

SECTION CULTURE



CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair By Monika Krause	Pg. 2
Four Questions with Larissa Buchholz By Manning Zhang	Pg. 3
Book Review of <i>Seeing Others</i> by Michèle Lamont By Estela B. Diaz	Pg. 7
SSHA Conference Session Report By Marissa Combs	Pg. 9
Section Announcements Calls for Papers and New Publications	Pg. 11

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Letter from the Chair

Monika Krause



Dear Members of the Culture Section,

I hope you had a chance to connect with the people, ideas, and perhaps places that matter most to you during the winter break and were able to replenish your energies for the important work you are doing.

One of the highlights of my fall semester was to email members of the section, usually sociologists whom I don't know personally, asking for free labor on behalf of the section and getting lots of emails back saying, "yes", "sure", "happy do it." It is a testament to peoples' individual generosity but also (I think) to the sense of goodwill that the section has created over the years, the sense that being connected to each other across institutions through this section and through sections in general really is meaningful and important.

I thank Laura Adler, Laura Nelson, Lyn Spillman, and Natasha Warikoo for chairing one of our awards committees, and many others for serving on them.

I hope you consider submitting your work. Upcoming deadlines are for the award for best article (March 1), best student paper (March 1), and for the Stuart Hall Award ("mid-career sociologist whose work holds great promise for advancing the cultural study of racial or ethnic inequality") (March 1).

Have you noticed the grammar underlying the programme that Chair-Elect Clayton Childress and

the programming committee have put together for this year?

There will be sessions on:

- Culture in Interactions
- Culture in Objects
- Culture in Organizations and Markets
- Culture in People

as well as co-sponsored sessions with Race, Gender, Class ("Culture and Solidarity Across Difference") and Mathematical Sociology ("Formal Models of Duality in Culture and Society"), Roundtables and a new edition of our popular "Professionalization Panel" put together by Tania Aparicio.

The deadline for you to submit papers and long abstracts is February 26th at 11.59 Eastern. If you are going to ASA and are making travel arrangements early, bear in mind that we have been assigned ... hm, well ... *Tuesday* as our day.

I hope you agree that the programme is making a pitch as good as any for you to make this a year where you use a suite of sessions to think (again) about this, our very own, "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English Language" and how it relates to other dimensions of the social. I hope I'll have a chance to discuss "findings" from across the sessions with some of you.

I will be in touch with more opportunities for you to connect with others before and during the ASA Meetings in Montreal. Stay tuned for invitations to attend events that are part of our online series "Culture and Contemporary Life" as well as the call to sign up for our mentorship programme as either a mentee or a mentor.

Our newsletter team, led in this edition by Man Yao, with support from Clara Cirdan, Nick Dempsey, Hannah Wohl, Manning Zhang and Derek Robey has put together news, which you sent, as well as some fantastic editorial contributions.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

My best,
Monika

Four Questions with Larissa Buchholz

Interview by Manning Zhang

Manning Zhang (Brandeis University) interviews **Larissa Buchholz (Northwestern University)** about her new book *The Global Rules of Art*, and her visions in the sociology of art.



Larissa Buchholz (left) in conversation with Kimberly Rachal (middle), co-founder of Epiphany Center for the Arts and Terry Franklin (right), Museum Educator, The Art Institute of Chicago at a book panel at the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, Northwestern University 2023.

Manning Zhang: First, congratulations on publishing *The Global Rules of Art*! Please tell us a bit about the origin story of this important book.

Larissa Buchholz: Thank you, Manning. As I explain briefly in the book's preface, I've been interested in global cultural issues for a long time. I grew up in East Germany, where traveling was heavily restricted. And after the Berlin Wall fell, my family seized every opportunity we could to travel beyond the former "Iron Curtain." Before university, I took a gap year and backpacked with my twin sister across Asia, Australia, and Europe; North America and South America would come later. Those early inspiring experiences kindled my initial interest in how cultures relate and how new cultural configurations take shape across borders.

But what turned that early curiosity into a full-fledged research project exploring global dynamics in the art market was a striking event that occurred in 2007. That year works by a group of contemporary artists from China suddenly began fetching multi-million-dollar prices at major auction houses. Soon, their sales had ballooned so drastically that these artists—many of them were relatively obscure just months before—had ascended to the global art market's highest echelons, rivaling the status of established Western superstars

like Damien Hirst and Jeff Koons. A rapid upheaval like this ran counter to previous research—including my own—which had predicted that despite broader globalization trends, artists from the US and Western Europe would still overwhelmingly remain dominant in the art world's top tiers, while artists from “the rest of the world” would continue being relegated to the margins.

This unexpected turn of events intrigued me, so I soon began interviewing art dealers and experts to figure out what had happened. Those interviews helped me begin to understand just how much the art market had become coupled to a financial logic of valuation, which was quite different from the more cultural expert-driven logic that conventionally constructed artistic value. I thus wanted to learn more about the diverse logics and processes that seemed to be impacting valuation at a global scale. Instead of emphasizing the reproduction of Eurocentric hierarchies—which was the prevailing view in the sparse literature about the globalization of culture back then—my focus thereby shifted, and I began trying to explain the possibilities for change. In other words, I wanted to uncover the historical transformations and conditions that allow marginal producers from the “Global South” to break through long-standing barriers and gain recognition on a global level.

Yet it took some time before I fully committed to this as a book-length project. Some faculty at Columbia initially thought a project on “global art” was too risky; they suggested I'd be better off pursuing research that looked at “conventional” markets. But I'm grateful to Gil Eyal and Diane Vaughan, who encouraged me then to follow my passions, and to Peter Bearman, who was also a great supporter early on. Once I'd made up my mind, what followed were years of demanding global research, which ultimately led to the book.

Manning Zhang: You are known for developing a global field approach to art and culture. What are the book's central contributions to the sociology of culture? How do you perceive culture in general?

Larissa Buchholz: I don't really subscribe to one particular notion of culture. I remember once talking with Orlando Patterson at Harvard, shortly after he had published his seminal “Making Sense of Culture.” We went back and forth for nearly three hours, discussing also that issue, and afterward, my head was spinning! I still hadn't settled the question for myself! Ultimately, my approach to culture depends on the problem I'm working on. For example, when I was interested in human rights, I published work that engaged with the world culture approach. But I've also done work on Harrison White's phenomenological network theory, which is inflected in interesting ways by Niklas Luhmann's take on meaning. Similarly, together with Gary A. Fine and Hannah Wohl we collaborated on an article that draws on symbolic interactionism and the strong program in cultural sociology to analyze the COVID pandemic's impact on the art market. Each of these approaches, of course, involves a different notion of culture. But they all contribute to our understanding of culture in important ways. I like working in a subfield that is open to a plurality of perspectives.

But in my book, I definitely foreground the big “C” tradition—that is, Culture as a relatively distinct sphere of artistic/cultural production. And the broader problem I was facing was how can we reasonably think of and approach this type of culture as something global. When I began the project, very little sociological research existed that looked at cultural realms at that scale. We had single case studies on art worlds outside of North America and Western Europe, important comparative work on how globalization affects cultural production in different national settings, and fascinating analyses about patterns of cross-border cultural flows (e.g., book translations or film). But there was still relatively little research that tried to theorize a global cultural system in itself, as a distinct entity that is more than just the sum of art worlds in various countries around the world. So on a most general level, my book tries to contribute toward the development of a global perspective for how we can study art and culture sociologically. My hope is that it also makes clear that such a perspective is useful to keep in mind, even when we're just looking at single nations or

regions, because different scales of cultural production can interact in important and intricate ways.

Of course, when you engage with global art, you can't ignore *cultural* sociology when trying to capture the complex meanings embedded in transgressive global circulation processes. And I found that working with, and extending, cultural field theory was particularly helpful. It allowed me to theorize both the commonalities and diversity of meanings in the globalizing art space: While global fields cohere (rather than converge) around certain meaningful frames of reference, they are also spaces where cultural differences clash and compete. For example, since the late 1980s, exhibition makers in the biennial circuit have increasingly come to share a meaningful vision of "global" rather than "international" contemporary art. Their interpretations of what "global art" means specifically, and who should qualify as the worthiest "global" artists, however, remain open to intense debate. I like Bourdieu's notion of "institutionalized anomie" in this regard, although he used it in a different context. It's vital to capture the ontological openness and contestation of meanings in global/transnational (cultural) spaces.

Yet I also quickly realized that I couldn't ignore the role power inequalities play in the global cultural arena, either. Take, for example, the persistent heavy concentration of influential art institutions and brokers in a few countries in the Global North, who critically affect the making of artistic careers and canons at a global scale (cf. chapter 5). In the end, I knew my research had to bring together both meanings and power structures. And that's what I see as one of the advantages of a global cultural field approach that the book elaborates, among others—it allows you to pursue such a multidimensional analysis while *also* integrating multiple levels of analysis (macro, meso, micro) and scales. In short, it offers a uniquely integrative framework for studying "global culture" that doesn't rely on overly unified assumptions, which could become too reified, if not outright Eurocentric at such a scale.

Manning Zhang: The book title echoes Pierre Bourdieu's *The Rules of Art*, which has become a classic in the sociology of culture. How is your global model different? What new things did you discover, and what methodologies did you use to discover them?

Larissa Buchholz: As I emphasize in my work, a truly global sociology of art and culture cannot merely be an upscaling of established theories; that is, we can't simply take an existing Western framework and superimpose it on the rest of the world. And this problem, of course, relates closely to questions involving conceptual methodology and theorizing. I'm indebted to those theorists who have encouraged us to think in ways that go beyond West-centric perspectives and epistemologies, e.g., Raewyn Connell or Julian Go, among others. I hope that related debates will gain broader traction after a period in which much of the discussion about global/transnational theorizing has centered on the critique of methodological nationalism. For my book, I relied on Critical Realism as a meta-foundation for strategies of explanation and generalization. I also discuss in an article how Diane Vaughan's method of analogical theorizing offers one strategy for scalar theory extension that can help to circumvent deductive reification and minimize Eurocentric bias, which goes beyond Bourdieu's own procedural suggestions.

Researching the "global" is very easy to say, but it's actually very difficult to do, and that is also due to issues involving empirical methodology. It's no surprise the book contains an extensive appendix (laughs). Yet if I were to summarize my methodological approach in just a few words, then it was important to combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies in ways that integrate rather than combine macro, meso and micro levels of analysis. I aimed to create a research design that would realize the multidimensional features of the theoretical approach and make it possible to relate large-scale structural developments with fine-grained discursive dynamics and the richness and diversity of the experience of cultural agents "on the ground." It was also critical to proceed as inductive as possible in my data gathering, building my theoretical framework not just from the top down but also from the ground up. In this regard, as a means to minimizing West-centric bias, I drew upon emic approaches for data collection, as, for example, when I created large-

scale samples of “contemporary” artists, which is a category that can vary wildly across different world regions. Further, I utilized prosopography, a distinctive kind of research on collective biographies, to discern the social, cultural, and geographic features of the globalizing art economy in a grounded way. And while my primary research included fieldwork on four continents, I also went to great lengths to engage numerous secondary studies to explore multiple angles before I delineated any “global” patterns.

With that much abbreviated methodological summary, let me point to a few key discoveries and how the global model differs from Bourdieu’s original framework. First, one of the central issues he explores in *The Rules of Art* is the division between “art” and “money” and how those differences play out in different subfields within the same cultural sphere. I certainly draw inspiration from that idea, but the way I theorize those divisions within a global context goes well beyond his initial framing. This is due to how they manifest amid new global institutions and infrastructures in unique ways. Bourdieu has no such theory. Further, my framework accounts for a new fundamental divergence between contemporary discursive logics of artistic evaluation and a globalized financial logic—something else that Bourdieu’s field model lacks. But this isn’t just about uncovering a fundamental division in global art. More importantly, it’s about revealing a temporal pattern of increasing disjuncture and polarization, which runs also counter to existing interdisciplinary studies about art’s globalization. In fact, as I argue, a key reason for the polarization of art and money in a global context is the radicalization of art investment and speculation games, and the book provides a framework to explain how that process has come to operate across multiple continents.

When it comes to particular works of art, I theorize how different types of artistic “universality” accelerate global flows among cultural experts or commercial circles in divergent ways. In light of these and other points, the book is not the modernist Bourdieu with a fresh coat of paint. It is a new study that theorizes how the perennial tensions between art and money have become articulated in novel ways in cross-border infrastructures, relations, and logics, for which Bourdieu’s original field theory is too narrow. As such, the book provides a model how institutions and intermediaries across the cultural and commercial spectrum connect and diverge in global transformations and valuations. In this way, we also can understand how alternative cultural circuits are able to resist the forces of commercialism and profit-chasing corporations that have been foregrounded in so many discussions about “global culture” in neighboring disciplines, such as media and communication studies. Of course, at the end of the book, I also emphasize that my model could be extended further with other potential logics and globalizing subfields of art production and circulation.

Moreover, Bourdieu examined the art field’s genesis as a process of relative autonomous differentiation from other *types* of fields. But I’m more interested in articulating a different model that explains how a global art field arises primarily in the vertical differentiation from “lower” national or regional field *levels*. That dynamic creates a complex field configuration where global, regional, and national levels intersect and influence one another but where they also coexist relatively independently. A multi-scalar field theory not only extends Bourdieu’s field model, but it also helps us to move beyond any zero-sum conception of different scales in cross-border cultural production. This approach counters arguments suggesting that the rise of regional circuits in contemporary visual art would offset the outsized influence of global centers.

In other parts of the book, I discuss some distinctive ways in which geography matters in a global cultural arena, an issue that I find particularly intriguing (and one which Bourdieu did not consider). At a global level, field theory in my study extends to a theorization of the inequalities among geographic macro entities (i.e., cities, countries, or regions). The unequal distribution of what I call field-specific forms of “macro capital” delineates a field’s symbolic or commercial geographies of power (i.e., its unique centers and peripheries, which can’t be reduced to the larger economic world-system). Even more intricate, however, are the distinct ways in which geographic classifications affect the circulation and evaluation of cultural goods. In a global context, we can no longer adhere to the exclusionary construct of a linear (Western) art history, which

underpins Bourdieu's theory of artistic "distinction" and innovation. My study reveals shifts away from a dominant paradigm of evaluating innovative art with time-bound categories to categories that are instead spatial. I propose a framework of four modalities in which geo-cultural classifications imbue art with meaning and value—sometimes in quite complex ways—which can be applied to other cases and art worlds. In short, I don't see myself replicating or "globalizing" Bourdieu's field theory. Instead, the book is really an attempt to chart new theoretical directions at the macro, meso and micro level, supported by a rigorous comparison of original, diverse, and multivalent data.

Manning Zhang: How do you envision the future of cultural sociology? And what excites you the most? What advice do you have for graduate students and early scholars?

Larissa Buchholz: Cultural sociology is a rich field with so many exciting directions and approaches. But personally, I'm excited that the sociology of art is currently such a vibrant and thriving field; many amazing books are coming out, and we're starting to see increasing interest in transnational and global approaches. As indicated, when I began my project, there was very little material to work with, especially compared with the wealth of sociological research on the globalization of the economy or politics. So in a way, this increased interest is long overdue. I'm currently working with colleagues on a review article, and it's clear there's now an emerging subfield that has incredible potential for exciting new discoveries and theoretical innovations. I also believe the time is right for rethinking our tools and methodologies in light of both global, transnational processes and post- or decolonial perspectives.

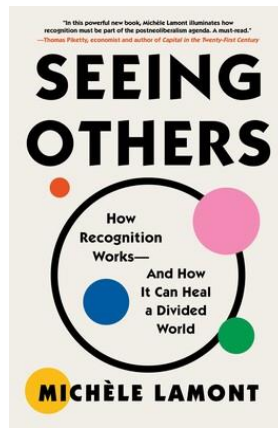
When it comes to advice for graduate students or early scholars, I would suggest that they do follow their passions in choosing their topics, but that they also pay attention to broader developments in the discipline. Even though the sociology of art is thriving, it's still not necessarily considered to be a "bread-and-butter" topic among some sociologists. So while I believe students should always work on projects that excite them, I also encourage my advisees to frame their theoretical problems in ways that build bridges to other subfields. In my work on global art, for example, I've tried to contribute to the advancement of global/transnational field theory as a relatively new theoretical paradigm in global and transnational studies more broadly.

Lastly, I've increasingly come to believe that work in the sociology of art can have practical relevance too. We have tremendous transformations in multiple art worlds and creative industries, and our knowledge could be valuable for cultural organizations and practitioners to navigate ever more complex environments. Economists have touched on these topics, though their approaches are usually much narrower, and humanists, by and large, tend to focus more on single artists or artworks. That means there is a unique niche where the sociology of art can make key contributions. For instance, in my free time, I've found it gratifying to translate findings from my research in advising nonprofit organizations or small galleries that help promote artists with nontraditional backgrounds or with origins in the "Global South." I've learned that this process of translation does not mean to compromise genuinely theoretical or scholarly goals. It's not a dichotomy, but about different forms of communication. Another issue from my research that I already mentioned concerns strong financialization trends in the art market, which has become one of the most unregulated financial markets in the world! As sociologists of art, we can contribute to raising awareness about such massive transformations and problematize how they affect broader structures and practices—and our very way of valuing human creativity. Although I don't advise early scholars to engage in outreach too much, simply because their focus needs to be fixed on publishing, they can still select their research problems with an eye toward their potential public significance. Projects could be multi-dimensional.

Thus, as I look to the future of the sociology of art, I definitely see a global wave in the making, which is being enriched by post- and decolonial approaches. And I believe that there are various opportunities for a "public sociology of art," among many other important trends and exciting avenues!

Seeing Others by Michèle Lamont

Book Review by Estela B. Diaz



Book Review: *Seeing Others*
By Estela B. Diaz
Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow
Princeton University

With *Seeing Others: How Recognition Works – and How it Can Heal a Divided World* (Simon & Schuster 2023), Harvard sociologist Michèle Lamont brings her nearly 40 years of expertise into the public sphere. Sociological scholarship and public policy tend to focus on reducing inequality in the distribution of material resources. In *Seeing Others*, Lamont implores a wider audience to tackle the equally pressing task of increasing recognition, defined as “acknowledging people’s existence and positive worth, actively making them feel visible and valued, reducing their marginalization, and openly integrating them into a group” (4). At its core, *Seeing Others* argues that we must collectively institute a politics of recognition and create new narratives that empower and dignify groups who have been historically stigmatized. For Lamont, it is only by instituting a new politics of recognition that efforts to ameliorate inequalities in material conditions will take full effect.

Over the course of ten succinct chapters, Lamont charts a path toward a more inclusive society. *Seeing Others* begins by devoting the first four chapters to establishing the case for increasing “recognition.” She argues that neoliberal economic policies and their corresponding social changes have worsened living conditions for almost all social groups. Here, Lamont is at her finest, skillfully wielding empirical evidence from her complete oeuvre and the work of other social scientists. Every sentence is supported with strong evidence, leaving perhaps even a skeptical general reader thoroughly convinced.

The next third of *Seeing Others*, Chapters 4 through Chapter 7, introduce us to her new data: 185 interviews with “change agents” who are “cultural entrepreneurs who intentionally aim to transform how we perceive others” (62) and 80 interviews with Gen Z college students from the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States. Scholars will appreciate the rather unusual accompanying methods appendices that identify change agents by name. The datasets were well chosen to address the research questions. Change agents occupy a wide variety of industries and are notably *not* politicians, and yet their media narratives are consumed by millions of Americans, while Gen Z college students help highlight the nascent beginnings of new systems of worth. Much like the working-class portrayed in *The Dignity of Working Men* (Lamont 2000), the change agents and college respondents place tremendous weight on defining their identity and self-worth on being “morally good” people. Data featuring change agents are especially striking in this regard –

they do not, for the most part, define themselves by their material success and high-status social networks. Instead, they articulate narratives that center their efforts to portray stigmatized communities with dignity and complexity.

In the final third of *Seeing Others*, Lamont reminds us that though she has made a case for devoting new resources towards reducing inequalities in recognition gaps, these efforts must come alongside sustained movements towards reducing economic inequalities and material deprivation. Throughout, the book thoughtfully engages with the dark underbelly of social progress – as the rights of many stigmatized populations have been expanded, there have been renewed threats to reverse those gains. Some readers may argue that the book should have engaged with prominent conservative change agents more directly but as Lamont points out, much ink has been spilled on these figures elsewhere.

Cultural sociologists familiar with Lamont’s body of work may find that *Seeing Others* introduces us briefly to the new data but I wish these data had a more prominent place in the book. Fortunately, numerous academic articles using these same data are being published with talented co-authors. I found myself wanting more details on the innovative concepts of “recognition chains,” defined as “a network of change agents and organizations that scales up and disseminates messages of recognition” (77) as well as and the distinct strategies used by Hollywood creatives to broaden the circle of who matters. Perhaps future articles will distill these more clearly, allowing for change agents in other industries to have a playbook and create change elsewhere.

Like Lamont, I also found myself considering the limits of a politics of recognition. From whom are we seeking recognition, and under what relations of power? Are new narratives for stigmatized populations automatically emancipatory? Here, we can look not only to our familiar critics within Marxist sociology but also to the work of Glen Sean Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) in political science. In *Red Skin, White Masks* (2014), Coulthard draws on a case of a First Nation in Canada to argue that a state politics of recognition can reproduce colonial hierarchies in liberal democracies. A politics of recognition does not challenge social inequalities, meaning that recognition becomes another form of domination and wielding power over a stigmatized population. *Seeing Others* highlights at least one type of self-recognition where immigration activists write new narratives for stigmatized immigrant communities on their own terms, but other change agents fall into the trap of centering a politics of recognition from above. Recognizing the limitations of a politics of recognition is important for combatting purely symbolic measures and empty public statements used by institutions. A healthy politics of recognition must acknowledge the embedded power relations and simultaneously fight for the distribution of resources that accompany destigmatization.

The book is a pleasurable read for a generalist audience, deftly covering decades of literature in an accessible manner. In a discipline often dominated with works identifying sites of inequality and worsening conditions, it was refreshing to read a text that highlighted a site of potential healing. Determining “who matters” shapes the distribution of material resources, and it would behoove sociologists to more closely examine how “stigmatization, the mirror opposite of recognition” (63) can be reduced. *Seeing Others* reads like a hopeful guide, reminding us how far we’ve come in battling against various forms of stigmatization and giving us a pathway forward. Readers of this newsletter may not need convincing that cultural processes are an important aspect of inequality. However, by reading *Seeing Others*, we are all better equipped to convince our colleagues in other disciplines and perhaps our family members as well. The book also reads as an excellent example of what can happen with cultural sociology in the public sphere – it is receiving media coverage on various outlets like the *Brian Lehrer Show*, the *New York Times*, TED Talks, and even a “Fireside Chat” at Google. I look forward to following along as Lamont shares her work with more change agents who are in positions of power to narratives investing in new narratives of worth.

References

- Coulthard, Glen Sean. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lamont, Michèle. 2023. *Seeing Others: How Recognition Works — and How it Can Heal a Divided World*. New York: Simon & Schuster/One Signal Publishers.
- Lamont, Michèle. 2000. *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration*.

SSHA Conference – The Handbook of the Sociology of Morality Conference Session Report by Marissa Combs

Marissa Combs (Harvard University) reported a book session event for the second volume of the Handbook of the Sociology of Morality at the 2023 Social Science History Association conference in Washington D.C.



Marissa Combs
PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology
Harvard University

A lot has changed since the first volume of *The Handbook of the Sociology of Morality* was published in 2010. What was once considered a peripheral topic addressed in a few literatures has now evolved into a burgeoning and dynamic subfield. The diversity of perspectives on the topic has incited spiritedly debate as scholars work to define key concepts, interrogate core assumptions, and shape a comprehensive research agenda. In their second volume, editors **Steven Hitlin** (University of Iowa), **Shai M. Dromi** (Harvard University), and **Aliza Luft** (UCLA) take stock in this resurgence, bringing together leading scholars in the field. Covering aspects ranging from cognition and decision-making to the role of institutions and applications to questions of inequality in civil society, this new volume offers clarity on the various viewpoints within the subfield and serves as a guidepost for scholars seeking deeper engagement in these issues.

Anna Skarpelis (Social Science Berlin Center) chaired a book panel for the second volume of the Handbook of the Sociology of Morality at the 2023 Social Science History Association conference in Washington D.C.

Opening the session, **Shai M. Dromi** shared insights from the editing process of the new volume, emphasizing the relevance of moral questions to some of the most critical sociological issues of our time. He then introduced the panelists, each of whom discussed their contributions to the handbook: Matthew Norton (University of Oregon), Candice Robinson (UNC Wilmington), Michael Rosino (Molloy University), Lynette Spillman (Notre Dame), Michael Lee Wood (Brigham Young University), and Dustin S. Stoltz (Lehigh University).

In his chapter titled “Culture, Morality, and the Matter of Facts”, **Matthew Norton** calls on cultural

sociologists of morality to study relationships between moral systems as they manifest in the social world. These “relational moral facts”, as he calls them, enable sociologists to reveal the causal mechanisms through which moral facts drive and are driven by structural and social dynamics. Applying this framework, Norton studies the contradictory moral positions of institutionalized slavery and the rule of law on questions of private violence in the ante-bellum United States. His chapter not only contributes insights to a crucial period of American history but, drawing on Abend (2008), also advocates for the analytical value of considering the “facticity” of these moral contradictions.

Candice Robinson and **Michael Rosino’s** chapter, “Understanding Morality in a Racialized Society,” addresses a key gap in the literature on morality around race. How is morality racialized and how does racialization contain moral frameworks? They assert that previous works that neglect the consideration of race, racism, or racialization unwittingly contribute to “ahistorical and falsely race-neutral” approaches to the study of morality. Leveraging ethnographic research on racialized forms of morality in civic and political organizations, Robinson and Rosino propose a rich assemblage of frameworks that integrates racialized power dynamics and inequalities into understandings of moral orientations.

Lynette Spillman’s chapter, “Morality, Inequality and the Power of Categories”, begins with a provocative claim: even if individuals consistently engaged in altruistic behavior, inequality and domination would persist. She argues that neither the properties of moral actors nor their actions are relevant to social inequality. Altruistic actions can have selfish and corrupt consequences. Instead, sociologists of morality can gain more analytic traction on these issues if they focus on cultural categorization, relational mechanisms, and the “moral background” of taken-for-granted beliefs about others and field of actions (Abend 2014). Adopting this perspective, she draws on recent studies exploring racial/ethnic stigma, economic justice, and human rights.

How is morality related to cooperation? In their chapter, “Grounding Oughtness: Morality of Coordination, Immorality of Disruption,” **Michael Lee Wood** and **Dustin S. Stoltz** explore this question by drawing on insights from phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and cognitive science. They argue that morality emerges from embodied, situated, and coordinated activities. The foundation of morality lies in a “radically local” phenomenological experience of “oughtness,” developed through repeated practical experience. Consequently, immorality is characterized by a sense that the expected “oughtness” of a situation or practice has been violated, often leading to conscious moral deliberation. This model holds implications for researching moral variation and the socio-historical factors influencing moral deliberation and moral frameworks.

Shai M. Dromi presented **Hajar Yazdiha’s** (USC) chapter, “Bridging the Sociologies of Morality and Migration: The Moral Underpinnings of Borders, Policies, and Immigrants.” Yazdiha sheds light on the moral foundations that not only influence analytical perspectives, but also contribute to political debates concerning borders, policies, and immigrants. She develops a comprehensive research agenda within an evolving landscape of global politics for the sociology of the morality of migration. Yazdiha identifies three areas of potential fruitful exchange between scholars of morality and migration: 1) exploring how structures, resources, and power impact migration processes; 2) analyzing the socio-historically patterned meanings of migration across cultures; and 3) understanding the moral judgment and discourse surrounding migrants and stakeholders.

The panel concluded with a lively discussion moderated by **Anna Skarpelis**. Panelists and audience members discussed shared questions and themes across the chapters including: Are there moral truths? Where does morality come from? At what scale should sociologists conceptualize and study moral phenomena—at the “radically local” or the macro-level? Should sociologists of morality engage in moral judgements?

Announcements

Calls for Papers / Participants

From Kristóf Nagy:

Call-for-Proposal: Infrastructures of Trading and Transferring Art since 1900 Workshop

Organized by: Gregor M. Langfeld (University of Amsterdam/Open University, Netherlands)
Kristóf Nagy (KEMKI – Central European Research Institute for Art History, Hungary)
Lynn Rother (Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany)

Deadline: 31 January 2024. Speakers will be informed by 11 February 2024.

Dates of the Workshop: June 26–28, 2024.

Location of the Workshop: KEMKI – Central European Research Institute for Art History

From Dr. Anna Schwenck:

Call-for-Abstracts: Sounds in Times of War. Popular Music, (Contentious) Politics and Social Change Since Russia's War on Ukrain. Special theme-section of “Baltic Worlds”

Guest Editors: Anna Schwenck (Siegen University), Aleksej Tikhonov (UZH Zurich), David-Emil Wickström (Popakademie Baden-Württemberg)

Deadline Abstracts: by January 31, 2024

Deadline Articles: July 31, 2024

Estimated publication: second quarter of 2025

From Jiayi Tian:

Event Title: Art Production and Valuation in a Global Context.

A BSA Sociology of the Arts Study Group Event

Link (info and registration): <https://www.britsoc.co.uk/events/key-bsa-events/art-production-and-valuation-in-a-global-context/>

20 February 2024 (4.00-5.30pm GMT)

Online

About the Event

How is art produced, mediated, and valued within a global context? Larissa Buchholz’s recent book *The Global Rules of Art* (Princeton University Press, 2022) examines the historical emergence of a global cultural field and the diverse ways artists from formerly colonized or “peripheral” countries become valued worldwide. This conversation will focus primarily on the book’s findings but also moves beyond it to other forms of art production, especially the works of outsider and self-taught artists who are far away from the well-established art institutions and art market centers.

We will be joined by the book’s author Prof. Larissa Buchholz and sociologist Jiayi Tian who works with the self-taught artists in post-socialist China. The event will run as a conversation between the two speakers, with ample opportunity for audience discussion.

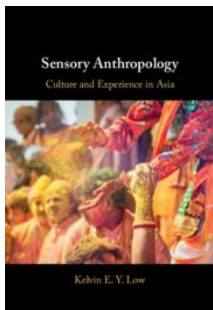
New Books

Gardner, Peter Robert and Benjamin Abrams. *Symbolic Objects in Contentious Politics*. University of Michigan Press, 2023. *Project MUSE*, <https://doi.org/10.1353/book.111514>.



When we observe protest marches, striking workers on picket lines, and insurgent movements in the world today, a litany of objects routinely fill our field of vision. Some such objects are ubiquitous the world over, like flags, banners, and placards. Others are situationally unique: Who could have anticipated the historical importance of a flower placed in the barrel of a gun, a flaming torch, a sea of umbrellas, a motorist's yellow vest, a feather headdress, an AK-47, or a knitted pink hat? This book explores the "stuff" at the heart of protests, revolutions, civil wars, and other contentious political events, with particular focus on those objects that have or acquire symbolic importance. In the context of "contentious politics" (disruptive political episodes where people try to change societies without going through institutions), certain objects can divide and unite social groups, tell stories, make declarations, spark controversy, and even trigger violent upheavals.

Low, Kelvin E. Y. *Sensory Anthropology: Culture and Experience in Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2023. [doi:10.1017/9781009240826](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009240826).



From constructions of *rasa* (taste) in pre-colonial India and Indonesia, children and sensory discipline within the monastic orders of the Edo period of Japan, to sound expressives among the Semai in Peninsular Malaysia, the sensory soteriology of Tibetan Buddhism, and sensory warscapes of WWII, this book analyses how sensory cultures in Asia frame social order and disorder. Illustrated with a wide range of fascinating examples, it explores key anthropological themes, such as culture and language, food and foodways, morality, transnationalism and violence, and provides granular analyses on sensory relations, sensory pairings, and intersensoriality. By offering rich ethnographic perspectives on inter- and intra-regional sense relations, the book engages with a variety of sensory models, and moves beyond narrower sensory regimes bounded by group, nation or temporality. A pioneering exploration of the senses in and out of Asia, it is essential reading for academic researchers and students in social and cultural anthropology.

Schwenck, Anna (2024). [Flexible Authoritarianism: Cultivating Ambition and Loyalty in Russia](#), Oxford University Press.



Flexible Authoritarianism challenges the idea that the transnational rise of authoritarianism is a backlash against economic globalization and neoliberal capitalism. Flexible authoritarianism--a form of government that simultaneously incentivizes a can-do spirit and suppresses dissent--reflects the resonance between authoritarian and neoliberal ideologies in today's comeback of strongman rule. The book conveys the look and feel of flexible authoritarianism in Russia through the eyes of up-and-coming youth.

Drawing on field observations, in-depth interviews, and analyses of documents and video clips, Anna Schwenck demonstrates how flexible authoritarianism is stabilized

ideologically by the insignia of cool start-up capitalism and by familiar cultural forms such as the summer camp. It critically evaluates how loyalty to the regime--the order underlying political and economic life in a polity--is produced and contested among those young people who seek key positions in politics, business, the public sector, or creative industries.

Joseph A. Kotarba. (2023). [Music in the Course of Life](#). Routledge.



The author integrates over 40 years of research on the social aspects of music. His theoretical orientation is symbolic interaction, with a taste of existential thought and postmodernism. The music styles examined include pop music, the blues, heavy metal, rap, children's music, rave/dance and religious/spiritual among others. His methodological approach is distinctly interpretive and qualitative. The presentation is narrative. Dr. Kotarba arranges his analysis according to a revision of life course theory. Music serves as a fundamental resource for meaning throughout life. The life course model is suggestive of the range of music experiences, but the actual availability, selection and appreciation of music in everyday life are essentially situational and are shaped by interaction with the audiences-to-self that are present.

New Articles

- Daly, Mary; Leon, Margarita, Pfau-Effinger, Birgit; Ranci, Costanzo & Rostgaard, Tine (2022) COVID-19 and Policies for Care Homes in European Welfare States: Too little, too late? *Journal of European Social Policy*, 32, 1: 48-59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09589287211055672>
- Eggers, Thurid; Grages, Christopher; Pfau-Effinger, Birgit (2023) How culture influences the strengthening of market principles in conservative welfare states: The case of long-term care policy. *International Journal of Social Welfare* (Online First), <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijsw.12612>
- Eggers, T.; Grages, C.; Pfau-Effinger, B. (2022): Re-Traditionalizing Childcare in the Pandemic? Policies on Childcare in the COVID-19 Pandemic in Different Types of Care Arrangements, in Armenia, A.; Duffy, M.; Price-Glynn, K. (eds.): *Carework in a Changing World*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Hart-Brinson, Peter, M.L. Tlachac, and Emily Lepien. 2024. "Contradictions in Experiences of Compulsory Sexuality and Pathways to Asexual Citizenship." *Sexuality and Culture*, 28, 1, pp. 187-213. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12119-023-10110-1>
- Jasso, Guillermina. 2021. "The Methods and Surprises of Sociological Theory: Ideas, Postulates, Predictions, Distributions, Unification." Pp. 17-36 in Seth Abrutyn and Omar Lizardo (eds.), *Handbook of Classical Sociological Theory*. New York, NY: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78205-4_2 .
- Jasso, Guillermina. 2023. "Fifty Years of Justice Research: Seven Signposts Past and Future." *Social Justice Research* 36(3):305-324. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-023-00419-5> . View-only sharelink <https://rdcu.be/djH1E> .
- Maciel, Andre F., and Michelle F. Weinberger. 2023. "Crowdfunding as a market-fostering gift system." *Journal of Consumer Research*: ucad052.

- Mueller, Jason C. 2023. "Does the United States owe Reparations to Somalia?" *Race & Class* 65(1): 61-82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03063968231155358>.
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- Mueller, Jason C. 2023. "Subjective Destitution, Love, and Rebellion in Pandemic Times: Theorizing with *Hot Skull*." *Human Geography*, online first here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/19427786231190848>.
- Och, Ralf; Pfau-Effinger, Birgit. 2023. Marketization policies in the neoliberal era: How culture and governance structures affect the introduction of market principles in local care policies, *Environment & Planning C, 4, 3: 448–465*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/23996544221137959>
- Pfau-Effinger, Birgit. 2023. Theorizing the Role of Culture and Family Policy for Women's Employment Behavior, in Daly, Mary; Pfau-Effinger, Birgit; Gilbert, Neil; Besharov, Douglas (eds.) *The Oxford International Handbook of Family Policy*, Series 'The Oxford Library of International Social Policy', New York: Oxford University Press. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-family-policy-9780197518151?cc=de&lang=en&>
- Pfau-Effinger, Birgit; Sebastian, Marcel. 2022. Institutional persistence despite cultural change: A historical case study of the re-categorization of dogs in Germany, *Agriculture and Human Values*, 39, 1: 473–485. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-021-10272-4>
- Pfau-Effinger, Birgit. 2022. La culture comme variable dans l'analyse de la politique sociale, in Giraud, O.; Perrier, G. (eds.) *Politiques sociales: l'état des saviors*, Paris: Édition La Découverte Recherche.
- Pitluck, Aaron Z. 2023. "The interpretive and relational work of financial innovation: A resemblance of assurance in Islamic finance." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 16(6):793-811. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17530350.2023.2196990>.
- Pitluck, Aaron Z. 2022. "Beyond debt and equity: Dissecting the red herring and a path forward for normative critiques of finance." *Focaal—Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 93:60-74. (Open Access). <https://doi.org/10.3167/fcl.2022.930105>
- Schwenck, Anna. 2023. Performances Of Closeness and the Staging of Resistance with Mainstream Musics. Analyzing the Symbolism of Pandemic Skeptical Protests. In Daniel, Antje, Anna Schwenck and Fabian Virchow (Hrsg.), *The Protests of Pandemic Sceptics in Germany and Austria*. Prismatic Perspectives. Special Issue of *German Politics and Society* 41 (2), 35-60. <https://www.berghahnjournals.com/view/journals/gps/41/2/gps410203.xml>
- Stoicescu, Maria and Michael G. Flaherty. OnlineFirst. "Tinder and Time Work through the Lens of Gender: Temporal Agency, Technology, and Intimacy." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/eprint/WPFMR8FHTM6PH6B3BYDB/full>