

Culture

Section of the American Sociological Association

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FROM THE CHAIR

Diana Crane

The 1992 ASA Program for the sociology of culture section has been organized by Elizabeth Long, our Chair-Elect (full details will appear in the June *Newsletter*). Elizabeth Long reports that she received 71 submissions, a substantial increase over previous years. She was able to accept 80%; there will be four sessions and 17 roundtables.

Each year, the annual program provides us with an indication of what we are collectively thinking and doing. Looking back over the five programs that have taken place since we began in 1987 and comparing them with this year's program, what can we conclude about our collective interests and preoccupations and how they are evolving?

An analysis of the themes of our sessions and roundtables reveals a considerable diversity of topics (see Table on page 3). I identified 24 distinct themes [1]. Of these, ten (more than 40%) occurred only once. Obviously our interests are widely dispersed.

What subjects predominate? It appears that we are focusing our efforts on an area that has for a long time been neglected by the disci-

pline as a whole: the content of culture. The one topic that occurred in all six programs was the analysis of meaning. This topic was approached from various perspectives: cultural texts (such as television programs, films, magazines), cultural texts and gender issues, national cultural symbols and values, and the relationship between meaning and social structure.

Typically, we are not using the method that has been traditionally used to analyze cultural content, content analysis. However, we have not given much consideration at our annual meetings to questions of methods, particularly the development of new approaches specifically for the study of culture. Only one session and two roundtables dealt with this topic.

Theory is an important concern but it is significant that only two of the ten sessions and roundtables on theory dealt with classical or neo-classical sociological theories that receive attention in mainstream sociology journals. The others dealt with contemporary theories, originating either in

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From the Chair

Europe and/or the humanities. Reception theory and the production of culture had 7.5 and 4 entries respectively. Certain topics that interest some of our members were marginally represented, such as the cultural dimensions of organizations, urban problems, and the economy. Policy issues have also not been a popular theme. Censorship, which is definitely increasing in American society, has received almost no attention from us. Questions concerning the specialty and its future have only been discussed in three roundtables.

What happens if we compare topics in sessions with topics appearing in roundtables? The former are selected by our leadership (Chairs-Elect), while the latter are based on submissions by our membership. The two most frequent subjects for sessions are: Meaning and Theory while the three most frequent topics for roundtables are Meaning, the Arts, and Theory.

Finally, if we compare the first three programs (1987-89) with the last three (1990-92), are there any trends? Significantly, three-quarters of the sessions and roundtables on the sociology of arts occurred in the first three years of our history. Interest in this area appears to be diminishing. We are also devoting less time to theory with a capital "T" (8 sessions and roundtables in the first period; 3.5 in the second). By contrast, gender has emerged as a strong theme entirely in the last three programs. Concern with meaning has been strong throughout the six-year period and has increased in the past three years.

Clearly, the sociology of culture is not simply a marriage of the sociology of (fine) art and the production of culture. Instead, in the nineties, the dominant themes seem to be the sociology of popular culture, including not only the content of television and film but analysis of a great variety of cultural materials; (2) the nature of national identity as indicated by cultural symbols; (3) the reception of cultural materials by audiences and publics; and (4) gender and its treatment in cultural texts.

Our annual programs are obviously only one indication of what we are doing; however, to date, these programs represent the only collective history we have as a group. Another type of record could be obtained by compiling anthologies dealing with specific themes in the sociology of culture. A model for this type of work already exists in the form of Foster and Blau's excellent collection of reprints on *Art and Society* [Suny 1989], which also includes a superb bibliography. Judith Balfe's *Behind the Arts: Causes and Consequences of Art Patronage* [U. Illinois, forthcoming] is in the works. More efforts of this kind would be useful.

NOTE

[1] Coding was based on titles of papers only and therefore may not reflect the actual content of the papers in all cases. In some sessions, papers were coded in more than one category, as indicated by a few fractional entries.

(See Table on next page)

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TABLE
Themes of Sessions and Roundtables included in the
Sociology of Culture Section ASA Programs, 1987-92

Theme	Roundtable	Session	Theme	Roundtable	Session
Meaning	26	5	Consumption	0	1
Sociology of the Arts	12	0.75	Culture and Evol. Perspec.	1	0
Theory	9	2.25	Culture and Social Policy	1	0
Reception	6	1.50	Ethnic Identity	1	0.50
Gender	5	0.75	Micro-Macro Links	1	1
Production of Culture	2.50	1.50	Science, Art and Religion	1	0
Politics and Culture	1.50	0.25	Social Construct. Cult. Prob.	1	0
Mass Media	3.50	0	Social Approaches to Body	1	0
Problems of the Specialty	3	0	Dreams	0	1
Methods	2	0.75	Aesthetics and Sociology	0	1
Occupations and Culture	2	0.50	Arts Policy	0	1
Organizational Culture	2.50	0.25			
Censorship	1	0	TOTAL	83.0	19.0

INTERVIEW WITH NICOLA BEISEL

Northwestern University

Awarded the 1991 Section Award of Honorable Mention

Note: Last issue featured an interview with the winners of the Section's 1991 Article Award for First Prize; here is the companion interview with the author whose article "Class, Culture, and Campaigns Against Vice in Three American Cities, 1872-1892", *American Sociological Review* (Feb. 1990), received an Honorable Mention. Beisel is the Chair of the Social Science History Association's newly formed Cultural Studies network. Her current work is tentatively titled *Morality and Class Formation: Censorship and the American Upper Class, 1870-1900*.

EDITORS: The article for which you received this award was based on your dissertation [1] and published in the *ASR* while you were a graduate student — not only noteworthy but an inspiration for the student members of our section. What is the relationship of the article to your dissertation research?

NICOLA: My dissertation, like the article, is a study of the late nineteenth-century anti-vice crusades in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. What fascinated me about the anti-vice societies was not only their historical role in the suppression of contraception and art — the two things that their leader, Anthony Comstock, is remembered for — but the social class of their membership. The Societies were known as organizations of blue-bloods, and the press fre-

quently commented that Comstock and his followers were able to accomplish (or get away with) what they did because of the prestige and influence of their leaders and members. The theories sociologists have generated to explain moral reform movements could not explain why wealthy and powerful people would see obscenity as a threat. The answer to this, I argue, is partly found in ethnic and class relations: the New York and Boston anti-vice societies linked obscenity to the presence and political power of the immigrant working class, and were able to generate support for their campaign by arguing that immigrants posed a moral threat to 'respectable' children. Philadelphia's city government, while equally corrupt, was dominated by the native-born, in part because Philadelphia's immigrants were less unified demographically and socially. Thus attempts to link obscenity to immigrants did not resonate with the experiences and fears of Philadelphia's elite.

But clearly this structural argument depends on understanding ideologies and discourses about morality, sexuality, immigrants, and the purity and vulnerability of children. One cannot understand how nudes in art and contraception came to be seen as bearing similar

dangers to the morality of youths without thinking about the culture of the upper class — the ideologies they shared, and the cultural tools they used to understand and articulate both their identity and their situation. The book I am working on, more than the dissertation, focuses on morality and the role it played in the formation, identity, and reproduction of the late nineteenth-century upper class.

EDITORS: When and how did you develop your interest in the topic and your approach to it — that is, what were some of the major intellectual and social influences on your approach?

NICOLA: When I started graduate school I was very Marxist. I had intended to study the process by which changes in relations of production influenced women's reproductive rights and choices. Given my theoretical predilections the path to cultural sociology was a rocky one. Along the way I was greatly influenced by Moore's *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, which, along with the works of Tilly and Skocpol, led me to think about both the comparative method and issues of state power and transformation. A lot of these interests crystallized

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when I read Luker's *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, which made me decide that the opponents of contraception and abortion were more theoretically intriguing than the proponents of reproductive rights.

Certainly the biggest influence on my work was the University of Michigan's Center for the Study of Social Transformations (CSST), a group of sociologists, social historians, and anthropologists that was started by Bill Sewell, Terry McDonald, Sherri Ortner, and Jeff Paige. The year I spent as a CSST fellow was one long and extremely fruitful discussion of culture, structure, agency, and social change. As a result of this year, and another spent at Michigan's Institute for the Humanities, I came to "culture" through cultural history, cultural anthropology, and art history. Certainly CSST couldn't have happened at a better time for me, because I became involved in it at about the same time I figured out that my hypotheses about relations of production weren't working. So my data led me to think about the cultural construction of social reality, and I was very fortunate to be a part of two groups that gave me new ways to look at the questions I was asking.

EDITORS: The influence of work on cultural capital by Pierre Bourdieu and Paul DiMaggio obviously played a part, but we also see an attempt in your article to differentiate your work from theirs. How would you characterize that difference?

NICOLA: The link between culture and social power articulated by Bourdieu and DiMaggio is enormously important. Certainly *Distinction* was a critical book in helping me see the relationship between culture and class formation. But I have often been frustrated in trying to use Bourdieu's work to explain the actions and rhetoric of the historical actors I study. I think Bourdieu's theory gives too little weight to the agency of

actors and fails to recognize that ideologies and discourses have at least some autonomy from social structures. Bourdieu's *habitus* is a theoretical mechanism that allows people to unconsciously reproduce social structures in accord with their interests, which are in turn determined by their own structural position — meaning their particular mix of cultural and economic capital. But I am interested in how people transform social structures given structural constraints — what is possible — and cultural constraints — what is thinkable.

EDITORS: Cultural sociologists are always interested in the classic questions posed by the sociology of knowledge — how a cultural product is influenced by the social traits of the author. How has your own social and cultural experience shaped your interest in the research questions you pose?

NICOLA: Much of my interest in the relationship between class and culture is a product of my family history. My family has been in central Pennsylvania since 1720 — my mother's parents owned the general store in a tiny town called Fishertown (it had about 45 families in 1970), and my father grew up on a 16 acre homestead in Helixville, which is the smallest town I've ever seen. My dad was the first person in my family to go to college, receiving a degree in dairy science from Penn State. He made a good salary, and we left Pennsylvania. Whenever I go back to Fishertown I marvel at my parents' upward mobility. The issue of fitting in the upper-middle class was always a bit painful for them. I went to Bowdoin College and am the first Ph.D. in my family, so the culture of the academy was certainly foreign to me and remains something that I have to explain to my family.

I began to identify myself as a feminist when I was fifteen years old, no doubt in rebellion against the roles that most of the women in my family, and in my friends' families, occupied. I was, and remain, interested in how children influence women's social position, al-

though in my recent work I have focused on how children influence the family's class position — particularly on how upper class families' positions are influenced by the marriages of their children. But I haven't abandoned my prior interest; I am planning to do a series of papers on the nineteenth-century abortion controversy. The historian James Mohr credits Comstock and the NYSSV [2] with being the first enforcers of the anti-abortion laws passed in the 1850s and 1860s. I am not sure that this is accurate, but certainly Comstock's work was part of the process of redefining abortion as a crime in the 1870s — a process which we may soon witness again.

EDITORS: Your analysis of the social origins of moral reform movements is informed by, and deliberately situated at, the intersection of several subfields in sociology. How do you conceptualize the relation between these in your own work? Are you trying to define a new approach to a familiar topic, or even a recasting of it, and how would you describe this?

NICOLA: In trying to understand the anti-vice movement I have had to draw on a number of fields; but in being forced to pull together class, culture, politics, and gender I keep wondering why our discipline has relegated these topics to separate areas. "Pro-family politics" were not invented by Reaganites; they have recurred throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, but until recently political sociologists have tended to accept the public/private split and strip "the state" of issues about family and gender. Similarly, "class politics" have often been seen as essentially concerned with the labor of men. Struggles in the workplace have been seen as "real" class politics, while parents' attempts to ensure that their children grow up sharing their values and beliefs is somehow seen as epiphenomenal to "real" class issues. But I'm pretty sure that men and women work at boring and alienating work in part so that they can have a family, and that in families most people seek the love and identity that work doesn't allow them. A number of scholars seem to be

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rethinking how the public/private split has led to blind spots in our theories. I hope that my contribution to this work will be to show how culture, and the family, are central aspects of the formation of upper class identities, social worlds, and politics.

EDITORS: In other work [3], partially related to your argument in this article, you have chided feminist theorists for a reductionist interpretation of nineteenth century moral reform movements (as attempting to directly suppress more liberated roles for women). You criticized this interpretation for failing to distinguish between intended and unintended outcomes. Instead you saw the reproduction of traditional gender roles as the indirect outcome of an attempt to reproduce upper class status through moral reform campaigns aimed at protecting certain functions of the family — the ability of upper class parents to insulate their children from ‘threatening’ influences from below, and reinforcement of mothers’ proper role as one of ‘moral guardian’ for their children. One metatheoretical subtext seems to be a recommendation that cultural sociology would benefit from greater analytic attention to the family. What are your thoughts on this?

NICOLA: I finally decided that calling the continued oppression of women an “unintended outcome” was misstating the point. Theorists such as Rosalind Petchesky have incorporated into their analysis of campaigns to reform sexual and reproductive practices the understanding that the struggle to control children is a political end in its own right. Petchesky argues that we should not think of campaigns for parental consent laws and such as solely attempts to control women, which is the point I wanted to make in that article. I do devote a considerable part of my book to issues of the gender, sexual, and family ideologies utilized and promulgated by the anti-vice crusaders, and hope this will be a useful

contribution to our understanding of the relationship between family and gender politics.

I think that a number of subfields of sociology would benefit from greater analytical attention to the family. The transmission of cultural beliefs is an important topic and I would welcome more work in that area. But “more work on families” is not the programmatic statement I’d make for cultural sociology. At the risk of sounding utterly presumptuous, I want to suggest that our collective mobility project would be aided considerably if we 1) devoted more attention to the rest of sociology, and 2) devoted more attention to culture. I’d better explain.

I think that the sociology of culture is going to be seen as a luxury, positions that are expendable in hard times and not particularly vital in good ones, unless and until we convince our colleagues who do work in areas such as class, race, and politics that if they take cultural frames/ideologies into account they will better understand the social dynamics they care about. I am not advocating a retreat to the old anthropological bottom line that “everything is culture.” But I do think that we have to demonstrate to our colleagues who think they do work on “hard structures” that culture plays a vital part in the constitution and reproduction of those structures. In thinking about these issues I have been greatly influenced by Bill Sewell’s and Anthony Giddens’ theorizing about the duality of structures, particularly the discussions in Sewell’s forthcoming *AJS* article.[4]

Being more attentive to “culture” implies two things. First, I strongly believe that sociologists of culture should concern themselves with meaning, that is, the ideologies and discourses through which people understand and articulate their position in the world. To take meaning seriously is to articulate the real power of cultural sociology.

Does this mean that we sociologists of culture should abandon our traditional

object of study, namely the arts? I don’t think so (especially since I’ve spent a number of years thinking about the nude). But perhaps we should pay more attention to what art historians are saying about the import of their work. Some of the most interesting reading I’ve done lately has been the work of Marxist art historians such as T.J. Clark and feminist art historians such as Linda Nochlin, Hollis Clayson, Janet Wolfe, and Griselda Pollock. Pollock’s *Vision and Difference* contains a particularly compelling argument that what is at issue in art history is not only how paintings are interpreted according to ideologies at large in society (the sociologists’ take on art), but how the paintings suggest to viewers new interpretations of the world. The idea of “cultural power” is thus not only that a text allows multiple interpretations, but that in trying to interpret a text (or a painting) the viewer might come to a new interpretation of their social world. To argue that a text conveys meanings seems to me to be quite reasonable (perhaps because I am currently engaged in writing a text!), but theorists of “cultural capital” have largely overlooked the meanings conveyed by cultural objects. I think that this is a mistake. Ironically, if we take more seriously the arguments of colleagues in the humanities, we may be better able to convince our colleagues in sociology of the importance of what we study.

NOTE

[1] “Upper Class Formation and the Politics of Censorship in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, 1872-1892.” (Awarded U. Michigan’s Rackham School of Graduate Studies’ Distinguished Dissertation Prize.)

[2] “New York Society for the Suppression of Vice”.

[3] Nicola Beisel, 1988, “Family Ideology, Class Reproduction, and the Suppression of Obscenity in Nineteenth Century New York,” presented at the ASA Annual Meetings, Atlanta, GA, August.

[4] William Sewell, Jr., 1992 (forthcoming), “Towards a Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation,” *AJS* 8 (July).

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FROM THE EDITORS

Cheryl Zollars and Muriel Cantor

One unintended consequence of editorial action (*i.e.* goading readers into becoming contributors) is an occasional resonance in themes between texts -- in concerns on the minds of authors. Diana Crane's review of the section's past ASA offerings finds a focus on theory and the study of meaning, as well as a decline in attention to censorship and methodology. In different ways the articles by Lamont, Beisel and Press touch upon the study of meaning. Censorship is one of the topics treated in Balfe's report on the arts-in-political worlds. And Press opens a continuing series on methodology with an applied discussion about

studying values in relation to a policy issue.

Lamont and Beisel also consider the importance of our subfield to sociology as a discipline, wondering whether the latter's current uncertain health might be improved by better treatment of the former. Peterson joins them in highlighting the need for cross disciplinary dialogue about concepts and theory. Beisel argues that cultural sociology would benefit from paying more (respectful) heed to ongoing debates in the humanities; Lamont argues that supposed two-way dialogues are supposed to go back the other way

at least part of the time; and Peterson's review of changing conceptions of culture within and across disciplines provides a constructive basis for rapprochement.

* * *

Queries about articles for the newsletter and letters of comment/response are welcome. Please note that the submission deadline for the Summer 92 issue is May 15, 1992. All submissions, regardless of brevity, should be made on diskette in either [IBM] WordPerfect 5.1 or ASCII. Complementary faxes, e-mails or printed copies are welcome, as long as they are accompanied by copies on diskette. [ASR format preferred.]

LATE CAPITOL-HILL-ISM

Judith Huggins Balfe

CUNY - Graduate Center

Drawing on her background in the sociology of art, Judith offers advice on how to be politically correct --

However we define ourselves, culture section members share with other sociologists a preference for the Big Picture. Thus, we tend to ignore -- even to deny any significance to -- such specifics of the national political process as the content of any piece of legislation and the compromises necessary to get it passed at all, let alone implemented. We tend to see such specifics as epiphenomenal and of concern primarily to political scientists of the most legislative and a-theoretical bent. We have preferred to focus on the problems of capitalism rather than those of capitolism.

Surely the Reagan/Bush administrations should have convinced us of the folly of our lack of political

savvy; it is time to educate ourselves! (Suggestion: astonish one of your political science colleagues by sitting in on an Intro. to American Government class. Such qualifications as I have for sounding off on these matters include a marriage of more than 25 years to a political scientist specializing in Constitutional Law. It has taken me awhile to accept that people like us have a great deal to learn from people like him.)

So what is going on inside the Beltway that we should pay attention to? How do federal policies and practices affect culture (or *Kultur*, if you prefer), and therefore both our "subject matter" and our ability to approach it?

Start with the Endowments, most visible among the federal agencies that legitimate and institutionalize "high" culture and thereby affect both the human resources and the stylistic options of commercial popular culture. Whatever one thinks of its conservative direction, under Lynne Cheney's leadership the National Endowment for the Humanities appears to be in good shape administratively. Indeed, President Bush has recommended that its budget be increased to enhance programs in humanities education -- some of which we may want to become involved with.

In marked contrast is the National Endowment for the Arts, which

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has been under assault by both left and right and has recently seen its chairman resign under fire. A cooperative study of the Endowments might be useful to explore not just the quality and political stance of their respective chairs, but also the structure of the respective peer review processes, related as these are to differences in institutional location and career ladders of "humanists" and "artists". The former are largely academics, the latter work in far less "rationalized" settings. The projects funded differ as well. Even when they are revisionist, NEH grantees are concerned with inherently conservative standards of scholarship (think how long it takes to research, write, and publish a book). In contrast, NEA grants often fund creative expression which may end up having a very short life-span indeed. Do they support the same "culture"?

In any event, the Endowments have a combined budget of only \$350 million, in marked contrast to the economic scale of the commercial culture industries. However, they are not the sole extent of federal support for high culture: Sociologist Joni Cherbo estimates that the total federal support for culture (including the Endowments, the Smithsonian, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, USIA, and military bands under the Defense Dept.) is at least \$3 billion. This does not include the various forms of indirect support through the non-profit

structure of most high culture institutions (reduced postal rates, etc.). In recognition of this degree of activity, a bill has been introduced to establish a cabinet-level Dept. of Arts and Humanities to oversee all aspects of federal support for culture, including the Endowments. (Also pending is a bill that would abolish the NEA altogether!) Stay tuned....

Federal legislation has a direct impact on commercial culture industries: for example, under consideration in Congress at the moment are bills concerning copyright, colorization or "material alteration" of film, regulation of cable television, and (always!) proposed revisions of the tax code. Those of us who study specific culture industries often analyze the impact of such legislation on them, but given the complexities of any single sector of cultural activity we have rarely considered issues of more general concern -- and we should.

One such issue which *has* engaged us is the threat of censorship or content restriction in all federally-funded programs affecting culture -- including higher education. We might gain a greater understanding of the apparent *kulturkampf* if we studied political or economic conservatives with as much sympathy as we tend to accord those on the left. In any case, we would be better prepared to analyze the issues and gain support for our positions if we knew more about the political process.

We need not start from scratch: here and in other regards, a number of Washington-based agencies provide both information and analysis of these issues. Perhaps most helpful is the National Humanities Alliance whose director, Jon Hammer, works with both COSSA and other professional arts and cultural associations gathering and sharing information on the Endowments and federal agencies, as well as covering pending legislation and policy decisions. Among the associations concerned with the arts are the: American Council for the Arts (headquartered in New York), American Arts Alliance, People for the American Way, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies. Many publish newsletters to keep subscribers aware of congressional and executive activities in the field. The *J. of Philanthropy* is also useful for information across the entire independent sector of non-profit institutions, including religion and education.

With so much information and assistance readily available to sociologists of culture, we have no excuse for ignoring political activities or regarding them as secondary to our concerns -- as dependent variables of little significance. We will become more persuasive as sociologists if we pay attention to legislative and regulatory processes as well as to their cultural consequences.

CRISIS OR NO CRISIS CULTURE AND THEORY IN SOCIOLOGY-- THE HUMANITIES AND ELSEWHERE

Michele Lamont
Princeton University

Michelle's current research compares the cultures of majority and minority working class males in France and the United States [her sample includes White and African-American males in New York suburbs, and White and Algerian males in Paris suburbs].

When I agreed to prepare a piece for *Culture* on cultural theory, I decided to write about something that "matters". [1] I was on the lookout for a topic of significance all summer. It jumped at me inadvertently last September when I received comments from several university presses *a propos* of a book I was co-editing. One of the reviewers was an eminent historian who defined himself as having a strong interest in an intellectual perspective that "combines British social history and Marxist cultural analysis with French post-structuralism and North American reflexive anthropology". His comments came to embody for me, and for some of the contributors to the volume, what I would define as "the crisis" in cultural sociology, and in sociology more generally. Random discussions with colleagues over a few months led me to believe that many experienced, in a more or less acute way, "the crisis". I was urged to describe my own understanding of it, with the goal of raising the issue of its very existence — we all know about this "construction of reality" business — and of sharing ideas about "what should be done" if anything needed to be done at all.

So what does "the crisis" consist of? Answering this question requires going back to the edited volume, which only acts here as "a carrier" of "the crisis", as Poulantzas would put it. It deals with various types of status signals that are used for exclusion — high culture, citizenship, ethnicity, morality, and the like. It also addresses questions pertaining to the process of institutionalization of these categories as high status signals. [2] Our famous historian — the only nonsociologist to review the book — was disappointed with the fact that some

of the essays did "unfold relatively independently of the now extremely ramified and sophisticated discussions of such questions in a more European and to some extent North American context, from Stuart Hall and other British 'post-Marxists' to feminist theories and Laclau and Mouffe." In so many words, he told us that constructivism is now a hot thing practiced in Europe, that sociologists are coming in a little late, and need to get updated and more involved in interdisciplinary discourse.

Why did these comments reveal a "crisis"? They indicated the reader's inability to read our "text" in "context", and his unawareness of what is going on in our field, and particularly of what we take for granted. Other comments also revealed that, like many of my anthropologist and humanist friends, our eminent historian stressed the importance of "number crunching" in our intellectual tradition while downplaying the importance of our interpretive, and particularly Weberian, tradition.

From where I — and others — stand in the field, these comments were disheartening because they unmasked an underestimation of sociological contributions to cultural analysis. They ignored the fact that if many of us find the work of the Birmingham School less than appealing it is in part because the theoretical questions it asks are sometimes too simple sociologically. If we are less fascinated with the criticisms of positivism that were formulated by post-structuralists and others, it is in part because Garfinkel articulated many of these criticisms more than thirty years ago. And if identity construction is a revelation for many, it is *deja vu* for those of us who are familiar with the work of Blumer,

W.I. Thomas, Becker and others. [3]

Of course, the relationship we have with cultural theory, and with theory more generally, is very different from that of academics working in Comparative Literature, English, or History departments. While sociological theory has always been at the center of our common enterprise, the interest of these scholars in "theory" — to say nothing of their interest in power, class, etc. — has developed from their relatively recent encounter with European texts (Foucault, Ricoeur, Derrida, and others). Disciplinary differences in our understanding of theory can be best seized *via* a sociology of knowledge perspective that considers how these theories travel, and how European theory came to function differently as a status signal across fields. Most people would agree that European theory is less powerful a form of cultural capital in sociology circles than it is in lit. crit. journals — empirical evidence and "scientific progress" being more eulogized in our field than elsewhere, more salient as standards of legitimation of knowledge.

Even if we have at our disposal conceptual tools to make sense of disciplinary subcultures, sociologists nevertheless face "a crisis" if our contributions are being underrated for not being "where it's at". There are a number of powerful minds in cultural sociology who are asking novel theoretical questions in very sophisticated ways and whose work should be diffused far beyond our circles. [4] I agree with Craig Calhoun that too often we fail to demonstrate to nonsociologists the intellectual importance and originality of what we do. [5] I find it worrisome that *Lingua Franca*
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LAMONT
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can proclaim our demise without generating rebuttals and that a growing number of nonsociologists take for granted the decline of our field — even if data show that in 1987 we still produced more doctorate degrees than disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology and political science, and while a number of top universities are investing important resources in sociology departments.[6]

So, if some evidence suggests that "the crisis" is in our midst, "What should be done?" Clearly, the solution is not for the most successful of us to distance themselves from our field — yes, some have been known to do this. Instead, I think we need to publicize the exciting changes that our discipline is now undergoing, including the rapid growth of areas such as cultural and comparative historical sociology. We also need to humbly claim our heritage and particularly the fact that symbolic interactionism prefigured many of the more macro constructivist works that became popular in the eighties — our silence on this point is rather surprising. We need to painstakingly explain the place of theory in our field, and how issues that are being appropriated by New Historicism, New Cultural History, Cultural Studies, and "Race Theory" have been conceptualized and studied empirically by sociologists. We need to trace in historical and comparative terms new dis-

ciplinary trends in sociology and elsewhere in order to help ourselves and others transcend our respective intellectual tribalism and remain open to other disciplinary ways of seeing. More generally, we need to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue to demonstrate to others the importance of the sociological perspective. Finding refuge in a muted self-righteousness is as intellectually sterile as it is insulting to our interlocutors, humanists or others; if, as Mayer Zald recently suggested, sociology will remain a quasi-humanity, we have to learn to live more happily with our hybrid status.[7]

There is no doubt in my mind that the growing awareness that humanists have of society makes their work ever more interesting to us. Their relatively recent discovery of theory, particularly among those who "do" cultural studies, is having similar effects. And rarely in the past have cultural anthropologists and sociologists had so much in common. For us and others to deny these convergences is to create intellectually counterproductive disciplinary status boundaries. In order to emerge from the present period of fluctuation intellectually and institutionally invigorated, sociologists need to do more than produce imaginative and intellectually ambitious work: we need to engage in a robust interdisciplinary exchange to claim our own distinct, and just, intellectual place — no more but no less.

NOTES

[1] I wish to thank Paul DiMaggio and Robert Wuthnow for their comments on an earlier draft of this article.

[2] See M. Lamont and M. Fournier, eds., August 1992 (forthcoming), *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, to be published by U. Chicago in parallel with my *Money, Morals and Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class*.

[3] For more on this topic, see A. Abbott, 1991, "So Reality is Socially Constructed — So What?" presented at the Social Science History Association, New Orleans.

[4] Among recent and forthcoming publications, my personal hit-parade includes: M. Schudson, 1989, "How Culture Works: Perspectives from Media Studies on the Efficacy of Symbols," *Theory and Society* 18:153-180; R. Wagner-Pacifici and B. Schwartz, 1991, "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past," *AJS* 97:376-420; and W. Sewell Jr., forthcoming, "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation," *AJS* 98.

[5] C. Calhoun, forthcoming, "Sociology, Other Disciplines, and the Project of a General Understanding of Social Life," in *Sociology and Its Publics: The Forms and Faiths of Disciplinary Organizations*, eds. T.C. Halliday and M. Janowitz, U. Chicago.

[6] R. Collins and D. Waller, forthcoming, "Did Social Science Break Down in the 1970s?" in *Formal Theory in Sociology: Opportunity and Pitfall*, ed. J. Hage, SUNY.

[7] M. Zald, forthcoming, "Sociology as a Discipline: Quasi Science and Quasi Humanity," *American Sociologist*.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS
DISSERTATION - Doctoral Student

Boundary Work: Drawing the Line Between "Home" and "Work"

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The concepts of "home" and "work" have rarely been challenged in sociology. These realms have seemingly been equated with ready-made, separate spheres. The construction of personal boundaries between home and work is the focus of this project, based on 86 in-depth interviews with women and men employees at a research facility in the Northeastern U.S.. I argue that people — constrained by key social statuses like gender, occupation, parenthood and work organization position — pursue specific strategies to juxtapose "home" and "work." These conscious and often unconscious strategies fall along a continuum of segmenting and integrating possibilities. Those who tend toward a segmentation approach rely more heavily on their location in space and time to organize and distinguish the elements of each realm. Wage labor work and all its associated artifacts, people and thoughts are happily contained to a specific time and place, just as are the things of family and leisure. Those who tend towards integration, however, blur this kind of boundary along many dimensions.

Boundary work helps us constantly refine our personal, mental categories of "home" and "work." It is the process through which people negotiate their unique configurations of social expectations. Boundary work allows us to accommodate and innovate as we move this way or that along the segmentation/integration continuum.

MELDING ETHNOGRAPHIC AND HUMANIST DEFINITIONS OF CULTURE

Richard A. Peterson

Vanderbilt University

When he isn't cheerfully assisting beleaguered newsletter editors Pete is at work on a book showing the fabrication of authenticity -- a condensation of three chapters will be appear in a forthcoming issue of Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales.

The term *culture* is used in two quite different ways, one deriving from anthropology and the other from the humanities. The first sees culture as codes of conduct embedded in or constitutive of social life. In this sense scholars may speak of the culture of a nation, a class, a corporation, a reading group, or a scientific research laboratory. Here culture is to social structure roughly what the genetic code is to a species of living organisms. Such cultural codes may be discovered in ethnographic observation, attitude surveys, patterns of cultural choice or content analysis of documents.

The second general perspective sees culture as those symbolic products of group activity such as books, poetry, paintings, plays, music, speeches, and the like that people use to encode and convey various forms of information including knowledge, power, authority, affect, merit, virtue, and beauty. Such symbolic products enable individuals and groups to identify those of like-kind and to mark distinctions from others. In this view, deriving from the humanities, culture is the special concern of symbol mongers be they artists, writers, religionists, scientists, lawyers, taste-makers, the folk, or the mass media. Sociologists employing this usage focus on how such symbolic codes are produced, what they teach, and on how they are used in the competition between classes and collectivities ranging in size from nations to scientific research laboratories to informal circles of like-minded persons.

In the decade following World War II, ethnographically-oriented culture researchers ["e-culturalists"] saw culture synchronically as part of a system at a point in time, and asserted the universality of culture and the ideological stance of cultural relativism.[1] The humanistically oriented scholars ["h-culturalists"] saw culture diachronically as a narrative process playing out over time, and were steadfastly ethnocentric in asserting that only a few in their own society had culture to any appreciable degree.[2]

While it is conventional to focus on the ways that e- and h-culturalists disagree, it may be instructive to focus on the assumptions they share, and on the methods of inquiry they have borrowed from each other over the past fifty years. These are sketched in this necessarily brief piece which is like an artist's cartoon: assertions are drawn with quick strokes and the detail is only suggested, but hopefully this sketch will excite others to join in working on the canvas.

In the 1940s and 50s e- and h-culturalists agreed that for a society there was just one overarching culture standard. E-culturalists saw the universal patterns of culture expressed in beliefs, values, and norms, while H-culturalists saw the standard as embedded in the artistic and critical canon of the day. E- and h-culturalists both embraced the modernist optimism of the era that, in part through their own efforts, the universal standard was evolving

toward ever greater perfection. For e-culturalists this meant the more perfect functional integration of the socio-cultural system, and for h-culturalists this meant an ever clearer view of the shadows in Plato's cave.

But in the 1960s the e-culturalists vision of a single cultural system came unraveled with the aid of the methods of narrative and textual analysis borrowed from the h-culturalists. Elements of "culture" were revealed by Daniel Bell and Alvin Gouldner among others to be self-serving ideology,[3] and the everyday elements of culture were seen, most notably by Erving Goffman and Clifford Geertz, to be evoked, recast, or ignored as needed to fit the needs of the moment.[4] In recent years the techniques of literary analysis have been turned inward by some e-culturalists bringing into question the entire social science enterprise.[5]

In the 1970s, sociological h-culturalists in turn began borrowing ethnographic and other social science methods to examine the workings of diverse art worlds and in the process they exploded the idea of there being a single aesthetic standard.[6] Other special symbol-producing worlds once seen as operating in ways unique to the particular world -- such as science, religion, and law -- were shown to run by cognate social rules.[7] More recently these demystifying techniques have been used to show the class and gender

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biases built into the canons of art and literature.[8]

In the early 1990s e- and h-culturalists agree there is no single standard,[9] and they often borrow each others' methods, with e-culturalists seeing social action as text[10] and h-culturalists engaging the full range of social science and historical methods.[11] But the thrust of their work is still distinct. Three examples must suffice to illustrate the current melding of e- and h-culture modes.

E-culturalists focusing on social integration through culture now use the h-culturalist sensitivity to ichnography to show the construction of what is variously called "collective memory," [12] "mediated reality," [13] "invented tradition," [14] "imagined community," [15] and "fabricated authenticity." [16]

H-culturalists' insistence on culture's role in marking boundaries between groups has been sanitized of its snob vs. slob connotations and is being creatively used by both e- and h-culturalists in recasting stratificational differences.[17]

Finally, the classic e-culturalist insistence that culture serves to buttress social structure is being used by diverse contemporary culturalists to show how groups ranging from turn-of-the-century working women and little league baseball players, to hot-rod enthusiasts and womens' reading groups use the available elements of art, mass culture, and advertising in fabricating a culture for themselves.[18] This way of framing research that is a combination of e-culture problem and h-culture material has no designation but might

well be called the *auto-production* of culture. "Auto-", that is "self-", production of culture seems appropriate because the focus is on how groups select for themselves among the available elements of culture, recombining them to create distinctive cultural configurations with which they can identify and call their own.

Ethnographic-and-humanist-culturalists have drawn fruitfully from each other over the past half century and the perspectives have come closer together in the process. Their repeated borrowings may be confusing to students and interested outsiders, but this melding suggests that it is most productive to keep the perspectives linked-but-separate rather than be prematurely forced together in a new grand synthesis.[19] One of the great strengths of the ASA culture section so far is that neither perspective has tried to purge the section of the other.

NOTES

[1] A. Kroeber and T. Parsons, 1958, "The Concepts of Culture and Social System," *ASR* 23:582-593.

[2] C. Greenberg, 1946, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *The Partisan Reader*: 378-389; D. McDonald, 1953, "A Theory of Mass Culture," *Diogenes* 3:1-17.

[3] D. Bell, 1960, *The End of Ideology*, Harvard; A.W. Gouldner, 1976, *The Dialectic of Technology and Ideology*, Seabury.

[4] Their contributions are summarized in E. Goffman, 1974, *Frame Analysis*, Harper & Row; and C. Geertz, 1973, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Basic.

[5] J. Clifford, 1988, *The Predicament of Culture*, Harvard; P. Clough, 1992, *The End(s) of Ethnography*, Sage.

[6] R.A. Peterson, ed., 1976, *The Production of Culture*, Sage; and H. Becker, 1982, *Art Worlds*, U. California.

[7] B. LaTour and S. Woolger, 1979, *Laboratory Life*, Sage.

[8] J. Wolff and J. Seed, ed.s, 1988, *The Culture of Capital*, Manchester; Gaye Tuchman, 1989, *Edging Women Out*, Yale.

[9] Sociological e-culturalists have been most conflicted about the collapse of the idea of a single standard values system. Some lament it, (notably R. Bellah, et al, 1985, *Habits of the Heart*, U. California) while others (notably R. Wuthnow, 1987, *Meaning and Moral Order*, U. California) work toward its reconstruction.

[10] N.K. Denzin, 1991, *Images of Postmodern Society*, Sage; D. Halle, 1989, "The Vision of the Landscape in the Residences of Contemporary Americans," *Prospects* 14:373-406.

[11] P. DiMaggio and F. Ostrower, 1990, "Participation in the Arts by Black and White Americans," *Social Forces* 68:753-778; J. Ryan and D. Sim, 1990, "When Art Becomes News," *Social Forces* 63:869-889; J.R. Blau, 1991, *The Shape of Culture*, Cambridge; Wolff and Seed, *op cit*.

[12] G. Lipsitz, 1989, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture*, U. Minnesota.

[13] D. Nimmo and J. Combs, 1983, *Mediated Political Realities*, Longman.

[14] E. Hobsbawm and T. Rager, ed.s, 1983, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge.

[15] B. Anderson, 1983, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso. See also W. Zelinsky, 1988, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*, U. North Carolina.

[16] R.A. Peterson, forthcoming, "Fabricating Authenticity: The Case of Country Music," *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*.

[17] The foundational work is Pierre Bourdieu's [1978] 1984 *Distinction*, Harvard; an excellent compilation of current research in this vein is M. Lamont and M. Fournier's forthcoming *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, U. Chicago.

[18] K. Peiss, 1986, *Cheap Amusements*, Temple; G.A. Fine, 1987, *With the Boys: Little League Baseball and Preadolescent Culture*, U. Chicago; H.F. Moorhouse, 1991, *Driving Ambitions*, St Martin's.

[19] G. Jaeger and P. Selznick proposed such a union of the two perspectives, but in so doing they created an approach that has not proved fruitful in stimulating subsequent theory and research. See their 1964 "A Normative Theory of Culture," *ASR* 29:653-69.



TELEVISION AND THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF ABORTION

Andrea Press

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Andrea's work on 'discourses of abortion' has also appeared in Critical Studies in Mass Communication and in Perspectives on Social Problems (both in 1992, the latter co-authored by Elizabeth Cole).

When I decided to study the depiction of abortion in entertainment television and women's responses to it, a colleague told me to choose another topic. "Abortion's been done," she insisted. Another colleague echoed her warning, citing an already rich literature. Yet I persisted, convinced that there remained much to learn. Luker (1984) and Ginsburg (1989) had produced detailed historical and ethnographic pictures of the worlds of activists on both sides of the debate. I was inspired and impressed; still, some important questions remained unanswered.

Increasingly, as the issue of abortion is covered almost daily in the press, it is entering into the minds, hearts, and household discussions of Americans not often found on picket-lines or in clinics. While national surveys have explored the opinions of ordinary people (Scott and Schuman 1988; Scott 1989), ethnographic investigations have privileged the opinions and experiences of activists, at the expense of examining how abortion opinions resonate with the lives of less "political" citizens. If Ginsburg and Luker were right, and activists' views on abortion refracted women's concerns about a number of much broader issues, what might we learn from investigating the views of the much larger group of non-activist women, not necessarily strongly allied with either "side"? What is the process by which social values are formed and negotiated in women's everyday lives in our culture? When women are conflicted about an issue, how do they enter into debate as they develop their opinions in the course of everyday life?

Almost every woman I have spoken with in the course of this study has either faced an abortion decision or been close to someone who has. For women in our culture, the abortion issue is alive in an

ongoing, daily way matched by few other concerns. Often women must decide on a course of action without having clearly defined values to guide them. What do they do, and how is this decision made? When our values are conflicted, how do we decide on a course of action?

If women debate the abortion issue internally and with family and friends, they also implicitly enter into debate with the broader social discourse about abortion many of us encounter primarily through the mass media. As Delli Carpini and Williams (1990, 1992) argue, the mass media are a "participant" in our ongoing conversations about political and social issues. In the case of abortion, we are daily inundated with coverage of demonstrations, court cases and decisions. Our private and collective opinions about it are formed not in a vacuum, but against the background of this ongoing discourse.

Many have argued that the presence of television has fundamentally changed the character of our domestic lives and discourse (Gronbeck 1984; Gitlin 1980, 1983; Delli Carpini and Williams 1990, 1992). In domestic settings, where women often work, socialize, or relax, television is an omnipresent companion. In this sense television is an important participant in women's ongoing dialogue about abortion.

We know little about the nature of television's contribution to the abortion debate. While most analyses of television's political content have focused on news programming (Iyengar and Kinder 1987), the majority of television programming consists of entertainment. Scholars have often cited the "pro-choice bias" of television programming (Montgomery 1989; Condit 1990; Lerner *et al* 1990). Yet, closer analyses

of entertainment television's discourses on abortion (Condit 1990; Clark 1990) indicate that the reality of television's rhetorical position is much more complicated. Entertainment television's pro-choice perspective is qualified in important ways: abortion is permissible, but only for poor or working-class women facing dire economic straits. These women are commonly white rather than women of color. Entertainment television's perspective on abortion distinctly invokes the rhetoric of social class and of race. White (or black) middle-class women on television rarely decide to have abortions; it is much more commonly pictured to be a part of the lives of white poor or working-class women. The class dimensions of television's perspective is somewhat ironic in a society as ostensibly class-blind as our own, while the fact that television ignores the experiences of women of color is consonant with its overall bias toward white experience. How, I wondered, do these biases of television's abortion narratives enter into the conversations women of different social class and racial groups have about abortion? Has current research ignored the class-specific ways in which abortion enters into the discourses and practices of everyday life for women of different social classes and racial groups?

To investigate these questions, I began in-depth interviews with individual women. After women answered a short questionnaire about demographic data, media use habits, conversational habits, and opinions about abortion and other issues, I probed their thinking about abortion, and the history of their reproductive decision-making, for approximately one to one-and-one-half hours. Following the initial interview, I showed respondents a tape of a television entertainment show treating the abortion is-

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sue. [1] After the show, I re-opened the conversation, incorporating questions about the characters and plot of the shows.

While the interviews with individual women were interesting, something was missing from this methodology. I came to realize that what I lacked was a sense of the public: the abortion issue is interesting precisely because it transcends the boundaries of public and private which permeate so much thinking and research on women. While research on abortion activists has tapped into its public dimension, this focus has been ill-suited to treat the particular ways the abortion issue challenges our categories of public and private, categories increasingly exposed by feminist theory to be falsely hypostatized by masculinist biases (Fraser and Gordon 1992; Fraser 1989). Widely treated in both news and entertainment media, abortion is a topic of conversation among friends, acquaintances, in religious and educational groups; it exists not only in the public dimension of activism, and in the private realm of home and family, but in a semi-public dimension of discourse between friends, neighbors, co-workers, and acquaintances. To be successful, the research method used must enable the researcher to tap into this realm of public discussion.

Delli Carpini and Williams (1990, 1992) have developed a focus-group methodology to study citizens' public discourse about a variety of issues. Their research challenges conventional notions of "public opinion," arguing that what is often termed "public opinion" is actually more a reflection of what citizens believe in private than what they believe when they come together in a group. Survey research only samples private opinion, what people are willing to mark anonymously on survey forms. Individual interviews ignore the public discourse citizens engage in during their daily lives. Focus group discussions allow the researcher to tap into the process by

which opinions are formed as citizens converse with one another. Using the focus group in this manner to study public opinion--and how television enters into the way people debate public issues--seemed ideally suited to my purposes.

Delli Carpini and Williams did not treat women as a particular group, and their method involved the assembly of groups of strangers, not particularly well-suited to discussions of issues which challenge the public/private dichotomy. To adapt this methodology to my study, I decided to use small, personal groups of female relatives and friends, meeting, conversing with one another, and watching and commenting on television, in their homes. I divided my groups into pro-life and pro-choice, including in each category groups of middle-class and working-class women, and groups predominately black and predominately white. Groups consisted of women who knew each other, sometimes intimately as family members, more often as friends and occasionally as co-workers or co-members of organizations not explicitly connected with abortion activities. In each interview, I led the small group discussions, discussions punctuated by viewing one of my television tapes.

While I am still finishing the group interviews, several interesting themes characterize my results thus far. The first is a direct challenge to the pro-life, pro-choice opinion dichotomy, which dominates scholarly and commonsense thinking about abortion opinion. The dichotomy's inadequacy is seen most clearly when women attempt to answer the questionnaire item designed to determine their position on the issue. Adapted from a National Election Survey question, the question lists five possible positions on abortion and asks the respondent to check one; these range from "by law, abortion should never be permitted" to "by law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice." I handed questionnaires out at the beginning of the interview and waited until women

filled them out before beginning the discussion. An unforeseen benefit of this choice of methodology became apparent early. Women often asked for clarification on various of the questions, and I was able to witness some of the processes respondents went through in deciding how to answer. Most groups were stymied by the question. The only groups for whom this was not true were those most uniform and extreme in their pro-choice views. All others asked for various qualifiers, wanting to know if they could either check more than one box, or write-in amendments to the box they checked. Witnessing this has made me doubt the accuracy of survey research for recovering what the categories of abortion opinions really are in our society.

I noticed an even more extreme problem of fit concerning the labels "pro-choice" and "pro-life." To organize groups of women whose opinions cohered, one of the questions I asked when initially screening them was whether they considered themselves pro-choice or pro-life. In practice, this screening effort turned out to be more complicated than expected. Often, women who called themselves "pro-life" would later tell us that they believed abortion ought not to be prohibited by law. Some told us that they would have an abortion under certain circumstances; indeed, some of them had had abortions in the past. I early came to realize that a key advantage of the in-depth focus group interview was that it would allow me to probe behind customary labels and dichotomies. In addition, focusing on non-activists would allow me to question categories which might adequately characterize the positions of abortion activists but not the beliefs of ordinary, non-activist women.

The social class and racial dimensions of my project will introduce a new perspective into the cultural sociology of abortion. Ginsburg (1987, 1989) and others (Granberg 1981, for example) note the middle-class and white biases of existing literature on abortion activists.

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There is a paucity of literature exploring differences between social classes and racial groups in attitudes toward and interpretations of prime-time television's overwhelmingly white, middle-class programming (see Press 1991 and Blum 1964 for exceptions). The racial differences in abortion opinions and attitudes evident from survey data (Scott 1989; Scott and Schuman 1988) have been little explored in qualitative studies. I hope to open dialogue about racial attitudes on the abortion issue with data from focus groups consisting predominately of African-American women. As I am just beginning to collect and analyze this data, however, these results are too preliminary to discuss here. Thus the following discussion will concentrate on the differences between social class and abortion opinion groups revealed in my preliminary data.

These findings challenge categories current in both the cultural sociology of abortion and of media reception. My findings indicate that women in working-class pro-life groups form a more cohesive group than pro-choice women due to their general rejection of what they identify to be the materialistic, immoral values of our culture. [2] Consonant with Ginsburg (1987, 1989), I find that the abortion issue resonates with much broader issues for pro-life women. In their discourse, family values should predominate over the desire for material success. Many of my pro-life informants, for example, had decided to stay home with their children, working minimally or not at all, in the interests of providing a more meaningful home life. They were less likely than pro-choice women to use daycare, and more likely to be satisfied with lower incomes. Financial considerations, as factors to be considered when deciding on the advisability of continuing one's pregnancy, were less likely to be mentioned as important by pro-life women. Their standards concerning how much money was "enough" to raise one's family successfully seemed considerably different.

Pro-life women read television narratives quite differently than do pro-choice women. They are much more distanced from the medium. Many groups greeted me by saying that they would like to show me "their" tapes after they viewed mine, indicating a consciousness (even before viewing my tapes, and without any knowledge of my own position, which I was careful not to reveal) that my tapes were likely to embody a different viewpoint. This distance characterizes their approach to television. Pro-life women are accustomed to the fact that their own positions counter those views which predominate in the mass media and in our culture. While most watched my television tapes attentively, as do other groups, their interpretations of the content remain skeptical. Most groups are quite articulate, following television viewing, about the ways in which they disagree with the progression of the narrative, its presentation of the woman's emotional state and the options she is shown to have regarding her pregnancy. They find that television underrepresents the family and community resources available to unwed or troubled mothers, and misrepresents what they perceive to be the brutality of the abortion procedure. But they are very rational in their explanations of this pervasive bias on television; they expect it, illustrate its dimensions well, and calmly defend their alternative vision.

Most pro-choice women notice, and expect, a pro-choice bias in television as well. What is interesting about pro-choice women's discussions are the ways in which two distinctive class positions are articulated. Middle-class women essentially adopt the class perspective of television abortion rhetoric. They agree with the position that the poor or working-class white women seeking abortions on television are choosing the best option for them. Few argue with television's representation of the plight, emotional or financial, of poor and working-class women. Working-class women in this group, however, while not disagreeing with the pro-choice position generally, resist television's particular depictions of the lives of women

in their social class groups. As do pro-life women, but for largely different reasons, they take issue with the resource-poor environment within which these women are shown to live. Like pro-life women, working-class pro-choice women often point out financial and emotional resources in the family, workplace, and community which are downplayed in television narratives. They resist the idea that women of their class are forced into abortion decisions because they have no real choice. Women in this group would like to retain the option of choice; yet they interpret this quite literally to mean that even very poor women should be able to choose the option of childbirth rather than abortion. On this dimension, they resist television discourse by literally seeing choices and ambiguities in situations most often presented in television rhetoric as clear-cut indications for abortion as the right and only decision.

An interesting dimension of my data about pro-choice working-class women is the richness and breadth of their discourse. I have argued (Press forthcoming) that there are two distinct pro-choice working-class discourses on this issue. The first I term "middle-class identified"; the second, "working-class identified." While both groups are pro-choice, their responses to television's class-specific rhetoric differs. More so than women of the other group, middle-class identified women adopt television's rather condescending attitude toward its allegedly destitute poor or working-class women. They tend to take a hard line on the immorality and poor work habits of women who find themselves facing an abortion decision while strained both emotionally and financially. Women in these groups speak of women making "mistakes" which ought to be limited by the system, perhaps by national computers which forcibly sterilize women after two abortions. Both multiple abortions and careless childbearing, they feel, waste taxpayers' money and medical resources, and ought to be limited by the state.

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While both groups interpret television's abortion heroines to be more resource-rich than they seem, working-class identified women have somewhat more sympathy for their plights. Sometimes, in their view, women can fall between the cracks of a system which disadvantages the poor. Further, these women are more likely to argue that even women who have made mistakes deserve the option of childbearing in a society that offers them more support than they can obtain at present. For these women, abortion is an understandable option in an environment of unstable male-female relationships, unreliable birth control, and unstable employment conditions, all of which they are conscious of experiencing themselves. Working-class identified pro-choice women identify with television's abortion heroines on some dimensions, yet on others resist television's depiction of their personalities, environment, and options.

In sum, what I try to do in this project is to develop an empirical methodology designed to investigate the abortion opinions and attitudes of non-activist women and to yield more nuanced insight into women's opinions than that gathered through survey research methodology. At the least, my findings can be used to refine and sharpen survey questions. Beyond this, the methodology is designed to allow women to speak for themselves, expressing their opinions and ideas with all the subtleties and nuances which are often lost when we as researchers become too set in our ways, too comfortable with the categories customarily used to understand an issue.

NOTES

[1]. I decided to use three television shows: an episode of *Cagney and Lacey* [C&L] and of *Dallas*, and the made for television movie version of the *Roe vs. Wade* [RvW] book. The C&L episode shows police officers attempting to escort a woman seeking an abortion past a line of angry pro-life demonstrators, one of whom later bombs the clinic. The *Dallas* episode shows Ray and Donna deciding whether to abort Donna's fetus

after learning the child has Downs' syndrome; they decide to keep the child, but afterward Donna miscarries. The RvW movie follows the real-life story of Jane Roe who unsuccessfully seeks an abortion in Texas, is forced to have the baby (which she puts up for adoption), and serves as plaintiff for the feminist lawyers who sue the state of Texas and win on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The heroine in the C&L episode is an upwardly mobile working-class woman who ultimately obtains her abortion; in the RvW television movie she is not upwardly mobile and does not obtain her abortion; in *Dallas* she is an upper-class woman who decides not to abort but is saved from the consequences of the birth by a miscarriage. All shows were edited to approximately 30-40 minutes in length; commercials were omitted from the two episodes. Due to its length, only the first portion of the television movie was shown; I completed the story using identical words for all participants.

[2]. I am still researching middle-class pro-life groups; my discussion of all my findings, pro-life findings in particular, remain speculative.

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Scott, J. 1989. "Conflicting Beliefs About Abortion: Legal Approval and Moral Doubts." *Social Psych. Q.* 52:319-326.

Scott, J. and H. Schuman. 1988. "Attitude Strength and Social Action in the Abortion Dispute." *ASR* 53:785-793.

Weinstein, Deena. *Heavy Metal: A Cultural Sociology*. NY: Lexington Books. Rather than corrupting youth and debasing culture, heavy metal is seen in this thorough review as a rebellious spirit that affirms life through destructive images.

Cohen, Sarah. *Rock Culture in Liverpool*. U. Oxford Press. Not the early 60s but the late 80s, Cohen focuses in fine ethnographic detail on the struggles of two bands, the Jactars and Crikey it's the Cromptons, both to attain local credibility and achieve commercial success.

Turow, Joseph. *Media Systems in Society: Understanding Industries, Strategies, and Power*. A text that focuses behind the scenes of television production, showing the roles of advertising, news, entertainment and corporation power games in shaping media content. Interestingly complements the next work.

Schwoch, James, Mimi White, and Susan Reilly. *Media Knowledge: Readings in Popular Culture, Pedagogy, and Critical Citizenship*. NY: SUNY Press. This text is helpful in showing how to go about understanding television and movie content.

Gero, Joan, and Margaret W. Conkey. *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. The androcentric nature of archaeology is exposed, opening the way to considering the role of women and of gender relations in prehistoric cultures.

Calagione, John, Doris Francis, and Daniel Nugent, eds. *Workers' Expressions: Beyond Accommodation and Resistance*. NY: SUNY Press. Using examples drawn from the U.S., Mexico, China, Japan and India, the authors show how popular culture and folk practices empower workers in the modern workplace.

Hansen, J.T., A. Susan Owen, and Michael Patrick Madden. *Parallels: The Soldiers' Knowledge and the Oral History of Contemporary Warfare*. Hawthorne, N.J.: Aldine de Gruyter. The authors record the accounts of Soviet veterans of the war in Afghanistan and American veterans of the war in Viet Nam and of their parallel ways of coming to terms with what they did.

The National Guide to Funding in Arts and Culture, 2nd Edition. NY: The Foundation Center. Beyond its intended audience, the work provides a wealth of information for researchers including the grant giver's fund-

ing history. After National Endowment for the Arts we find: "Never More." Just kidding.

Hale, Norman. *All Natural Pogo*. NY: Thinker's Books. Readers over 50 will remember Walt Kelly's Pogo (the possum) as a political cartoon strip character that, among other things, ran against Eisenhower in 1952. As Hale shows, between 1942 and 1954 Pogo and his southern swamp animal friends romped through comic books as well as discoursing on the struggle of morality and friendship against instinct. Is this Northerners appreciating Southerners? Is it about a new order of race relations?

Sixteen from Harvard University Press

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*. An expanded version of *Ce Que Parler Vent Dire*, Bourdieu shows how, in shaping their words to a particular linguistic market, people both reveal and reproduce their social position.

Bersani, Leo. *The Culture of Redemption*. Bersani does battle with the persistent view that art can save us and urges us to be aware of the enervating concealed morality of high modern art.

Lesser, Wendy. *His Other Half: Men Looking at Women through Art*. Lesser ranges widely through literature, visual art, and comics to show how men have seen women over the past 100 years. Useful introduction for undergraduates.

Auerbach, Nina. *Private Theatricals: The Lives of the Victorians*. Auerbach argues that Victorian novels, popular fiction, and biographies cast individuals in stock roles drawn from the popular theatricals of the time.

Suleiman, Susan Rubin. *Subversive Intent: Gender Politics and the Avant-Garde*. Suleiman shows how Woman as fantasy, myth, or metaphor has functioned in the works of the 20th century male avant-garde. She then examines the work of contemporary women artists and theorists showing the power of feminist critiques through humor and parody.

Russett, Cynthia Eagle. *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood*. Shows 19th. century male scientists and thinkers trying to prove women inferior to

men - thereby making women, along with "savages" and "idiots" an evolutionary buffer between themselves and animals. [But weren't women and Protestant divines of the time doing the same thing with the genders reversed?]

Schiebinger, Londa. *The Mind Has No Sex: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*. Schiebinger unearths the heritage of women scientists and probes the gendered forces that continue to shape the course of scientific scholarship and knowledge.

Chuvin, Pierre. *A Chronicle of the Last Pagans*. Chuvin describes the complex spiritual, intellectual, and political lives of professing pagans after Christianity became the state religion of the Roman empire and the impact of paganism on the subsequent development of the West.

Hirschman, Albert O. *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Hirschman charts the structure of rhetoric used by conservative public figures and theoreticians over the past two centuries.

Marling, Karol Ann and John Wetenhall. *Iwo Jima: Monuments, Memories, and the American Hero*. The authors trace the iconographic evolution of the American hero exemplified by the (staged) photo of the Stars and Stripes being raised during the WW II battle for Iwo Jima.

Hartman, Geoffrey H. *Minor Prophecies: The Literary Essay in the Culture Wars*. Concerned with the development of literary criticism since 1700, Hartman shows how a major change in style occurred after 1950. A critic himself, he longs for a return to criticism of the sort he favors, a "text-centered response."

Shweder, Richard A. *Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology*. In proposing an agenda for cultural psychology, the author calls for a reconciliation of rationality and relativism in the comparative analysis of societies.

Thomas, Nicholas. *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific*. Showing the place of material culture in social life, Thomas contrasts Western and Non-Western notions of transaction and gift-exchange.

Prost, Antoine and Gerard Vincent, eds. *A History of Private Lives: Riddles of Identity in Modern Times*. Part of a continuing

BOOKS OF NOTE

RICHARD A. PETERSON

series, this volume portrays Italian, German, and American family life in the 20th century. Authors focus on a wide range of topics from ever-changing dress codes to the history of contraceptives.

Ozouf, Mona. *Festivals and the French Revolution*. Ozouf shows how revolutionaries of all stripes used popular spectacles to serve their own political and cultural agendas.

Miyoshi, Masao. *Off Center: Power and Cultural Relations between Japan and the United States*. Reviews both Japan bashing and America bashing with an emphasis on current Japanese fiction showing how America is viewed.

Ten from Sage

Hage, Gerald and Charles H. Powers. *Post Industrial Lives: Roles and Relationships in the 21st Century*. Based on a fresh reading of role theory, Hage and Powers construct a version of functionalism built from continual adaptation to changing circumstances. Structure, consequently, is seen in networks rather than in organizations.

Denzin, Norman K. *Images of Postmodern Society: Social Theory and Contemporary Cinema*. Contours of the post-modern self are seen in the leading Hollywood films of the 80s.

Featherstone, Mike. *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. Featherstone sees the roots of postmodern society in consumerism and shows how this view is consistent with the views of contemporary postmodern theorists.

Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan Turner, eds. *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*. The authors see the body as the locus of the interchange between nature, society, and culture and show the utility of this view in examining diverse subjects ranging from romantic love, physical fitness and the work of Nietzsche to dietary practices.

Lorber, Judith and Susan A. Farrell, eds. *The Social Construction of Gender*. This useful anthology is better called the *Cultural Construction of Gender*.

Blumler, Jay G., Jack McLeod, and Karl Erik Rosengren, eds. *Comparatively Speak-*

ing: Communication and Culture Across Space and Time. Authors consider both the difficulties of comparative research across media, language, and cultural boundaries, and how the same media stimulus or world event is differently interpreted in different countries.

Gold, Steven J. *Refugee Communities: A Comparative Field Study*. Comparative case studies of Soviet Jews and Vietnamese refugees show the clash of cultures and efforts both to keep intact the past and to recast it to fit the needs of the future.

Abramson, Paul R. *A Case for Case Studies: An Immigrant's Journal*. A grandson's loving exegesis of his Russian Jewish immigrant grandfather's three-volume handwritten autobiography. In this study, begun 35 years after the older man's death, the author brings a world of context-building information and multi-cultural interpretation to the documents.

Fowles, Jib. *Why Viewers Watch: A Reappraisal of Television's Effects*. A reassuring text for those wanting a sanguine view of TV's effects. Fowles' foes are the "TV Prigs", like Nicholas Johnson who view TV as debasing, but Fowles focuses on "how it happens that viewers get what they want." There are updates such as several paragraphs on CNN but, unfortunately, the book's view is arrested in the period of the first edition, 1982.

Windhal, Sven R., Benno H. Signitzer, and Jean T. Olsen. *Using Communication Theory: An Introduction to Planned Communication*. This a how-to book for campaign and organization flacks that is sophisticated enough to spend an entire chapter cautioning that "Not all problems are communication problems." Substantive toxic waste may be flowing as well!

Seven by University of Minnesota Press

Jusdanis, Gregory. *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture: Inventing National Literature*. Jusdanis shows the role that literature has played in the building of a national identity over the last two centuries in Greek society.

Spadaccini, Nicholas and Jenaro Talens, eds. *The Politics of Editing*. Hispanists discuss the central role of editors of differing political, religious, and editorial leanings in shaping Spanish consciousness.

Kendall, Calvin and Peter S. Wells, eds. *Voyage to the Other World: The Legacy of Sutton Hoo*. Exploration of pagan Anglo-Saxon culture through the analysis of the remains of a richly outfitted ship discovered at Sutton Hoo.

Boyarin, Jonathan. *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory*. A provocative case of the shaping of collective memory seen in the long-time Jewish experience of being the "other" and now of "othering" others in Israel.

Conley, Tom. *Film Hieroglyphs*. An insightful exploration of the language of the movie camera - composition, focus, camera angle, sight lines, cutting, dissolves, etc. - that communicates to the experienced viewer.

Subotnik, Rose. *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music*. This is a fresh critical philological reading of Adorno's work on art music.

McClary, Susan. *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*. A set of critical essays on Western art music.

Judith Adler
David Altheide
Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson
Thelma McCormack

Membership Committee

John Ryan, Chair
Dept. of Sociology
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634

Judith Balfe
Mabel Berezin
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13 rue Cassette
75006 Paris, France

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Elizabeth Long
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Rice University
Houston, Texas 77251

Jon Cruz
Herman Gray
Annette Lareau
Ron Lembo

Culture Section Directory II

This is the questionnaire which will be used to construct the 1992-93 Culture Section Membership Directory. The last issue of the newsletter solicited suggestions for improving the response categories. Many of those suggestions have been incorporated into this version. Please complete the following questionnaire and return it to: John Ryan, Department of Sociology, Clemson University, Clemson SC 29634-1513. The deadline for inclusion has been extended to May 15th, 1992.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

NAME: SPILLMAN LYNETTE P
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)
 DEPT: SOCIOLOGY
 ORGANIZATION: UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
 STREET (IF NECESSARY): _____
 CITY: NOTRE DAME STATE: IN ZIP: 46556
 OFFICE PHONE (WITH AREA CODE): 219 239 8067
 HOME PHONE (WITH AREA CODE): 219 287 9846
 FAX NUMBER: 219 239 8209
 BITNET ADDRESS: _____
 NUMBER OF YEARS SECTION MEMBER: 5
 YEAR OF PH.D. 91

WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION? (CIRCLE ONE):

- (1) Student (2) University or College with Graduate School (3) None (4) 4-Year College (5) 2-Year College
 (6) Government (7) Research/Consulting Organization (8) Self-Employed

1. What are the substantive sources of information for your research? Choose no more than 5 and rank order by placing a number from 1 to 5 next to your choices.
SUNY Press. This text in showing how to go about understanding television and movie content.

Gero, Joan, and Margaret W. Conkey. *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. The androcentric nature of archaeology is exposed, opening the way to considering the role of women and of gender relations in prehistoric cultures.

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The National Guide to Funding in Arts and Culture, 2nd Edition. NY: The Foundation Center. Beyond its intended audience, the work provides a wealth of information for researchers including the grant giver's fund-

2. What are your primary theoretical, methodological research orientations? Choose no more than 3 and rank order by placing a number from 1 to 3 next to your choices.

ORIENT:

- 1 a. culture/society links
3 b. content/analysis
 — c. critical theory
 — d. sociology of knowledge
 — e. ethnography
 — f. symbolic interaction
 — g. archival research
 — h. experimental studies
 — i. computer modeling
 — j. analysis of large data sets
2 k. collective memory
 — l. cultural capital/strat.
 — m. production of culture
 — n. participant observation
 — o. social networks
 — p. cultural change
 — q. other _____

4. Does your research focus primarily on one region? (e.g. the South; Eastern Europe; North America; Afro-Caribbean) Please specify below

U.S. & Australia

3. Disciplines other than sociology of greatest relevance to your culture-related work? Choose no more than 4; rank order by placing a number from 1 to 4 next to your choices.

DISC:

- 1 a. history
3 b. English/comparative literature
3 c. anthropology
 — d. philosophy
3 e. economics
 — f. political science
 — g. psychology
 — h. cognitive science
 — i. religious studies
 — j. history or philosophy of science
 — k. education
 — l. creative writing
 — m. journalism
 — n. theater
 — o. painting, etc.
 — p. dance
 — q. music performance
 — r. arts administration
 — s. psychiatry
 — t. popular culture
4 u. American studies
 — v. media, communication studies
 — w. musicology/ethno-musicology
 — x. art history
 — y. folklore, folklife
 — z. marketing
 — 1. linguistics
 — 2. other _____

CALLS FOR PAPERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

—CONFERENCES

Symposium on Academic Knowledge and Political Power, 20-22 November 1992, University of Maryland, College Park. Faculty and advanced graduate student papers are invited for multiple parallel workshops (although some may be accepted for plenary sessions). Focus will be the relationships between academic knowledge and political power. Topics to be addressed include the linkages: between implicit ideologies and the academic production of 'facts'; between academic, external professional and political discourses; between academics and the general public regarding social policy formulation. Contact: Richard Harvey Brown, Dept. of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park MD 20742-1315. Submission and Registration Deadline: 30 August 1992.

—ANNIVERSARY

Section members may also be interested to learn that *Index on Censorship*, a periodical covering human rights and free speech-censorship issues worldwide, is celebrating its 20th anniversary [and commencing a subscription drive]. Address: 39c Highbury Place, London N5 1QP, England.

—ASSOCIATION

The *International Thorstein Veblen Association* is now being formed; its *ad hoc* organizing committee includes: John Diggins [CUNY Graduate Center], Franco Ferrarotti [University of Rome], Arthur J. Vidich [New School for Social Research], and Acting Director Rick Tilman [Department of Public Administration, University of Nevada(Las Vegas, 89154)]. Contact Tilman for membership applications and inquiries. The inaugural business meeting and Veblen symposium are scheduled for December 1993, News School for Social Research, NY.

—SECTION NEWS

If you have not already completed your questionnaire for the new edition of the *Culture Section Directory of Members*, please do so immediately and send it to John Ryan. The questionnaire appears on page 18 of this issue.

—PUBLICATIONS

Circles: The Buffalo Women's Journal of Law and Social Policy, a new semi-annual journal published by students at the SUNY-Buffalo School of Law and Women's Studies Program. Interested writers, illustrators and photographers are invited to submit scholarly articles, commentary, poetry, fiction, book reviews or art work which illuminate the lives of women in both a legal and social policy context. All written submissions should be double-spaced, submitted in triplicate and submitted on disk in WordPerfect 5.1. Include a bibliographic note and for longer submissions a brief abstract. [Artwork will be returned.] Send submissions to *Circles*. SUNY-Buffalo School of Law, O'Brian Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260. Phone: (716) 838-0935.

ARTICLE

Quoted from "Frohnmayer Decries Cultural War: Departing NEA Chief Blasts Congress and the New Right" by Kim Masters, *Washington Post* 24 March 1992:1:4:

Commenting on the Smithsonian Institution's recent exhibit on so-called degenerate art — works that were attacked in Nazi Germany — [John] Frohnmayer said, "If you saw it, you couldn't help but be chilled to the bone with the similarities between even the language that was used, in the words of Hitler and Goebbels, to what is being used in the political discourse today.... There was a sign on a wall that the Germans had written that said, 'Your tax money goes to pay for this filth.' That could come right out of the Congressional Record, my friends."

Some of Frohnmayer's scorn was reserved for Leonard Garment, the former counsel to President Nixon who recently published comments that the endowment should fund 'time-tested' art and avoid controversy. Frohnmayer charged that Garment advocates the "funding of only 'safe' art—the work of dead white European males."

Culture Section Committees

Section Chair Diana Crane has announced the following section committees and members for the coming year:

Book/Article Prize Committee

Diane Barthel, Chairman
Dept. of Sociology
SUNY-Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794

Ewa Morawska
Charles Simpson (SUNY-Plattsburgh)
Gaye Tuchman
Janet Wolff

Student Paper Prize Committee

Liah Greenfeld, Chair
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Harvard University
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Cambridge, MA 02138

Judith Blau
Sarah Corse

Publication Committee

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New York City, NY 10003

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