniel will teach courses in cultural sociology, qualitative methods, and the sociology of religion, among other topics. In addition to publishing his dissertation research, he is also planning a future project on the training of religious missionaries and the cultivation of global religious imaginations.



Grad Student Representative Report

Fiona Rose-Greenland (University of Michigan)

Dear Culture Section student members,

It's my pleasure to be serving as your representative to the Culture Section. I'm writing to let you know about student-related initiatives in the Section and how you can get involved.

First, many thanks to all of you who expressed interest in attending the **journal publishing workshop** at ASA. The workshop is scheduled for Sunday, August 11 at 4:30pm. We have some great editors lined up: Tim Dowd, Geneviève Zubrzycki, Jeff Alexander, Neil Gross, and Mabel Berezin. There is a waiting list and if you'd like to be added to it, please contact me (frose@umich.edu).

Second, Culture Section student member **Sean McCarron** has generously put his time into a new periodical for section members: *Cultural Conversations*, a graduate student newsletter of reviews and essays on contemporary issues in culture theory, research and teaching. The first edition is available through the Culture students' Facebook page. We're grateful to the contributors for their fantastic work. If you'd like to submit to the next issue contact Sean (smccarro@usc.edu). Sean can also add you to the FB page.

Third, I want to put in a plug for the Junior Theorists Symposium. It will be held at the New School for Social Research on Friday, August 9 (the day before the ASA annual meeting begins). Several Culture Section members will be presenting work, and it's a great opportunity to meet faculty and graduate students in a small-conference setting. Registration is \$10 per student, \$20 per faculty, and that includes morning coffee/bagels and lunch. You can check out the program at asatheory.org.

Finally, it's a pleasure to welcome Ruth Braunstein as the second student representative. Ruth and I will serve together for the coming academic year. If you have questions or concerns that we can assist you with directly or advocate for at the Culture Section business meeting, please don't hesitate to contact either of us.

*Click here for the Graduate Students Google Doc
for listing profiles*

Culture Panels at the ASA

Hilton New York Midtown & Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers

Saturday, August 10

10:30 AM

044. Regional Spotlight Session. Empire State of Mind: New York as a Cultural Space (co-sponsored with the Section on Sociology of Culture)

Session Organizer: Sharon Zukin, City University of New York-Brooklyn College

Presider: Sharon Zukin, City University of New York-Brooklyn College

Panelists: Sujatha Teresa Fernandes, City University of New York-Queens College

Ashley E. Mears, Boston University

Harvey L. Molotch, New York University

Vera L. Zolberg, New School for Social Research

Is New York still a center of cultural innovation, or is it just an expensive entrepreneurial venue for global billionaires and celebrities to buy art and dine out? Join us for a sociological tour of the city's cultural ferment and its present state of exaltation and anxiety.

2:30 PM

089. Regular Session. Culture and Identity

Session Organizer: Prudence L. Carter, Stanford University

Presider: Natasha Kumar Warikoo, Harvard University

A Very Long Engagement: The Persistence of Bridewealth in a South African Community. Michael W. Yarbrough, Yale University

Authority, Identity and Inequality in Domestic Food Work. Carol S. Lindquist, Bemidji State University

Pretense, putdowns, and missing identities in activists' class talk. Betsy Leondar-Wright, Boston College

Innovating Authenticity: Contemplative Worship in the Twin Cities. Annie Dille Jollymore, University of Minnesota

Telling your Homosexuality: France and the Cultural Limits of Coming Out. Michael Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, University of California-Los Angeles, Abigail C. Saguy, University of California-Los Angeles

090. Regular Session. Culture and Inequality: Conceptions of Class

Session Organizer: Maria Charles, University of California-Santa Barbara

Presider: Maria Charles, University of California-Santa Barbara

Encountering Inequality in American Civic Life. Peter T. Klein, Brown University, Elizabeth A. Bennett, Brown University; Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Brown University; Stephanie Savell, Brown University

From minor to major: Social mobility and cultural dissonance. Stijn Daenekindt, Ghent University; Henk Roose, Ghent University

Transnational Connections and Cultured Disposition: Framing Culture for Brazilian Elites. Danielle Hedegard, Boston College

Class Imagery and Its Effects on Subjective Social Location: Perceptions and Consequences Around the World. Mariah Debra Evans, University of Nevada-Reno; Jonathan Kelley, University of Nevada-Reno; Joanna Sikora, Australian National University

Discussant: Maria Charles, University of California-Santa Barbara

6:30 PM

Section on Sociology of Culture Reception, Sheraton Hotel

Sunday, August 11

8:30 AM

171. Section on Sociology of Culture Roundtable Session

10:30 AM

206. Section on Sociology of Culture Invited Session. Methods, Materials and Meanings: Designing Cultural Analysis.

Session Organizer: Mabel Berezin, Cornell University

Presider: Mabel Berezin, Cornell University

How Culture Fails to Measure Up -- Or Down. Richard G. Biernacki, University of California-San Diego
Spaces of Validation and the Hermeneutics of Institutionalization. Andreas Glaeser, University of Chicago
In Praise of Methodological Pluralism. Michele Lamont, Harvard University; Ann Swidler, University of California-Berkeley

Mixed Methods and the Logic of Cultural Argument. Lyn Spillman, University of Notre Dame

Discussant: John R. Hall, University of California-Davis

Questions of epistemology, meaning and agency are constitutive of cultural analysis and pose ongoing challenges for research. This panel asks established scholars in the field of cultural sociology to first, discuss how they deal with questions of evidence and method in their empirical work, and to second, generalize more broadly to our sub-field and the discipline as a whole on the issue of cultural analysis and research design.

12:30 PM

Section on Sociology of Culture Council and Business Meeting

2:30 PM

285. Section on Sociology of Culture Invited Session. Political Cultures: Comparison, Contingency and History

Session Organizer: Mabel Berezin, Cornell University

Presider: George Steinmetz, University of Michigan

The Decentering of Power: From Weber to Texts and Performances. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Yale University

Towards a New Sociology of Civic Action. Nina Eliasoph, University of Southern California; Paul R. Lichterman, University of Southern California

The New Cultural Materialism as Political Theory. Chandra Mukerji, University of California-San Diego

The Cultural Politics of Religion in Comparative Perspective. Genevieve Zubrzycki, University of Michigan

Discussant: Mabel Berezin, Cornell University

In the last twenty years, cultural analysis has become constitutive of various subfields of political sociology. This panel focuses upon how sociologists have confronted the political and the cultural across a range of methodologies (from ethnographic to historical) and topic areas (nationalism, democracy, religion). Panelists discuss how they have come to terms with this hybrid field in their past and on-going research.

4:30 - 6:00 PM

Culture Section Graduate Students Journal Publication Workshop/Conversation

If you're coming to ASA this year, please consider joining us for this journal publishing workshop. Questions? Contact Fiona Rose-Greenland (Culture Section student rep) at frose@umich.edu.

Jeff Alexander (editor, *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*)

Mabel Berezin (reviewer, *American Journal of Sociology*)

Tim Dowd (editor, *Poetics*)

Neil Gross (editor, *Sociological Theory*)

Genevieve Zubrzycki (editorial board member, *Qualitative Sociology*).

Maggie Frye (a recent PhD recipient who has published her dissertation material in *American Journal of Sociology*.)

Please note the location: Murphy Institute, CUNY, 25 W 43rd Street (a twelve-minute walk from the conference hotel) Please confirm your availability to participate in this session by August 1, 2013. We want to ensure that the room can hold everyone who's interested in coming. Check out the new Facebook page for Culture Section grad students: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asaculturegrad/>

Monday, August 12

8:30 AM

303. Regular Session. Culture and Inequality: Labor Market Processes

Session Organizer: Maria Charles, University of California-Santa Barbara

Presider: Maria Charles, University of California-Santa Barbara

Signals of Class: Do They Affect Hiring Outcomes? Kyla Thomas, Princeton University

Recognizing Chilliness: How Cultural Schemas Shape STEM Faculty's Views of Department Climate and Professional Culture. Erin A. Cech, Rice University; Mary Blair-Loy, University of California-San Diego;

Laura E. Rogers, University of California-San Diego

Proficiency in Foreign Languages and Socio-Economic Status. Juan Diez Medrano, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

The Essentialist Foundations of Gender Inequality. David B. Grusky, Stanford University; Karin Hallden, Swedish Institute for Social Research; Asaf Levanon, University of Haifa; Reinhard Pollak, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

Discussant: Leslie McCall, Northwestern University

306. Regular Session. Sociology of Culture. Relational Approaches to Cultural Analysis

Session Organizer: Paul D. McLean, State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

Presider: Neha Gondal, State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

A Nested Narratives Project: theoretical grounding and methodological implications. Charles Kirschbaum, Insper Institute of Education and Research

Love, Sex and God: The Institutional Logic of Romantic Love Among University Students. Roger Friedland, Departments of Sociology and Religious Studies; John W. Mohr, University of California-Santa Barbara; Paolo A. Gardinali

Text Mining for Comparative Cultural Analysis. Gabe Ignatow, University of North Texas; Rada Mihalcea, University of North Texas

Race, Gender, and Varieties of Ambivalence: A Configurational Analysis of Musical Boundaries in Mississippi. John Sonnett, University of Mississippi

Discussant: Neha Gondal, State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

317. Section on Sociology of Culture Paper Session. "Isms" as Culture: Ideologies of Collective Publics

Session Organizer: Bart Bonikowski, Harvard University

Presider: Bart Bonikowski, Harvard University

A Comparison of New Institutionalized Forms of Populism in Venezuela and the United States. Ritchie Savage,

New School for Social Research

Hello Lenin: Socialism, Capitalism and Liberalism Among Venezuelan Student Activists. David A. Smilde, University of Georgia; Hugo Pérez Hernaíz, Universidad Central de Venezuela

Protecting Privilege or Fighting for the Nation's Soul? The Tea Party Movement as Culture War. Paul Geoffrey Bakken, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Simulating the Nation: The Production of Zionist Belonging in a Jewish American Summer Camp. Dan Lainer-Vos, University of Southern California

10:30 AM

354. Section on Sociology of Culture Paper Session. Performance as Cultural Form

Session Organizer: Jason L. Mast, University of Warwick

Presider: Jason L. Mast, University of Warwick

Performance and Climate Change: An Aristotelian Analysis of Culture Structures and Character in "An Inconvenient Truth." Philip Smith, Yale University; Nicolas Howe, Williams College

'A Black by Any Other Name': Strategic Ethnic Confusion and the Commodification of Identity. Tristan Ivory, Stanford University

Journalistic professionalism as performance and boundary work: Source-relations at the state house. Matthias Revers, State University of New York-Albany

Politics and Performance at the Court of the Sun King. Chandra Mukerji, University of California-San Diego

Constructing and Deconstructing the Lance Armstrong Myth. Ronald N. Jacobs, State University of New York-Albany

2:30 PM

394. Section on Sociology of Culture Paper Session. Explorations in Cultural Sociology: Boundaries, Contracts, Networks and Experience

Session Organizer: Anne Kane, University of Houston – Downtown

Presider: Anne Kane, University of Houston – Downtown

Sketches of a Practice-Network Program. David Kalim Diehl, Duke University

The High of Cultural Experience. Claudio Ezequiel Benzecry, University of Connecticut; Randall Collins, University of Pennsylvania

The Strange Invention of Contract in Early Modern England. Richard G. Biernacki, University of California-San Diego

Boundary Processes, Status Challenges and the role of Non-State actors in Group-Making. Christi M. Smith, The Ohio State University

Discussant: Mark Gould, Haverford College

This sessions captures a variety of research paths and programs contributing to innovation in cultural sociology.

4:30 PM

413. Regular Session. Sociology of Culture. Social Issues, Social Protest, and Cultural Analysis

Session Organizer: Paul D. McLean, State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

Cultural Change Via Cultural Revitalization and Fabrication in the Context of Social Movements. David A. Snow, University of California-Irvine; Peter B. Owens, University of California-Irvine; Anna E. Tan, University of California-Irvine

A Dramaturgical Approach to Protest Policing in the United States.: Actors, Enemies, Stage, and Performance. Thomas Nolan Ratliff, Arkansas State University

Mad Science, Good Religion, and Abstract Law: Cultural Schemas in Americans' Talk about Social Controversies. Penny A. Edgell, University of Minnesota; Kathleen E. Hull, University of Minnesota

Coming Out of the Shadows: Structural and Cultural Opportunities for Undocumented Student Mobilization.

Laura E. Enriquez, University of California-Los Angeles; Abigail C. Saguy, University of California-Los Angeles

Discussant: Paul D. McLean, State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

Tuesday, August 13

10:30 AM

481. Regular Session. Popular Culture 1

Session Organizer: Jennifer C. Lena, Barnard College-Columbia University

Presider: Jennifer C. Lena, Barnard College-Columbia University

Career Tournaments as Commitment Traps: The Case of Stand-Up Comedy in Los Angeles. Patrick Michael Reilly, University of California-Los Angeles

Close, But No Cigar: The Bimodal Rewards to Prize-Seeking. Gabriel Rossman, University of California-Los Angeles; Oliver Schilke, University of California-Los Angeles

Fields of Mutual Alignment: A Dual-Order Approach to the Study of Cultural Holes. Kyle Michael Puetz, University of Arizona

Genre-Regulating Organizations and the Process of Consecration in Popular Music Criticism. Ryan A. Light, University of Oregon; Colin Odden, The Ohio State University

Discussant: Jennifer C. Lena, Barnard College-Columbia University

2:30 PM

550. Regular Session. Narrative, Biography and Culture: Stories We Tell

Session Organizer: Jooyoung Kim Lee, University of Toronto

Presider: Jooyoung Kim Lee, University of Toronto

Doing Ambivalence: A Study of Surname Hyphenators' Multivocal Negotiations of Identity. Rachele Germana, City University of New York - John Jay College

Doing Autobiography. Stephanie Renee Medley-Rath, Lake Land College

Narratives of Self-Invention: Spoken Word Poetry, Creativity, and Contemporary Identity Politics. Valerie L. Chepp, University of Maryland

When Stories Fail: Accounting for How Women Interpret Stories of Sexual Assault. Francesca Polletta, University of California-Irvine; Britni Leia Adams, University of California-Irvine; Amanda Louise Ebner, University of California-Irvine; Monica Trigoso, Independent scholar

Discussant: Iddo Tavory, New School for Social Research

552. Regular Session. Popular Culture 2

Session Organizer: Jennifer C. Lena, Barnard College-Columbia University

Presider: Sudhir A. Venkatesh, Columbia University

Culinary Personas and the World of Celebrity Chefs: A study of cookbooks and cultural inequality. Alexandra Rodney, University of Toronto; Josee Johnston, University of Toronto; Phillipa Chong, University of Toronto

Social and symbolic category membership: Race and legitimacy in popular music. Vaughn Schmutz, University of North Carolina-Charlotte; Alex van Venrooij, University of Amsterdam

Trope Analysis: Capturing Creative Protests. Cristiana Olcese, London School of Economics and Political Science

Why We Hate Soaps: Evolution of Aesthetic Legitimizing Ideologies for U.S. Daytime Soap Operas, 1930-2009.

Melissa C. Scardaville, Emory University

Discussant: Sudhir A. Venkatesh, Columbia University

564. Regular Session. The Meanings of Things

Session Organizer: Christena Nippert-Eng, Illinois Institute of Technology

Presider: Christena Nippert-Eng, Illinois Institute of Technology

'Copwise?': How the Urban Poor Negotiate Hyperpolicing in Public Street Life. Forrest Stuart, University of Chicago

36 Etudes. Allen Shelton, State University of New York-Buffalo

Marginality, Dread, and Repression: The Phenomenology of Religious Practice in Contemporary India. Vikash Sin State University of New Jersey-Rutgers

Portraits of Chinese Shanzhai. Yiying Wu, Aalto University; Jack Whalen, Aalto University

Some Animals Are More Equal Than Others: American Zoos and the Culture of Childhood. David Grazian, University of Pennsylvania

Discussant: Noah McClain, Illinois Institute of Technology

“Culture Meets... Knowledge”

Owen Whooley, University of New Mexico

Accounting for the boundaries between academic subfields is in many ways a fool's errand (despite the professional stakes we often place in them). The vagaries of the histories of sociological subfields - their emergence, division, and decline - are so riddled with contingency that it is difficult to impose much sense on them. Sure, we might be able to write a Whiggish history of a subfield that portrays its current state as the logical end of progressive developments, but the only use of such a history would be to mislead. It is with this in mind that I tackle the curious history of the relationship between knowledge and culture in American sociology. This is a history characterized by the arbitrary segregation of knowledge and culture into distinct spheres, with very little dialogue between them, that only in the last two decades has begun to be rectified. Yet, even still today I face the disorienting task of linking together the concerns of cultural sociologists to those of sociologists of knowledge, despite the fact that disciplinary pasts aside, their link is self-evident.

Indulging the convention (somewhat misleading itself) of beginning our sociological with the august “founding fathers” (Marx, Durkheim and Weber), the decades long segregation of cultural sociology from the sociology of knowledge reveals itself not to be inscribed in the DNA of the field, but rather a phenomenon that came later. Indeed, insofar of these “founding fathers” discussed knowledge and culture, they did so in the same breath, as the two were inextricably linked. Durkheim, in his more anthropological moments when studying “primitive” religion, highlighted the social morphology of basic categories of thought in religion, thus giving a sociological gloss to the Kantian problem of the origins of such categories. Out of religious culture collective conscience was formed that made knowledge, and social organization itself, possible, by providing a communal basis for sense-making. With his historian's sensibility, Weber, among all the “founding fathers”, was less apt to carve up the social sphere, embracing complexity in favor of abstraction. *The Protestant Ethic* is a stunning work in both cultural sociology and the sociology of knowledge, as it demonstrates the manner in which expert knowledge (at the time Calvinist theologians) was (mis)translated into everyday practices (work as the indicator of salvation) to produce a particular cultural ethos (incessant labor). Whether one buys his thesis, we can appreciate the narrative for the way in which knowledge and culture are intertwined in performing a basic function – sense-making in the

social world. As for Marx, well, things get a bit more complicated. On the one hand, the cruder version of Marx reduces culture, knowledge, and ideology to mere epiphenomenon. Knowledge and culture accompany each other in their demoted position from the economic center of the action. On the other hand, Marx, in his scientific aspirations for historical materialism, holds out hope for true knowledge to eventually emerge of the false consciousness and opiates of the masses. In doing so, he creates a separation between culture and knowledge for epistemological and political reasons. But still the overall tenor of his work treats culture and knowledge *as objects of analyses* to be similarly positioned vis-à-vis the base.

Somewhere along the way the intellectual and disciplinary histories of knowledge and culture diverged. Whether this split was caused by typical academic niche-carving, real intellectual differences, or practical concerns in the division of labor is difficult to tease out (Probably a combination of each of these, most likely an unintended consequence of all). Regardless of origin, the sociology of culture went one way; the sociology of knowledge another. The logic underlying this split, if there even was a conscious one, was a division of subfields by perceived spheres, rather than underlying processes. Those interested in artists (producers of culture), museums (cultural institutions), or general national character (culture as macro system) took up residence in the sociology of culture. The delineation of the subfield by its sphere as opposed to a broader conceptualization of cultural sociology that recognizes *all* action as embedded in a horizon of meaning (Alexander, 1998), needs little rehashing here, as much of the current work in the field is aimed at its problems. What I'd like to discuss is the eerily parallel developments within the sociology of knowledge, whereby broad processes of knowledge production and translation, got circumscribed to a particular *sphere* of human activity, despite the fact that these processes of sense-making are relevant to *all* spheres of social life.

Subfields have their own “founding sons” and the program for the sociology of knowledge was explicitly laid and given force by Karl Mannheim, whose basic notion (despite some sociology privilege claiming and a weak argument for “relationism”) was that *all* knowledge is inextricably tied to social organization.

(Continued on page 10)

(“Culture Meets... Knowledge” continued from page 9)

Although his program seems somewhat limited to our post-modern world in that it is oriented toward teasing out the social determinants of knowledge forms, it contains within it a potentially radical implication – namely that all knowledge – be it political ideology, scientific research, or art criticism – could be interrogated sociologically. A broad program indeed. Some took this broad agenda to heart. Notably phenomenologists took it to the interactional level, dissecting the meaningful lived world of actors. This program reached its most ambitious formulation in Berger and Luckmann’s *The Social Construction of Reality*, a book influenced by Alfred Schutz, that argued that reality itself was socially constructed, as our knowledge and beliefs about reality are embedded in our social institutions. One can see in this tradition clear linkages to cultural sociology.

Despite the existence of the broad program of the sociology of knowledge, gradually in the U.S. sociological context, with its spherical thinking, the sociology of knowledge got transformed and constricted to the sociology of *scientific* knowledge. (A legacy of this is the fact that the ASA has a “Science, Technology, and Knowledge” section, not a “Sociology of Knowledge” section). Initially, this subfield was defined even more narrowly, as being primarily focused on the *institution* of science. Here the caricature of Robert Merton looms large. Merton’s concern was examining the social organization of science, the practices of scientists, and the scientists themselves. In doing so, Merton did marshal cultural arguments. His article “Pietism, Puritanism, and Science” makes an analogous argument to Weber in arguing that cultural values, inherited from Protestantism, promote the success of science in the United States; “Science and the Social Order” makes the case that democratic cultures are more effective than totalitarian ones in promoting science. But Merton drew the line on examining the social construction of scientific knowledge itself, perhaps respecting the norms of science he identified too much. Therefore, while the nuance of Merton’s thinking is done injustice by the blanket critique of “Mertonian sociology of science” circulating today, he should rightfully be criticized for an unwillingness to touch the *content* of scientific knowledge with a critical sociological brush. Under such a program there was too much reverence (or perhaps intimidation) for scientific knowledge, as the posture of the sociology of knowledge was that the institution could be examined sociologically, but its product – scientific truth – was viewed as emerging from an objective engagement and insight into reality. Thus, culture entered the equation on a macro level as promoting or prohibiting scientific truth. If it operated locally, within science itself, it was seen as a “corrupting” influence, not an integral part of scientific practice. Good

science was cultureless in its objectivity.

This of course changed in the post-Kuhnian landscape. Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* did not necessarily reclaim Mannheim’s broad program, but it did extend sociology’s critical reach when examining science, by challenging the progressive, linear view of science and noting the “extra-scientific” factors in its paradigm shifts. Science was no longer seen as a pristine and uncorrupted pursuit of objective knowledge; it got messier, more social. Scientists became more human in the process, their culturally embedded perspectives appreciated and not obscured by some false appeal to a view from nowhere. The Strong Programme, promoted by David Bloor and Barry Barnes, consciously sought to knock science down a peg, arguing that all knowledge, including science, was shaped by social factors, whether they be practices, cultural context, and/or self-interest. This opened the door to a more thorough engagement with culture. It was no longer merely corrupting and leading to “false” ideas; it was integral in understanding the emergence of perceived “true” scientific knowledge as well. Sociologists, thus, enter the laboratory (i.e. Latour and Woolgar), analyzed their internal “epistemic cultures” (i.e. Knorr-Cetina), and then followed them out of the laboratory to see how they muster and defended truth claims in the public sphere (i.e. Gieryn). Thus, once science was stripped of its mystique it opened the door for a more robustly cultural orientation toward it. A similar thing happened within the sociology of culture. Here the demystification did not involve “truth” but rather “creativity”; just as sociologists of science had long ruled truth as out of bounds, so had sociologists of culture romanticized creative genius. But once such genius was appreciated as fundamentally social in nature it opened up questions as to how it was produced, understood and maintained. Sociologists of science got their Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar following scientists (and others) around the “laboratory life”; sociologists of culture got their Howard Becker following artists (and others) around the “art world”. As both subfields demystified their objects and recaptured their broader mandate the possibility for convergence became greater as the animating research questions focused on similar processes. Both began to treat culture, not as a static system influencing action or fixed productions and representations, but rather through the lens of practice, as a constitutive feature of *all* practice that is continuously shaping and, and being shaped, by the pragmatics of social action. Thus, you get a figure like Bourdieu who applied a similar cultural sociology to examine the Flaubert in the literary field and homo academicus in the French academy.

(Continued on page 11)

“Culture Meets... Knowledge” continued from page 10)

But still, especially in its American context, the sociology knowledge has not been able to escape its narrow sphere. That has moved out of the laboratory, but it has not gotten that far down the street. There is an excellent research on knowledge producers like economists, doctors, engineers, and political elites whose production of knowledge is tied more closely to practical concerns. But it remains a field attuned primarily toward expert knowledge. Here it can take a cue from the strong programme of cultural sociology to begin to adapt its tools and insights to *all* forms of knowledge and sense-making activities. Just as every subfield must have a cultural dimension, so to must it have a sociology of *x* knowledge dimension. This should not only include research on lay challenges to expert authority (i.e. Epstein) – a persisting distinction that in itself speaks volumes on the orientation of the field. It should encompass more mundane, everyday forms of sense-making. As reflexive social agents all people produce meaning. A sociology of knowledges should know no artificial bounds.

Ultimately, once the sociology of knowledge has caught up to cultural sociology, once it has become what I've clumsily called here a sociology of knowledges, then arbitrary disciplinary boundaries will dissolve to the point where what one calls a subfield is an empty exercise. Folks can retain their ASA sections, but in practice and in thought, the treatment of cultural sociology and the sociology of knowledge are separate and distinction enterprise should cease. Cultural sociology and sociology of knowledge, at their core, are concerned with the social production and maintenance of (and conflict over) meaning. We can think of “knowledge as culture” (McCarthy), knowledge as subset of culture, whatever. As long those who identify under different labels but are engaged in the same questions are not prevented from talking to each other by arbitrary disciplinary boundaries. Only then will we overcome our problematic disciplinary history and the intellectual havoc its wrought.

Amuses

Recent articles collected and reviewed by the Newsletter Graduate Student Editors,

Go, Julian. 2013. “Decolonizing Bourdieu: Colonial and Postcolonial Theory in Pierre Bourdieu’s Early Work.” *Sociological Theory* 31(1): 49-74.

After being conscripted into the French military in Algeria in 1955, Pierre Bourdieu taught at the University of Algiers and conducted fieldwork during the Algerian War. With a vast body of theoretical scholarship, his work on Algerian society has often been overlooked until recent excavations. Despite this early work’s grounding in the French colonial empire, few have considered his contributions toward the advancement of postcolonial sociology. Through an analysis of Bourdieu’s work from 1957 to the early 1960s, Julian Go argues that Bourdieu, contrary to criticisms, articulated a theory and critique of colonialism and, in doing so, began development of his later concepts of habitus, field, and reflexivity. Go “illuminat[es] not only what Bourdieu made analytically of colonialism but also in what ways colonialism made Bourdieu” (p. 69).

Drawing from his embeddedness in the Algerian political and intellectual context, Bourdieu conceptualized colonialism as a system of racial domination rooted in coercion. Though similar to Fanon’s views, whose works were coming out during the same period, Bourdieu’s theorization focused less on the psychological effects of colonialism and more on the nature of colonialism itself—as a system with its own logics. As such, colonialism affected relationships; “social interactions and their attendant symbolic processes take on a particular form in colonialism” (p. 57). Structured by colonial logic, interactions between colonizer and colonized were marked by racism, paternalism, violence, and subservience. Further, he observed the emergence of conflicted identities and hybrid cultures as colonized peasants faced tensions between “tradition” and new sets of values, practices, and social conditions.

Go argues not only for recognition of Bourdieu’s contributions to a sociology of colonialism, but also suggests that Bourdieu’s colonial work were the grounds for his later, more well-known theorizations. Habitus emerged from understanding the relationship between tradition, hybridity, and the physical displacement of Algerian peasantry. Treating colonialism as an autonomous system that structures interaction represented implicit theorizations of the concept of the field. Finally, through his fieldwork and critique of colonial power relations, Bourdieu developed his epistemic reflexivity, recognizing that ethnography was structured by the colonial situation, as were other social interactions.

Challenging critiques of Bourdieu’s work as Eurocentric and eliding discussions of colonialism, Go’s novel analysis suggests that postcolonial scholarship and theorizing need not emerge solely from postcolonial societies or the global south, and cautions against the reliance on essentialized identities. He reminds us that “what is at stake in postcolonial theory should not be the racial, ethnic, or national position of the theorist; [at] stake should be the theory” (p. 68).

Friedman, Sam, and Giseline Kuipers. 2013. “The Divisive Power of Humour: Comedy, Taste and Symbolic Boundaries.” *Cultural Sociology*, 7(2), 179-195.

Ironically, humor may be the one cultural field that continues to be governed by cultural snobbishness, elitist

boundary-drawing and symbolic violence by the dominant class against their subordinates. In a challenge to the currently accepted theory of cultural omnivorousness, which claims that classically Bourdieusian distinction is passé, Friedman and Kuipers (2013) show that comedy consumers with high cultural capital in Britain and the Netherlands are harshly judgmental of lowbrow comedy, and see their own tastes as evidence of cultural superiority. Drawing on interviews from lower, working, and middle-class comedy consumers, the authors reveal that what may be a laughing matter on the surface is actually the source of deeply-held convictions about the worthiness of insiders vs. outsiders to one's own cultural tastes. While this is shown to map onto class differences, particularly when accounting for education levels, the data also reveals that humor is central to personhood, often at the root of interpersonal relationships, trust, and intimacy, while not sharing a sense of humor signals an unbridgeable social divide. In the pithy words of an interviewee, "There's something fundamental about what makes you laugh" (180).

This is shown nowhere more clearly than in what informants said *should* make you laugh. Respondents with low cultural capital said comedy should be fun, entertaining, and social—arguably a popular expectation of comedy. Those with high cultural capital, however, specified that comedy should be complex and original, even challenging—they identified their favorite comedians as those that really worked for the laugh. This formed the basis of their snobbery towards those who "didn't get" their humor, something they often attributed to lack of education. Surprisingly, these consumers were less likely to object to dark humor (i.e. jokes about pedophilia) than their low cultural capital counterparts; the authors suggest that this correlates to their different expectations—dark humor might pose a challenge, whereas it's unlikely to be described as 'fun.' In fact, those with lower cultural capital challenged the high cultural capital humor aesthetic, calling it "smug" and claiming their group had a better sense of fun and humor overall.

More insights abound in this important contribution about humor, which the authors successfully show is at the core of our cultural selves.

Junior Theorists Symposium

August 9, 2013

Kellen Auditorium, 66 5th Avenue, New School for Social Research, NYC

Please join us for the 2013 Junior Theorists Symposium on August 9, 2013, at the New School for Social Research. Details about the program follow. Questions? Contact Josh Pacewicz or Fiona Rose-Greenland.

8:30 - 9:00 Coffee and Bagels

9:00 - 10:50 Knowledge and its Production

The Duality of Philosophers? Social Lives and Ideas?
Monica Lee, University of Chicago

The Invisible Hand of the Scientist: Theorizing the Modern Platform of Knowledge? Alvaro Santana-Acuña,
Harvard University

Stylized Facts in the Social Sciences? Dan Hirschman,
University of Michigan

Discussant: Wendy Espeland, Northwestern University

10:50 - 11:00 Coffee

11:00 - 12:50 Institutions and Power

The Practical Boundaries of the State: The Politics and Mechanisms of the 'State Effect.' Damon Mayrl and Sarah Quinn, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid and University of Washington

From Prophecy to Practice: Mutual Selection Cycles in the Routinization of Charismatic Authority. Joseph West and Eric Schoon, University of Arizona

Toward a Sociology of Trustworthiness. Camilo Leslie, University of Michigan and American Bar Foundation
Discussant: Paul DiMaggio, Princeton University

12:50 - 2:00 Lunch

2:00 - 3:50 Meaning and Signification

Mechanisms and Meaning. Matthew Norton, University of Oregon

Complicit Masculinity in the African Periphery.
Jordanna Matlon, Institute for Advanced Study - Toulouse

From 'Champs' to Field: Lost in Translation. Angèle Christin and Marianne Blanchard, Princeton University and Sciences Po.

Discussant: Robin Wagner-Pacifici, New School for Social Research

4:00 - 5:30 After-panel: Theory past and future

Claire Decoteau, University of Illinois - Chicago

Neil Gross, University of British Columbia

Greta Krippner, University of Michigan

Iddo Tavory, New School for Social Research

Richard Swedberg, Cornell University

5:30 - until the last theorist drops

Beer, wine, and good conversation.

We ask for a participation fee of \$20 per faculty member and \$10 per graduate student, payable on site.

The Sociology of Culture in Brazil

Angela Alonso and Fernando Pinheiro (University of São Paulo)

It has taken quite some time for the sociology of culture to become an autonomous field in Brazil. Its constitution as a field of study ran in tandem with the institutionalization of sociology itself as a university discipline. From this perspective, a strict-sense sociology of culture has only existed since the 1970s, when effects from a two-fold change became visible. On one hand, the institutional conditions for the development of this sub-field were established. And on the other, the combined processes of accelerated industrialization and metropolization of the 1960s and 1970s created an urban middle class and along with it a mass cultural production to meet its demands. According to these parameters, the sociology of culture in Brazil had a very late development, driven by a reaction to the expansion of the cultural industry – and, as the term implies, inspired by the Frankfurt School.

However, the genesis of sociology of culture can be traced to a much earlier period if, instead of understanding it as a disciplinary field, we are to look at it as an angle of observation of social reality. In this sense, an interest in culture constitutes what is commonly seen in Brazil as theories of nation-building, encompassing dilemmas of a conservative and incomplete modernization, and the effects of both processes on sociability and politics. This approach dates back to the nineteenth century and has attempted to define the specificity of Brazilian culture in terms of theories of national identity, with miscegenation as its key element: Brazilian culture would be innately hybrid, resulting from the cultural mix of the European colonizers, the indigenous native, and the African, smuggled into the country via slavery. The weight of each explanatory element has varied over time. In the Post-Independence period, nativism prevailed, with Brazilian culture seen as a fusion of European and indigenous elements. At the end of the nineteenth century this mythology of nationality was questioned, with the inclusion of the third element, the African component. From 1870 to 1930, a long series of authors described Brazilian culture as based on cultural and ethnic miscegenation and African roots gradually gained more weight.

This approach appeared with the institutionalization of social sciences in Brazil beginning in the 1930s. At this point, the treatment of culture in the anthropological sense, as the self-production of a form of collective life, dominated and gained new methodological tools, orienting a search for empirical observation. The presence of Roger Bastide, a sociology professor, at the Universidade de São Paulo (founded in 1934) between 1938 and 1954 can be seen as a milestone in the establishment of this style of sociology of culture, closer to the anthropological analysis of culture as a relatively distinct sphere of production and circulation of cultural objects.

In the newly implemented academic sociology, the dominant theme revolved around the country's process of modernization and, as a consequence, the central axis for the treatment of culture came to be the placement of popular culture vis-à-vis a capitalist economic dynamics. The work of Florestan Fernandes¹, another first-generation exponent, on the social location of folklore and his debate with Bastide on the topic are an example in this regard. And Bastide proved to be an innovator, in focusing on the discussion of new objects, such as Minas Gerais baroque, black poetry, African religious rituals, and especially in shifting the emphasis on the capitalist modernization itself to its articulation with the symbolic dimensions of the organization of culture and to the analysis of language².

Incorporation of popular culture and anthropological elements are also present in the work of Gilberto Freyre, a former student of Franz Boas. His books, written between the 1930s and the 1970s, are scholarly essays grounded in an innovative methodology, in which culture looms mainly as a set of social practices. Simultaneously with the *Ecole des Annales*, Freyre invented in Brazil a sociology of everyday life, transforming the unusual and seemingly irrelevant – such as advertisements for shoes and notes on handheld fans – into objects of investigation and combining elements of classical and popular culture – analyzing both popular sentimental love songs and artistic portraits, religious and gastronomic rituals, slave clothing and *haute couture*. His “Proustian sociology,” as he defined it, operated in a spiral, as it constantly returned to the same themes but with varying viewpoints and materials, while the concepts were enriched with concrete experiences and a wealth of details that aimed to produce in the reader a sense of the phenomenon that was being studied. His main subject was the formation, crisis and breakdown of the Brazilian patriarchal society³, highlighting the opposition between the forces of change and conservation and their accommodation as an “equilibrium of antagonisms.”

(Continued on page 14)

¹ Fernandes, Florestan. *Folclore e mudança social na cidade de São Paulo*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1961.

² See, among others, Bastides, Roger. *Arte e Sociedade*. S.P. Martins Fontes, 1945; Bastides, Roger. *Poetas do Brasil*. Editora Guaira, Curitiba, 1946. Bastide, Roger. *Sociologia do Folclore Brasileiro*. São Paulo, Anhembi, 1959.

³ His most important works include *Introdução à História da Sociedade Patriarcal no Brasil*, in four volumes: *Casa Grande & Senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal*, Rio de Janeiro: Maia Schmidt, 1933. *Sobrados e mocambos: decadência do patriarcado rural e desenvolvimento do urbano*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1936. *Ordem e progresso: processo de desintegração das sociedades patriarcal e semipatriarcal no Brasil sob o regime de trabalho livre, aspectos de um quase meio século de transição do trabalho escravo para o trabalho livre e da monarquia para a república*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1959. *Jazigos e Covas Rasas* (inacabado). Rio de Janeiro, José Olympio, 1979.

(“Culture in Brazil” continued from page 13)

This earlier period left at least two legacies for the later phases of sociology of culture: one was thematic – looking at the mestizo character of Brazilian culture as a positive phenomenon, stressing the hybridism as a central Brazilian social feature; the other was methodological – the use of the newspaper, testimony, material culture (especially everyday objects), as a gateway to the senses, to sensitivity, to sociability and to values.

From 1930 to 1950, many other authors wrote about the miscegenation process and the hardship of social modernization. This came to be called as the “formation cycle”, series of books including the term in their titles and reconstructing the genesis of a particular dimension of Brazilian society. Two of these books deal directly with culture and were very influential in the decades that followed. The first is *Contribution to the history of ideas in Brazil*, by João Cruz Costa,⁴ who proposed to understand how European intellectual doctrines, particularly positivism, adapted to the “American [Brazilian] experience”. The book led the way for an investigation of culture as a set of systems of ideas, its method being the structural reading of texts. This book was also an agenda-setting, indicating as main subject for studies the “influence” systems of thought “imported” from Europe would have on Brazilian minds.

The second influential book of the formation cycle focused on literature. Its author, Antonio Candido, was a student of Bastide and Fernandes and an admirer of Auerbach. *The Brazilian literature building: key moments*,⁵ proposed a tripod analytical framework – author, work, public – in which elements outside the text gain analytical status. Since Candido, originally a professor of sociology, switched department at the Universidade de São Paulo to literary studies, his approach of understanding the conversion of social material into literary form would ground studies in both sociology of literature and literary criticism.

Sociology of culture suffered a major change with the 1964 military coup, and its effects were felt in the two decades that followed. On one hand, during the military regime (1964-1985), politics became an issue in the study of culture, thanks to the political involvement of many sociologists in the movement to redemocratize the country; strains of Marxism, especially Gramsci, thus flourished, pushing the sociology of culture to an analysis of the producers of ideas: the intellectuals. A valued concept at the time, the category of “public intellectual” was projected onto the past in a wide range of studies that sought to “rescue” the works “silenced” by history, especially of those classified as “radical intellectuals”. Such was the case, for example, of Joaquim Nabuco, whose works were then considered to be a cultural, economical and political proto-sociology of Brazil. This left-leaning trend was offset with the return to democracy in the 1980s, when conservative intellectuals of the nineteenth century, such as Oliveira Vianna and the Viscount of Uruguay, were also “rescued” from the shadows.

On the other hand, the field acquired new dimensions thanks to the expansion of the university system. The institutionalization of sociology as a university discipline reached its maturity, thus enabling the emergence of a sociology of culture that could indeed lay claim to its name. The growth of postgraduate programs, supported by the state, boosted the process of specialization. In a correlated movement, the consolidation of a market of symbolic goods steered the discussion regarding culture in the Frankfurt School’s direction. This style came to be dominant at the time, with studies focusing cultural objects as produced by a cultural industry or a mass society. Attention was then turned to the world of advertising and mass communication and its products, such as the case in the pioneering work of Gabriel Cohn⁶, starting a subfield of sociology of communication, and Renato Ortiz⁷, who described the cultural industry building in Brazil.

In the intersection between the sociology of intellectuals and the sociology of culture in the Frankfurt School style appeared Roberto Schwarz’s works. As former disciple of Antonio Candido, he chose literature as object, analyzing the books of the main national writer, Machado de Assis.⁸ Schwarz provides an immanent critique of Machado de Assis’ works, investigating the aesthetic solution spoofed by the novelist to convey the dialectic between backwardness and development, reputed to be the case in Brazil. Here the “importing of ideas” topos reoccurs. But in this case, this process is linked to a specific, concrete social experience: Since Brazil was the periphery of capitalism, this process would appear in the economics and in the ideas levels. A secondary thesis is the statement of a lack of intellectual accumulation in nineteenth-century Brazil – with the exception of authors with an “isolated stature” that are able to combine tradition and innovation, which is the case of Machado de Assis.

(Continued on page 15)

⁴ Cruz Costa, João. *Contribuição à História das Ideias no Brasil: o desenvolvimento da filosofia no Brasil e a evolução histórica nacional*, Rio de Janeiro, J. Olympio, 1956.

⁵ Candido, Antonio. *Formação da Literatura Brasileira: momentos decisivos*. São Paulo, Martins Fontes, 1959.

⁶ Cohn, Gabriel. *Sociologia da Comunicação: teoria e ideologia*. São Paulo, Pioneira, 1973.

⁷ Ortiz, Renato. *A moderna tradição brasileira*. São Paulo, Brasiliense, 1988.

⁸ Schwarz, Roberto. *Ao Vencedor as batatas: forma literária e processo social nos inícios do romance brasileiro*. São Paulo, Duas Cidades, 1977. Schwarz, Roberto. *Um mestre na periferia do capitalismo: Machado de Assis*, São Paulo, Duas Cidades, 1990.

(“Culture in Brazil” continued from page 14)

With the return to democracy in the mid-1980s, three movements intermingled. The sociology of culture became less subservient to a political agenda, it suffered a thematic dispersion, and it acquired a more professional character, moving towards a more technical training that responds to productivity and scientific criteria and values research practice. Correlated to these factors, within the theoretical and methodological realm, the dominance of Marxism, be it the critical theory of Theodor Adorno or of Gramsci, gradually began to give way to the Pierre Bourdieu’s instrumental as a central reference within the sociology of culture – flanked by authors such as Norbert Elias and Raymond Williams. The sociology of culture becomes more autonomous as a sub-discipline, with the multiplication of themes and approaches and an increased rigor, which is reflected, for instance, in the requirement to evaluation of the research. Parallel to this, scales of observation came to be more varied, comprising works, authors, critics, audiences, institutions – among other non-exclusive empirical possibilities of constituency.

The work of Sergio Miceli, a Bourdieu advisee and one of the first to introduce his ideas in Brazil, clearly illustrates these passages, with books that focus successively on the analysis of television talk shows, public patronage and cooptation by the state as a condition of intellectual life in the country, and the study of modernism in literature and the arts.⁹ More than just another theme, modernism came to be a central chapter in the sociology of culture, indeed almost a specialty, given its specific weight in the cultural dynamics. Since this topic emerged almost simultaneously with the very consolidation of scientific sociology, studies articulating the two experiences¹⁰ came about. In this sense, during this period there occurs a shift in the agenda: from modernization, which bound culture to socioeconomic processes of national development, to modernism, which focuses on the internal dynamics of the field of culture.

In recent years, the Bourdieusian approach has become more generalized, appearing either alone or alongside other approaches throughout most of the specific works on culture. But two classical lines of study have also been revived. On one hand, studies on cultural industry have being refreshed thanks to the pointing out of the limits of the Frankfurt School critiques to the commodity-form. Market value is no longer seen as eliminating the aesthetic sense and its critical potential. Notwithstanding the critical dimension, soap operas, urban popular music, and film began to be analyzed according to the intentionality of the projects themselves and their effects (especially in terms of their reception).

On the other hand, there is an invigoration of the study of intellectuals and ideas, in a line that came to be called “Brazilian social thought.” It encompasses new versions of the older studies on intellectuals, works and circulation of ideas, however now under diversified theoretical bases. Approaches are closer to history, inspired by Pocock, Skinner, Koselleck and Tilly, and seek to explain the production of ideas by placing the agents in the sociopolitical context and stressing their intentionality. Increasing attention goes to transnational processes of production, circulation and appropriation of ideas, and disregarding disciplinary barriers between the various social sciences.

In short, a look back at the history of sociology of culture in Brazil reveals a series of shifts in its main focus: 1) from the topic of national identity (miscegenation) and from an anthropological concept of culture to one that sees it as a relatively autonomous dimension of practices. However, a subfields keeps working in the intersection between culture and politics; 2) popular culture was initially valued as a trace of identity, then it was delegitimized as a subject by theories of mass culture, to finally being recuperated, since, most recently, the gap between popular, commercial and erudite lost its character as the principle of hierarchy of objects; 3) the figure of the public intellectual, who dealt with cultural issues, still exists but now competes with the specialized professional. The specialist in sociology of culture is now in charge of interpreting the entire cultural process, which includes taking into account the constraints of intellectual life itself.

The sociology of culture in Brazil can also be characterized in the negative, in terms of what it does not cover. To this effect, the sociology of religion developed independently, without a relevant intersection with the field of sociology of culture. As well, the development of cultural studies is incipient and almost restricted to the field of literary studies. There is also a lack of comparative studies. In most cases, the work consists of a case study. When comparisons are present these are usually intra-national, i.e., the focus is more on uniqueness than on common traits that a phenomenon may have with cases from other countries. A final shortcoming is methodological in nature. The works rely on qualitative analysis, based on documental research, interviews and testimonials. There is a resistance to the use of quantification in the analysis of culture, which, in this sense, still has a certain aura as an object of study.

(Continued on page 16)

⁹Miceli, Sérgio. *A Noite da madrinha*, Ed. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1972; Miceli, Sérgio. *Intelectuais e classes dirigentes no Brasil*, Difel, 1979; Miceli, Sérgio. *Imagens negociadas, Vanguardas em retrocesso*, São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1996.

¹⁰ Arruda, Maria Arminda do Nascimento. *Metrópole e cultura*. Bauru, Edusc, 2001.

(“Culture in Brazil” continued from page 15)

Currently, the sociology of culture has a strong presence in major Brazilian universities, has become definitively established as a research area. It is recognized by funding agencies and sectors of production and dissemination of scientific work, it covers extensive thematic and has theoretically diverse agenda. Its vitality is also expressed in the large number of students dedicated to the subject and in the increase in international exchanges between researchers.

Books of Note

Tim Dowd, Emory University

Since the last installment of this column, I’ve come across a host of books that bear mentioning—too many books for a single column, in fact. As a result, what follows is an effort to highlight some of these books. The next column will deal with books on politics (such as those by Amy Binder & Kate Wood and Ronald Jacobs & Eleanor Townsley) and books on race (such as those by Wendy Roth and Matthew Hughey).

Four on Religious Communities and / or Practices:

Mucahit Bilici. 2012. *Finding Mecca in America: How Islam is Becoming an American Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

I must admit that I’ve not read many sociological studies that draw primarily on a combination of Heidegger and Simmel (with a critical dose of Bourdieu thrown in, as well). Consequently, I was intrigued with both the theoretical approach that Bilici takes (which he calls “the agnostic approach in cultural sociology”) and the analysis that flows from that approach. Put simply, he deals not with identity and experience in a fixed or a priori fashion but, instead, deals with them as emergent, as a community addresses new realities and situations. Hence, on the one hand, he deals with the adjustments that Muslims have made when arriving and adapting to the US (Muslims as outsiders to a new place) and, on the other hand, with the citizenship practices of American Muslims, especially in the wake of 9/11 (Muslims as insiders). While I hadn’t initially thought of humor as an example of citizenship practices, I did find his chapter on Muslim comedy to be especially effective. In sum, this book took me to new places in theoretical and substantive terms, and I enjoyed the journey.

Wendy Cadge. 2012. *Paging God: Religion in the Halls of Medicine*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

While some cast science and faith as being at odds with each other, Cadge points to an arena of life in which there is much interest in how the two fit (if not work) together. Her book is both historically informed and qualitatively rich (drawing on interviews with medical personnel, as well as chaplains), and it provides nuance to our understandings of the interplay between spirituality and health, between religion and medicine. Her discussion of intensive care staff is especially compelling, as well as quite moving.

Nancy J. Davis and Robert V. Robinson. 2012. *Claiming Society for God: Religious Movements and Social Welfare in Egypt, Israel, Italy and the United States*. Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press.

Those with interests in religion or social movements—if not current events—will find this an informative read. Skillfully addressing four movements that are religiously based and orthodox in some fashion—albeit in different ways—Davis and Robinson show how the religious mission of each movement has led to an array of organizations (e.g., hospitals) that give some type of aid while also embodying the movement’s mission to change the broader society. The movements they consider are Comunionie e Liberazione (Italy), Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt), the Salvation Army (US), and Shas (Israel).

Gerardo Marti. 2012. *Worship across the Racial Divide: Religious Music and the Multiracial Congregation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Marti offers a telling passage in the opening pages of his book: “No sociologists could ever answer the question of what should be in any church’s worship service. But what the sociologists can do with confidence is discover the consistent patterns of thought and behavior found in racially diverse worship services and see how those patterns affect the congregation as a whole” (p. 9). Interestingly enough, via interviews and observation, Marti finds that the consistent pattern among racially diverse congregations does not revolve around an ideal set of songs or genres (which can run the risk of devolving into racial stereotypes, as when worship leaders assume that black congregants will like gospel music), but rather, around the practice of the musical ritual itself. Although Marti does not mention it, I find that his book goes nicely with Robert Wuthnow’s book, *All in Sync: How Music and Art are Revitalizing American Religion*.

Four on Community / Communities:

Andrew Deener. 2012. *Venice: A Contested Bohemia in Los Angeles*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

It’s not unusual to view neighborhoods as having a distinctive character or culture. Deener’s book resonates with that common view, but goes well beyond it by examining and explaining how such neighborhood distinctiveness is constructed. Based on years of ethnographic work (including five years as a resident), as well as on historical analysis, Deener examines and compares adjacent neighborhoods in Venice, California. Within these neighborhoods are a striking array of phenomena—including homelessness and million-dollar homes, gentrification and the counter-culture, poverty and privilege. Through a combination of historical trajectories, politics, law enforcement, race relations and other factors, each of these neighborhoods developed a “public culture”—but not without difficulties. This brief description only hints at the depth of his analysis and argument.

Katherine Giuffre. 2013. *Communities and Networks: Using Social Network Analysis to Rethink Urban and Community Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

The title of this book is both impressively succinct—as it lets us know exactly Giuffre’s intent—and impressively ambition—as it reveals that she seeks to expand a domain of study (community studies) by incorporating insights from another domain (social network analysis). While not everyone will agree with the need to rethink community studies, there’s another aspect of the book that is noteworthy: it’s also a very good primer on social network analysis—dealing with interesting cases and examples (e.g., assimilation in Chicago, urban revolts in Paris), while also helping with technical aspects of network analysis (e.g., calculating centrality in UCINET6). For those seeking such a primer for undergraduate or graduate courses, Giuffre’s book is an excellent choice.

Matt Miller. 2012. *Bounce: Rap Music and Local Identity in New Orleans*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Focusing on a sub-genre of rap (“Bounce”), Miller interrogates the interplay between Bounce and its locale (the city of New Orleans). Rather than offer a dry treatment of history, he expertly shows how this rap subgenre bears the imprint of musical and racial practices long associated with Mardi Gras, professional concerns that emerged in the city’s jazz production, New Orleans’ relatively slight infrastructure for musical recording and distribution, and the tragedy that was Hurricane Katrina.

Eviatar Zerubavel. 2012. *Ancestors & Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

I’ve long admired Zerubavel’s work—not only for its intellectual heft, but also for its aesthetic appeal. He has a knack for taking straightforward questions or points and then showing how they are not so straightforward after all. In *The Seven Day Cycle*, for instance, he goes from “Daddy, what’s Thursday?” (p. 1)—a question innocently asked by his young daughter—to a thorough account of how the 7-day week became so widespread that it almost seems based in nature. His 2012 book likewise starts with an equally provocative question: “Why do we consider Barack Obama a black man with a white mother rather than a white man with a black father?” (p. 3). Of course, the simple answer to that question is that kinship, lineage, etc. (and, in turn, community) are social constructions. Yet, that simple answer does not do justice to the adroit unpacking of this social construction that Zerubavel offers in the pages that follow.

Four on Cultural Consumption / Reception:

Andy Bennett. 2013. *Music, Style, and Aging: Growing Old Disgracefully*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Scholarship on music and identity has exploded as of late. Bennett not only taps into this burgeoning scholarship but also provides a nice corrective—showing that while tastes and actions can be somewhat idiosyncratic, there are also some common patterns that are shaped by the broader context (scenes) and the stage of life in which individuals find themselves. Thus, Bennett also taps into recent scholarship on fandom and the life course—doing so via the case of music.

Phillipe Coulangeon and Julien Duval, Editors. 2013. *Trente ans après La Distinction de Pierre Bourdieu*. Paris: Éditions La Découvert.

A November 2010 conference brought together an international group of scholars, so as to address (among other things) the impact of Bourdieu's now-classic work, *Distinction*. This edited volume offers contributions that came out of this conference. Not only do these chapters give a sense of the reach of Bourdieu's impact (e.g., the application of his theory / approach for research in nations other than France—such as Brazil, Denmark, Great Britain, and Portugal), they also offer critical assessments, as well as paths for future scholarship. Thirty years later proves, indeed, to be a good time for pondering *Distinction*—particularly given the stellar contributors found in this volume (e.g., Tony Bennett, Bernard Lahire, Michèle Lamont, Gisele Sapiro, Elizabeth Silva).

Isabel Jaén and Julien Jacques Simon, Editors. 2012. *Cognitive Literary Studies: Current Themes and New Directions*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Scholarship on the consumption of and engagement with cultural objects is not limited to sociology. Indeed, this edited volume brings together scholars from the humanities and social sciences (particularly psychology) who emphasize such things as how and why we identify with characters in books and what happens in our brains when we read. The chapters by Gerrig (“Why Literature is Necessary, and Not Just Nice”) and Oatley et al. (“The Psychology of Fiction: Present and Future”) are especially instructive and thought provoking.

Joseph A. Kotarba. 2013. *Baby Boomer Rock'n'Roll Fans: The Music Never Ends*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Tia DeNora has famously described music as a “technology of the self”—a tool of sorts that people use to construct who they are. Drawing on phenomenology and symbolic interactionism, Kotarba takes that description and runs with it, showing how music figures in the construction of the multiple selves that inhabit a given individual. Sometimes autobiographical, and sometimes drawing upon participant observation and / or in-depth interviews, he approaches the music-self linkage as evolving and dynamic, which helps us look anew at the individuals who populate various music scenes.

Three on Globalization and Global Processes:

Diane Barthel-Bouchier. 2013. *Cultural Heritage and the Challenge of Sustainability*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Barthel-Bouchier takes on the issue of cultural heritage in critical fashion. For example, she interrogates how the protection of such places as the Taj Mahal became legitimately cast as representing basic human rights while also considering the extent to which such protection is or is not widely supported. She also delves into challenges that confront heritage efforts—particularly environmental ones that pose physical dangers to cherished places (e.g., flooding, desertification), as well as tourism. Befitting a world polity approach, Barthel-Bouchier places heritage experts and organizations front and center, while also pointing to the interplay between the local and the global.

Damon Phillips. 2013. *Shaping Jazz: Cities, Labels and the Global Emergence of an Art Form*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Drawing on an impressive discographical database, as well as a wealth of historical materials, Phillips addresses a series of puzzles regarding the diffusion of jazz around the world. He has crafted a book that is conversational in tone and that draws the reader into the arc of the book's development—an arc that nicely lays out the case for issues of race, global diffusion and processes of canonization. Furthermore, the quantitative analysis is presented in a way that will appeal broadly—including both to sociological number crunchers and jazz fans who care little about

number crunching. It's a compelling book on many levels.

Motti Regev. 2013. *Pop-Rock Music: Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism in Late Modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Regev provides a much needed sociological take on the aesthetics of popular music, the field(s) in which popular music is produced and enjoyed and—most importantly—the situation of popular music amidst processes of globalization. While some scholars speak of such topics in an essayistic fashion, Regev notably addresses them by wedding nuanced theoretical insights with informed empirical analysis. His treatment of world polity theory via consideration of pop-rock is especially intriguing.

Three on Cultural Production:

Lucas Bessire and Daniel Fisher, Editors. 2012. *Radio Fields: Anthropology and Wireless Sound in the 21st Century*. New York: New York University Press.

Apart from scholarship by a few notables (e.g., Gabriel Rossman), there's not as much recent sociological research on radio as would be expected in light of the medium's importance around the world (given its relative cheapness and its easy reach into disparate communities). This edited volume provides both inspiration and a corrective—showing the lived and everyday import of radio in various locales, ranging from Appalachia to Israel and from Australia to Mali. Amidst the anthropological contributions, there's also a fine chapter by sociologist Danny Kaplan.

Vincent Dubois, Jean-Mathieu Méon, and Emmanuel Pierru. 2013. *The Sociology of Wind Bands: Amateur Music between Cultural Domination and Autonomy*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.

Focusing on wind bands in the Alsace region, Dubois and colleagues detail the bands' simultaneous location in four worlds and, in the process, reveal their challenges (e.g. their marginal position in the broader musical world of France) and their benefits (e.g., the connections and sociability they afford in the world of peer groups). Both quantitative and qualitative in its approach, this book should be of major interest to Bourdieusian enthusiasts, and it sits nicely alongside Ruth Finnegan's classic work, *Hidden Musicians*.

Gabriel Rossman. 2012. *Climbing the Charts: What Radio Airplay Tells Us about Innovation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rossman notes the central concern that runs throughout his book: "...how songs become hits" (p. 8). He then approaches that concern from a variety of vantages. You might think that hits occur as radio stations imitate each other. However, Rossman demonstrates that stations views are not so much focused on each other, but rather, on influences from other actors. On the one hand, for instance, the promotional efforts of record companies can have considerable impact on what radio stations play (and, in turn, which songs do or do not become hits). He makes this case especially clear by considering "payola" scandals. On the other hand, radio stations can also be attuned to their broader market (e.g., listeners), as revealed by country stations and their sudden inattention to the Dixie Chicks. This book packs a big wallop: methodologically sophisticated, data rich, theoretically nuanced, and substantively instructive in terms of the future of terrestrial radio in an online world.

Three Others Briefly Noted:

Danielle J. Lindemann. 2012. *Dominatrix: Gender, Eroticism, and Control in the Dungeon*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Abigail C. Saguy. 2013. *What's Wrong with Fat?* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Kristin Surak. 2013. *Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

While dealing with drastically different topics, these three books all share several traits: they are innovative, broad ranging in their engagement with scholarship, and well written. I highly recommend each one.