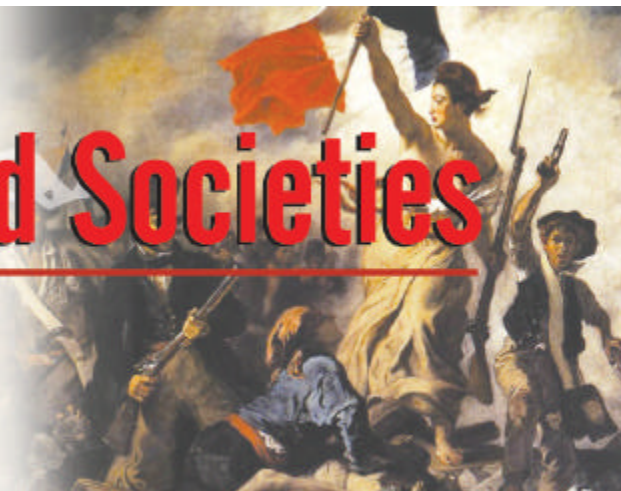


States, Power, and Societies

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY SECTION
American Sociological Association



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Symposium on Art and Politics

Is art autonomous, alienated, taking on a life of its own (Marx, 1857. *The Grundrisse*), a bounded ecosystem with its own dynamics (such as imitation), or part of the superstructure reflecting the dominant material forces (Marx, 1845. *The German Ideology*)? Is art an imperative of politics such as the two revolutionary Chinese ballets *The White-Haired Girl* and *The Red Detachment of Women*? Two of our contributors depict a third way-art as the nemesis of politics. Goldfarb has studied the role of theatre in repressive societies and Isaac has studied the role of novels in a democracy. They both

describe and analyze those autonomous "art" spaces where counter hegemonic values emerged. Rouosell and Roy survey the sociological landscape where politics and art intersect and offer an agenda for research. All move away from viewing art either as autonomous or as the imperative of politics. They suggest how counter hegemonic forces used and changed cultural forms as part of contentious collective action. Thanks to our contributors for their essays! (K. Schwartzman)

Politics of Contentious Collective Action and Cultural Change in Novel Form*

Larry Isaac

**Ed., *American Sociological Review*
Vanderbilt University**

The role that the politics of collective contention plays in cultural change has yet to become a major concern of political sociology, social movement research, or sociology of culture. It should be. Taking this relation-

ship seriously leads to a host of interesting and important questions, such as: (1) How are contentious collective actions that constitute social movements involved in producing cultural change? (2) What genres or forms of cultural change might be responsive to social movement actions? And in what ways might such processes be historically

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An Ironic Note on the Sociology of Art and Politics

Jeffrey C. Goldfarb
The New School

There was an interesting article in *The New York Times* about a poetry salon in Damascus, Syria a few months ago (Fahim and Mafou 2010). It reminded me of the theater movement I studied in Poland in the 1970s*. Both the theater movement and the

poetry salon are examples of constituted free zones in repressive societies. They suggest a fundamental way that the arts can and do inform politics in repressive societies, significantly challenging the repressive powers. I think they demonstrate the possibility of re-inventing political culture, the possibility of reformulating the relationship between

(Continued pg. 5)

Thoughts on How Art Does Politics*

Violaine Rousell

University of Paris

William G. Roy**

UC Los Angeles

In sociology's first century, scholars sought to explain why (and how) modernizing societies differentiated into distinct cultural and institutional spheres. Sociology itself developed specialties that mirrored the differentiation of society—political sociology, economic sociology, medical sociology, sociology of education, sociology of culture, etc. In the last quarter century, sociologists have increasingly stepped across those boundaries to examine how those spheres intersect each other. Sociologists of culture*** for example have incorporated economic and organizational sociology in the production of culture perspective, treated art in terms of the full panoply of people who participate in art worlds, problematized how audiences actually receive art, and examined how art actually operates in everyday life. The differentiation of art into separate spheres was framed in terms of “pure” art or “art for art’s sake” stripped of religious, political, commercial, or instrumental connotations. Its reintegration has been signaled by historicizing the very concept of “pure art” as the result of specific historical conditions. A major issue in the relation of art to the rest of society is the question of how art penetrates politics. From the perspective of most art scholars, this is a question of aesthetics—whether politics necessarily pollutes and debases the quality of the arts. From the perspective of social science, it has been primarily a question of meaning—how political meaning is conveyed through artistic media (Berezin 1997; Stamatov 2002; Wagner-Pacifci and Schwartz 1991). Recent work has begun to broaden the study of the arts and politics beyond meaning (Adams 2002; Cerulo 1995; Cruz 1999; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006; Lebrun 2008; Roscigno and Danaher 2004; Rousell 2007; Roy 2010; Turino 2008). Several strands of scholarship are converging around the general issue of the social relationships within which art takes political form, that is, how art *does* politics. The perspective of *doing* moves analysis beyond the meaning of culture, to focus on the ways that art is embedded in relationships, activities, and institutions.

An Agenda for Art and Politics

The question of how art *does* politics can be addressed in four issues:

The way politics comes to be inscribed in art forms, and inseparably, what art does to politics. The relationship between aesthetic and political fields varies historically and comparatively. For example, the concept of “pure” art unsullied by politics is a relatively recent conceit, enforced more tenaciously in some societies than others (Zolberg 1990). When social movements

make art, use art, and enroll artists in contentious action, how does the use of art frames and formats change to the physiognomy and fate of the protest? When political parties call on artists (or celebrities of the arts) to support them, how does that affect political actions, stakes and logics? The effects are shaped by more than political content. The attention to how art does politics must attend to the constitution of artistic repertoires of protest, their durability, the efficiency social actors grant it, and the effects they materially produce (Adams 2005). Tia DeNora's work has fully demonstrated that the everyday experience of music, for example, has powerful effects in social life (DeNora 2000). Similarly, the question of how art and political audiences experience their relationship to performers and each other should also be addressed. Instead of implicitly taking on the role of the collective audience, social scientists need to interrogate how political messages are circulated through artistic means. Consequently, what does art possibly cause audiences to do? Another connected question addresses how the *intrinsic force* of the *aesthetic genres* and *formats* are experienced by artists themselves (DiMaggio 1987; Lena and Peterson 2008). How do the prisms and social relations of genres shape the opportunities and restraints that artists face when attempting to mobilize for a cause? And how do the reactions to such opportunities and restraints affect the possible political uses of art and artistic voice?

The State and its relation to the politicization of the arts.

Public policies towards the arts contribute, on one hand, to provide the conditions of development of artistic activities and professions and, on the other hand, define what *the State itself* is made of (Berezin 1994; Blake 2007; Blau 1989; Cerulo 1995). The state has aesthetic content, which is most evident in national anthems, monuments, museums and architecture. Such devices do more than legitimize a separately existing state; they help constitute the state. Promoting the arts is indeed often a means of public legitimization, as it is a means of construction/promotion of national identity. The types of practices/products which are designated and officially elevated to the dignity of “art making”/“artwork” shapes both art and politics. If the State has a decisive hold on the arts, the arts also, to a certain extent, *do* the State.

The (symbolic) building of identities and communities.

Art has the capacity to both reinforce and transcend social boundaries (Bryson ; Lamont and Molnár 2002; Pachucki, Pendergrass and Lamont 2007; Polletta and

(Continued pg. 6)

Isaac: Contentious Collective Action and Cultural Change (continued)

contingent? (3) How might such movement-induced cultural change carry political significance? One of the ways I have begun to investigate such questions is by explicitly working to bridge the gap between theoretical preoccupations of two subfields—sociology of social movements (especially concerned with outcomes or consequences of movements) and sociology of culture. I have operated on the premise that serious engagement between these two subfields holds promise for advancing our understanding of movement-induced cultural change while simultaneously enriching both the sociology of contentious politics and sociology of culture.

One of my historical vineyards for such work has been the emergence of a new subgenre of fiction—the “labor problem novel” (hereafter, LPN)—that appeared during the late nineteenth-century American Gilded Age. The LPN was a form of “realist” fiction (more below) that dealt with the “labor problem” generally, often by making labor unions and/or strikes a part of the story. Taken as a whole, the LPN was a multivocal, multivalent body of stories with a clear two-sided character—i.e., those vehemently anti-labor on the one side and those active in or supportive of the labor movement on the other side vying for their respective realistic constructions of the labor problem and its solutions in storied form.

Between 1870 and 1919, more than 500 labor problem stories were published in America. Taken as a literary formation, this textual genre and its historical context (the Gilded Age rise of industrial capital) offer an intriguing empirical case and a rich theoretical opportunity, one that allows an examination of how storied cultural forms with significant political messages emerge, expand, and contract, a key part of understanding cultural change generally. When cultural change is infused with politically charged narrative situated in a field with a variety of storied valences, it signifies an important instance of political change as well, likely a struggle for ideological supremacy taking place in a multiplicity of arenas and cultural forms. Fiction-writing was only one such field within which ideological struggle occurred. I have illustrated its appearance during the same historical period in other forms of narrative and pictorial art as well (Isaac 2008).

The approach I have taken emphasizes an historical sociology of literary forms that builds on sociology of literature scholarship (e.g., Griswold 1981; Bourdieu 1996; Eastwood 2007), but one that provides a central role for the collective contention of social movements as agents in cultural change. At the point of theorizing the movement-cultural change relation, I draw on two bodies of scholarship—work on the political (e.g., Amenta 2004 for a review) and much more rare cultural *consequences* (e.g., Earl

2004 for a review) of social movements on the one hand, and theories of cultural production and innovation (e.g., see Peterson and Anand 2004; Kaufman 2004) on the other. The American LPN’s emergence and trajectory during its heyday (approximately 1870 to 1905) and relative decline (1906 to 1919) was the joint outcome of processes both exogenous and endogenous to the fiction-writing field. Writers, of course, wrote the LPNs. But the conditions under which they did so mattered a great deal for the over-time publication intensity (volume) of such stories.

Exogenous Influences. As production-of-culture theorists would expect, market conditions and laws played an important role in accounting for the LPN trajectory. Early in the Gilded Age, the market for fiction was quite favorable; the novel was gaining in prestige and competition from other sources of entertainment or popular culture was not particularly acute. A change in the legal environment of publishing (Platt-Simmons Act, 1891) also facilitated genre growth. However, by the latter years of the 19th century and growing into the 20th, competition for consumer’s time and entertainment dollar increased dramatically from such quarters as newspapers and magazines, bicycle craze, radio, silent films, and automobiles. Nonfiction was also gradually overtaking fiction in popularity. When the LPN first appeared authors claimed to provide stories that were entertaining as well as realistic depictions of industry, workers, new social conditions and social types, and the “labor problem.” But by the end of the century the growth of muckraking magazines and social science squeezed the LPN market. New popular culture forms competed with the LPN on entertainment grounds while muckraking journalism and social science of industry and labor (mostly by the economics profession) began to undermine the authority of even the most realistic labor problem fiction.

The biggest story, however, behind the LPN’s growth was the labor movement. Major features of workers’ collective oppositional action fueled a field of contentious discourse within which the LPN flourished. This discursive field was a highly contentious environment that bred hopeful excitement of a new world on the one hand, along with fear and contempt on the other hand. By far the strongest and most consistent influences on the LPN trajectory were union density and strike frequency effects, not a typical part of the theoretical apparatus for the sociology of literature or the sociology of culture more generally.

Endogenous Influences. Writers were, of course, key active agents inside the literary field. But here there is an important twist. Some LPN authors were themselves part of the labor

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The rise of the labor movement provided the material for a contentious literary field while realism provided the license to write about it.

Isaac: Contentious Collective Action and Cultural Change (continued)

movement and used their stories to ostensibly advance the cause. On the other side, some writers were connected to interests and organizations that worked to undermine the labor movement. Still others wrote about aspects of the labor problem more as writers than as movement or counter-movement activists. For them, their art came first, not the movement. All were *literary activists* who contributed, in varying degrees, to contentious discourse on the labor problem by writing their realist stories.

While production-of-culture theory emphasizes the importance of the institutional conditions surrounding the formal production of culture like literature, other sociology of culture perspectives emphasize the role of processes *within* the cultural field of interest when explaining cultural change and innovation. Cultural ecology is one such perspective which subsumes approaches featuring how cultural change occurs within relatively bounded “ecosystems” that contain culturally endogenous constraints on growth, stability, and change in cultural forms (Kaufman 2004). The premise is that such cultural systems contain internal dynamics for both emulation and innovation; the key issue, then, is to locate the threshold at which emulation begins shifting to differentiation. In short, cultural ecology explanations find the sources of cultural change inside the cultural system rather than the external conditions surrounding it that are featured by production-of-culture perspectives.

Processes internal to the fiction-writing field were, indeed, central to explaining the LPN trajectory. One was the rise and diffusion of the realist aesthetic in art and literature. Literary realism was a new set of aesthetic norms prizing stories that captured “life as it really was,” a version of artistic and literary reflection theory. This marked a shift away from the dominance of the ideal and sentimentalism in fiction-writing. This aesthetic change probably had greatest influence on professional, genteel writers more than working-class authors because the former had long followed a different set of literary norms dictating that cultured “good taste” could not be achieved by attending to the vulgarity of the lower orders. Good (tasteful) literature simply ignored them and their plight (Trachtenberg 1982). As realist practice spread through fiction-writing, prohibitions against lower-class inclusions in stories began to change. This shift in literary aesthetics, then, interacted with the rise of contentious politics surrounding the labor movement. The rise of the labor movement provided the material for a contentious literary field while realism provided the license to write about it.

The second major endogenous source of LPN expansion was the very dialogical character of the LPN literary field. Collective contention surrounding the labor movement not only was, in part, responsible for the rise and expansion of the subgenre, but ideological struggles in the form of “battling books” sometimes provoked new novels as one author wrote a story that would “correct,” offer a more “realistic” account of the labor problem than another author. Periodically, a text was so provocative, so audacious in its depictions of one side or the other in the struggle, that it set in motion, in good dialogical fashion, a series of counter-narratives. The anonymously authored (aka, John M. Hay) *The Bread-Winners: A Social Study* (1883-84) and Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1888) were both provocative initiator novels that each spawned a host of counter-sequels thereby fueling LPN growth.

Whatever else social movements might do, they create incubators for cultural fermentation, experimentation, and innovation. Theories of cultural change need to take political struggles, collective contention, and movements seriously as agents that change cultural meanings, practices, and cultural stock.

To recap: My research provides evidence for a theory of literary change that draws from production-of-culture and cultural ecology perspectives, but makes those contributions distinctly dialogical by showing how a contentious field of collective action associated with the rise of the labor movement innovatively induced and expanded the LPN literary formation. Without the contentious politics of the labor movement during the Gilded

Age there would have been no LPN. But for collective contention associated with unionization and strike activity to really gain traction in shaping the literary field these struggles needed a variety of other social conditions, especially the realist turn and favorable market conditions.

The findings of this project have important implications for each pillar of my initial bridge—sociology of culture and sociology of social movements, as well as political sociology. Most significantly for the study of culture generally and literature in particular: The fact that labor movement contention was central to the LPN’s emergence and trajectory tells us that social movements are at least periodically important in shaping literary innovation and trajectories, a point largely neglected by sociologists of literature and cultural sociologists in general. Whatever else social movements might do, they create incubators for cultural fermentation, experimentation, and innovation. Theories of cultural change need to take political struggles, collective contention, and movements seriously as agents that change cultural meanings, practices, and cultural stock.

Social movement scholars interested in how movements produce
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Goldfarb: An Ironic Note On the Sociology of Art and Politics (continued)

the culture of power and the power of culture**.

The secret police are present at Bayt al-Qasid, the House of Poetry, in Damascus today, *The Times* reports, but it is also a place where innovative poetry is read, including by poets in exile. Politically daring ideas are discussed; a world of alternative sensibility is created. Not the star poets of the sixties, but young unknowns predominate. The point is not political agitation nor to showcase celebrity, but the creation of a special place for reading, performance and discussion of the new and challenging. The article quotes a patron about a recent reading. “‘In a culture that loathes dialogue,’ the evening represented something different, said Mr. Sawah, the editor of a poetry Web site. ‘What is tackled here,’ he said, ‘would never be approached elsewhere.’”

This suggests an ironic sociology of the arts in repressive societies, and it has implications for less repressive ones. It confirms the insights of Max Weber, with a Frankfurt accent. Crucial to Weber’s overall account of modernity is the idea of societal differentiation, the idea that there are distinct institutional spheres in the modern social fabric, that provide different ways of doing things, with distinct principles and distinct modes of operations than elsewhere in the social order. Weber saw the arts as “a cosmos of more and more consciously grasped independent values which exist in their own right [taking on] the function of this-worldly salvation.” This, position, first outlined as a sociological problem by Weber in “Religious Rejections of the World,” was a basic element of the Frankfurt School critiques of the culture industry and affirmative culture (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002; Gerth and Mills 1958; Marcuse 1991). What Weber and Adorno, et al, appreciated is that art has an importance independent of the developments of capitalism and the modern state and the logic of their administration. The Czech novelist expressed this position as an evocative statement of vocational principle: “The novelist needs answer to no one but Cervantes” (Kundera 1988).

Although this may appear to be a conservative position, the experiences of novelists such as Kundera, poets such as the ones in the House of Poetry in Damascus and my theater friends in Poland show how it is not. The great sociological ironist postulated that the most ascetic of religions yields the most materialist of civilizations, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, and we see with him that art presents critical alternatives to the dominant value system, and in its independence, art that is distanced from the imperatives of politics, a-political art, can and has become the basis for politics.

Cynics would say that the Polish theater and the Syrian salon are safety valve mechanism, through which the young and the marginal can let off steam, as a repressive political culture prevails. But in Poland, the safety valve overturned the official culture, even before the collapse of the Communist regime, as I explained in my book *Beyond Glasnost: the Post Totalitarian Mind (which was written and published before the fall of the Berlin Wall)*.

I don’t want to assert that this happy ending is always the result of such artistic work. Clearly, it’s not. But I do want to underscore that the very existence of an alternative sensibility in a repressive context changes the nature of the social order. Poland was not simply a repressive country then, and Syria is not simply repressive now. Their political character is not only constituted by the regime, but also by the regimes subjects acting autonomously. They are places where the possibility for dialogue was established, places where poetry can prevail, and because of this, political culture can be reinvented – in Syria, at least for a discrete number of people in a particular location at a particular time. But the limits of today may be very different tomorrow. This I learned as I observed my Polish friends. †

What Weber and Adorno, et al, appreciated is that art has an importance independent of the developments of capitalism and the modern state and the logic of their administration.

**I have written about these theaters on many occasions. The most recent and most theoretically advanced account can be found in *The Politics of Small Things: The Power of the Powerless in Dark Times*, The University of Chicago Press, 2006*

***The project of reinventing political culture is the topic of my forthcoming book, *Reinventing Political Culture: The the Power of Culture versus the Culture of Power, Polity*, 2011.*

Isaac: Contentious Collective Action and Cultural Change (continued)

cultural change and add to cultural stock should pay attention to the theories of change advanced by sociologists of culture. The way movements influence cultural change will likely be mediated and conditioned by precisely the kinds of factors so central to theories of cultural change. Social movement scholars would also do well to move beyond the significant, if narrow, framing perspective and examine the relationship between movement aesthetic performance and cultural form innovation and the conditions of such production. To varying degrees, LPN author served as literary activists in producing and circulating perspectives on the labor problem.

So what was the real political import of the realist LPN? This literary formation was richly imbued with political ideology, much of which constituted a repository of stories about a young industrial America and a spectrum of meanings about social class associated with that great transformation. The process of genre differentiation—bringing the labor problem into the novel, thus creating a new subgenre—changed literary cultural stock in ways that provided new materials for class-based understandings of the world as they also entertained. At least during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, the struggle over the meaning of class was deeply storied. Just exactly what the impact of this cultural stock was for the fortunes of labor and capital is yet to be fully

unraveled.

Several years ago, Charles Tilly (2002) cautioned us about the “narrative turn” in the social sciences, “the problems with stories” as he put it. But he also pointed out that this turn opened an important opportunity, one within which we could begin to build narrative forms, stories, literary formations, into our theories of social, cultural, and political change: How can our theories of historical change account for forms of narrative, literary formations, and the like? In what ways do these storied forms matter for subsequent social and political change? My project capitalizes precisely on this opportunity, one with potentially important tracks to be followed in our understanding of how power (and its contestation) shapes and gets inscribed in cultural forms. †

**This essay draws heavily from my “Movements, Aesthetics, and Markets in Literary Change: Making the American Labor Problem Novel,” American Sociological Review 74 (December, 2009): 938-965, and I thank the ASA for permission to extensively reproduce ideas that appeared in that article. That article is the 2010 recipient of the American Sociological Association’s Section on Labor and Labor Movements “Distinguished Scholarly Article Award” and the ASA Section on Culture’s “Clifford Geertz Prize.”*

Rousell and Roy: Thoughts on How Art Does Politics (continued)

Jasper 2001; Roy and Dowd 2010; Sonnett 2004; Zolberg 1997). Group membership reflexively produces and reflects shared artistic references and aesthetic experiences (a common music tradition, cinematographic genre, and so on). Local activists thus devote an intense activity to the (re)activation of such “cultural markers.” Comparative analysis is especially necessary to unveil the social mechanisms shaping the association *or dissociation* between the definition of social groups and the identification of aesthetic reference systems.

The access that artists have to the “public sphere,” as a fundament to their artistic identity (Blake 2007; Ikegami 2005; Martin 2004; Polletta 2006; Sampson et al. 2005; Tilly 2008). As Hannah Arendt observed, both artists and politicians have to perform in public, and this defines what and who they are (Arendt 1968). The public sphere is itself a historical development that varies across society, including the degree to which it is politicized and aestheticized (Habermas 1989; Somers 1995). Politicians and artists play various roles and connect to each other in various ways. Salient questions include how and why the public sphere is integrated or specialized between politics and art, the insti-

tutional structures that politicize or aestheticize the public sphere, and the discursive framing that underlies the process.

Conclusion

The topic of art and politics involves more than the political content of art. In the conventional perspective on art and politics, artists communicate meaning through the content of art to audiences, who then incorporate those meanings into political action. But that is just one mechanism in a very complex relationship between artistic and political fields. Artists, activists, citizens, elites and office holders interact in many ways. The relationship of artist and audience is but one kind of social relationship through which aesthetic expression is channeled. A full analysis of the relationship between art and politics will consider the manifold ways that art *does* politics and how each can be mutually constituted by the other. †

**This essay is adapted from a prospectus for a continuing workshop of scholars from UCLA and University of Paris 8.*

***Authors are listed in alphabetical order*

****We are distinguishing between cultural sociology and sociology of culture. The former examines how meaning shapes interaction, relationships and institutions while the latter is the sociological investigation of arts, music, literature, drama, architecture, etc.*

2010 Section Award Winners

BEST BOOK AWARD

Committee Chair: John Skrentny, UC San Diego

Deborah B. Gould. 2009. *Moving Politics: Emotion and Act Up's Fight Against AIDS*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Deborah Gould's *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS* marks an important theoretical advance for political sociology. In this work, Gould takes seriously some of the recent critiques of social movement theory as being predicated on a set of assumptions that are (perhaps) overly rational, structural, and determinist. By re-analyzing existing data (newspapers archives and qualitative interviews) using a new set of theoretical tools, Gould has extensively expanded the possibilities for sociological inquiry first set forth by Goodwin, Jasper, and Polleta a decade ago. Her work analyzes how nonconscious affect is transformed and challenged by any effort to name just what it is that moves us to take (or not) a stand on some political or social question of the day. Even more, she subtly analyzes the ways in which accepted, normal practices of feeling – what she calls “emotional habitus” can open up (or close off) possibilities for collective political action. In doing so, she delineates the sometimes radical work that social movements do in shaping and changing the ways in which individuals perceive, articulate, and act upon their emotions. Perhaps most fascinatingly, Gould's analysis allows for a degree of indeterminacy: emotions are powerful in part because they are not easily contained, nor easily predicted. And it is in analyzing the power of emotional ambivalence and contradiction that Gould makes perhaps her most important contribution to our understanding of social movements, framing, charismatic leadership, and political communication.

HONORABLE MENTION

Mabel Berezin. 2009. *Illiberal Politics in Neoliberal Times: Culture, Security and Populism in the New Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Mabel Berezin's book brings a variety of disciplinary and theoretical tools to understand a phenomenon of great importance: the rise of right-wing populism in France and Italy in the 1990s. Her book expertly places these movements in their historical contexts, showing how they grew out of historical legacies and practices, but also placing them in the current context of globalization. Berezin also shows that cultural analysis contributes much to the study of power and economic dynamics.

BEST ARTICLE AWARD

Committee Chair: Monica Prasad, Northwestern University

Marcus J. Kurtz. 2009. “The Social Foundations of Institutional Order: Reconsidering War and the ‘Resource Curse’ in Third World State Building.” *Politics and Society* 37(4) 479-520.

Marcus Kurtz's article examines the micro-foundations of two important research traditions in the sociology of state-building, the tradition that equates war with state building and natural resources with the absence of state building. These are the two dominant theories of state building in the social sciences, but Kurtz points out several problems with them and then elaborates an alternative based on the work of Barrington Moore and Robert Brenner: “where a local elite organizes a labor-repressive agrarian economy, effective political development, even in the face of war or wealth, is unlikely.” He then shows through detailed studies of two carefully matched cases, Chile and Peru, that the nature of labor repression is a crucial mediating variable between war, natural resources, and state-building. In Peru the fear of arming the peasants upon whose servility the local agrarian economy depended prevented elites from forming successful state capacity even in the face of invasion, whereas free labor in Chile allowed inter-elite compromises that paved the way for effective state institutions. Committee members said: “The case comparison of Chile and Peru clearly illustrated the argument with carefully chosen cases.” “[The paper] contradicts a big literature, thus pushing the sub-discipline forward.” “[The paper] adds many strong points to the contemporary theory of state power.”

HONORABLE MENTION

Daniel Tope and David Jacobs 2009. “The Politics of Union Decline: The Contingent Determinants of Union Recognition Elections and Victories.” *American Sociological Review* 74:842-864.

Daniel Tope and David Jacobs present a political explanation for the decline of labor in the United States since the 1950s. They move the literature on this issue forward in several different ways: they focus on union recognition elections, a crucial aspect of the process of unionization that has received comparatively little attention in political sociology; they push beyond psychological and organizational accounts of these elections to test the effect of political and structural variables; and they present an extremely sophisticated time-series estimation of their hypotheses, raising the bar for quantitative political sociology. They

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2010 Section Award Winners

make a very strong case that the election of Ronald Reagan caused a decline in the fortunes of labor. This argument contributes to research showing important differences between the two American political parties, and to the role of political partisanship in explaining recent social trends. Committee members called the paper “a delicately carved piece of work with methodological vigor” and were especially impressed by the care and sophistication of the analysis.

tion state. Bart shows that these worldviews frequently cross geopolitical boundaries, and uses fuzzy-set analysis to show how exogenous events shape their distribution across states. In this way, Bonikowski builds useful bridges between political and cultural sociology that may be fruitfully crossed by future studies at the intersection of these literatures. †

BEST GRADUATE PAPER AWARD

Committee Chair: Sarah Sobieraj, Tufts University

Michaela Desoucey. 2010. “Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union.” *American Sociological Review* 75(3):432-455.

DeSoucey’s article “Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union,” analyzes how more than just sustenance or delicacy, food is a key cultural and political object that serves as a vehicle of national attachment and identity. Challenging conceptions about the homogenizing tendencies of globalization, this article introduces the concept of *gastronationalism* to explain how food is used by states to identify, promote, and defend national distinctiveness and how nationalist sentiments, in turn, shape food production and marketing. To illustrate the macro-level dynamics of gastronationalism, DeSoucey analyzes the relationship between national sentiments and food origin label movements in the European Union. She then provides a case study of the internationally contested but nationally protected French *foie gras* industry to analyze how food producers and consumers use cuisine to protect national distinctiveness and identity on a micro-level.

HONORABLE MENTION

Bart Bonikowski. 2009. “Shared Representations of the Nation-State in Thirty Countries: An Inductive Approach to Cross-National Research.” Unpublished ms. Department of Sociology, Princeton University.

Bart Bonikowski’s paper, “Shared Representations of the Nation-State in Thirty Countries: An Inductive Approach to Cross-National Attitudinal Research” examines cross-national variation in shared understandings of the nation between 1995 and 2003. Bart avoids the “methodological nationalism” of previous studies that use quantitative data from the International Social Survey Program by identifying transnational patterns in shared understandings of the nation-state. Latent Class Analysis reveals five ways members of Western democracies understand the na-

Invitation from ASA President-Elect Erik Olin Wright about the Real Utopias theme of the 2012 Annual Meeting

The theme for the 2012 Annual meeting of the ASA is “Real Utopias: Emancipatory projects, institutional designs, possible futures.” Here is how I described the core idea of this theme in the ASA newsletter, *Footnotes*:

“Real Utopias” seems like an oxymoron: Utopia means “nowhere” – a fantasy world of perfect harmony and social justice. To describe a proposal for social transformation as “utopian” is to dismiss it as an impractical dream outside the limits of possibility. Realists reject such fantasies as a distraction from the serious business of making practical improvements in existing institutions. The idea of real utopias embraces this tension between dreams and practice: “utopia” implies developing clear-headed visions of alternatives to existing institutions that embody our deepest aspirations for a world in which all people have access to the conditions to live flourishing lives; “real” means taking seriously the problem of the viability of the institutions that could move us in the direction of that world. The goal is to elaborate utopian ideals that are grounded in the real potentials of humanity, utopian destinations that have accessible way stations, utopian designs of viable institutions that can inform our practical tasks of navigating a world of imperfect conditions for social change.

Exploring real utopias implies developing a sociology of the *possible*, not just of the *actual*. This is a tricky research problem, for while we can directly observe variation in what exists in the world, discussions of possibilities and limits of possibility always involve more speculative and contentious claims about what could be, not just what is. The task of a sociology of real utopias, then, is to develop strategies that enable us to make empirically and theoretically sound arguments about emancipatory possibilities.

I am hoping that many of the sections of the American Sociological Association will be enthusiastic about engaging this theme in some of the sessions which they directly organize, but I also hope that members of different ASA sections will submit proposals to the program committee for thematic panels which explore the problem of real utopias within their subfield.

Because of the way the state and politics are so deeply implicated in the problem of creating fundamental alternatives to existing social institutions, political sociology is at the center of

the problem of envisioning real utopias. One of the preoccupations of my own work on this theme has been institutional innovations for deepening democracy, especially innovations that embody some elements of direct citizen participation and empowerment. The problem of radical democracy will be featured in at least one plenary panel, and many of my initial thoughts on thematic panels revolve around different aspects of democratic institutions and transformations. My hope is that there are many people in the Political Sociology section who will be excited by the theme and creatively elaborate proposals for panels at the 2012 meeting. It is an opportunity to think very expansively about some of the fundamental political problems of our time.

I. Real Utopia Proposals Sessions

Each of these sessions will revolve around a proposal for a real utopian design to resolve some domain of problems. Examples would include: unconditional basic income, market socialism, equality-sustaining parental leaves, participatory budgets, random-selection democratic assemblies, worker cooperatives, stakeholder corporations, solidarity finance, democratic media, etc. The ideal here is to recruit an anchor person for the session who we know has already worked extensively on formulating such real utopia designs rather than simply a person who has thought critically about the theme (although there will certainly be flexible on this). This format will not be appropriate for all of the themes around real utopias; it will be especially effective for those problems around which there exists an on-going discussion of alternative institutions.

Partial List of Potential Topics for Proposal Sessions

Below is an initial list of possible thematic panels built around real utopia proposals. I have identified these sessions by the central principle of the proposal (for example, Unconditional Basic Income) rather than by the general topic or target of a proposal (eg. Healthcare), except where I do not have a specific real utopian proposal in mind. Because of my own expertise, most of the topics I have thought of revolve around political and economic issues. Nevertheless, it would be good if some of these thematic proposal sessions revolved around cultural issues of various sorts and around egalitarian and social justice issues that are not exclusively socio-economic in character (gender, race, sexuality, etc.).

Unconditional Basic Income, A democratic media system, “High road” capitalism, Democratizing finance, Participatory budgeting, A democratic, egalitarian system of campaign finance, Deliberative referenda, Parental leaves for gender equality, Parecon (participatory economics), A framework for a digital network economy, Building the Scientific Commons

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Invitation from ASA President-Elect Erik Olin Wright (continued)

(publications, data dissemination, etc.), Community policing, Worker-owned Cooperatives, Pensions, labor's capital, solidarity finance, wage earner funds, Randomocracy, citizens assemblies, LETS (local exchange trading systems), Globally just Fair trade, Market socialism, Intellectual property – the creative commons, Public education, Universities, Healthcare

Childhood/children, Cities, Multiculturalism, Linguistic justice, Race, racial justice, International migration, Methodological issues: nonevents and possible futures, Criminal justice: crime & punishment, The military, Intentional communities, 19th century utopian communities, Transforming culture, Local food, Alternative Agro-food Systems, The Internet, Wikipedia, Creative commons, Voluntary simplicity, The Chicago participatory budget experiment, Transhumanism, Science policy,

II. Film/documentary sessions

I think it would be interesting to have a number of sessions which present documentary films on exemplary and iconic cases of social innovations to solve problems. The intention here is not to have cheerleading films, but documentaries that analyze specific kinds of leading cases. The films could either be presented by the filmmaker or by an expert who researches the case and could lead a discussion following the film. Most documentaries which are thematically relevant on these issues tend to be mainly about social movements and struggles – sometimes of the “heroic struggle” variety – and not so much about outcomes, institutional innovations, actual transformations of social structures. So, I am not sure exactly what is available.

III. Thematic panels around broad topics and disciplinary subfields

Some possible topics

Consumerism, The corporation: alternative models for more democratic/participatory governance, Carework, Future studies as a framework for envisioning real utopias, The Cleveland cooperatives initiatives, Mondragon, Emilia-Romagna and other exemplary worker cooperative districts, Utopian thinking within sociological theory, Utopian and dystopian visions, Marxism and real utopias or Marxism vs real utopias, Energy, Global Warming, The family, Sexuality,

IV. Plenary Panels

Tentatively, I am thinking of the following possibilities for the three plenary sessions:

1. *Big Ideas for Real Utopias*: This could be one or two of the plenary panels, depending on other plenary suggestions. The idea would be to have a panel(s) featuring very prominent, articulate advocates of specific real utopian proposals. Topics could include some of the following: Basic Income, A democratic media system, Participatory Budgets and direct democracy, Gender Equality and the family, Cooperatives
2. *Energy, the environment, and global warming*: This plenary would focus on institutional designs for countering global warming and other aspects of ecological crisis rather than just the nature of the problem itself.
3. *Sociology as Real Utopia*: I am less sure about this, but it might be possible to have a session which reflected on the nature of the discipline and academic life, and asked what the real utopia vision for sociology might be. †

A full version of Erik's memo may be found at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/ASA/ASAsectionsMemo.pdf>

Announcements

UPCOMING CONFERENCE

1st Global Conference on Transparency Research, May 19-20
Rutgers University-Newark, New Jersey, USA
<http://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/home/conferences/1stgctr.html>
Call for Papers Deadline: November 30, 2010

The purpose of the conference is to bring together scholars from a wide range of fields including sociology, anthropology, political science, public administration, economics, political economy, journalism, business, and law who study issues of governmental transparency. The Conference will collectively advance our understanding of the impact and implications of transparency policies that involve governments, either directly or indi-

rectly. This includes policies on access to information held by and about governments, transparency relationships between government entities, transparency relationships between governments and private and nonprofit entities, and access to information held by government about individuals. Conference organizers will provide hotel accommodations and on-site meals for all individuals presenting papers. We are seeking funding to support travel costs for some participants, but no commitment to travel support can presently be made to individuals whose proposals are accepted.†

Proposal forms are available at: <http://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/home/conferences/1stgctr/call-for-proposals.html> and should be submitted to Ms. Jyldyz Kasymova at transparency.conference@gmail.com by November 30, 2010.

Abstracts

RECENT BOOKS

Robert Rosenthal and Richard Flacks. 2010. *Music and Social Movements*. Boulder:Paradigm Publishers

Although music is known to be part of the great social movements that have rocked the world, its specific contribution to political struggle has rarely been closely analyzed. Is it truly the “lifeblood” of movements, as some have declared, or merely the entertainment between the speeches? Drawing on interviews, case studies, and musical and lyrical analysis, Rosenthal and Flacks offer a brilliant analysis and a wide-ranging look at the use of music in movements, in the U.S. and elsewhere, over the past hundred years. From their interviews, the voices of Pete Seeger, Ani DiFranco, Tom Morello, Holly Near, and many others enliven this highly readable book.

Brian Powell, Catherine Bolzendahl, Claudia Geist and Lala Carr Steelman. 2010. *Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and Americans' Definitions of Family*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation (the American Sociological Association's Rose Series in Sociology).

When state voters passed the California Marriage Protection Act (Proposition 8) in 2008, it restricted the definition of marriage to a legal union between a man and a woman. The act's passage further agitated an already roiling national debate about whether American notions of family could or should expand to include, for example, same-sex marriage, unmarried cohabitation, and gay adoption. But how do Americans really define family? The first study to explore this largely overlooked question, *Counted Out* examines currents in public opinion to assess their policy implications and predict how Americans' definitions of family may change in the future.

Counted Out demonstrates that American definitions of family are becoming more expansive. Who counts as family has far-reaching implications for policy, including health insurance coverage, end-of-life decisions, estate rights, and child custody. Public opinion matters. As scholars and lawmakers consider the future of family policy, they will want to consider the evolution in American opinion represented in this book.

Kim Scipes. 2010. *AFL-CIO'S Secret War Against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?* Lanham: Lexington Books.

The principles of trade unionism are based on working people acting together in solidarity with each other to improve wages, working conditions, and life for themselves and all others. These principles have been advanced in the United States since the 1880s by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), later the

Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and since their merger in 1955, the AFL-CIO.

However, unknown to many labor leaders and most union members in the U.S., the foreign policy leaders of the AFL and then the AFL-CIO, have been carrying out an international foreign policy that has worked against workers in a number of “developing countries.” This has been done on their own, and in collaboration with the U.S. Government and its agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency, U.S. Agency for International Development, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the U.S. State Department's Advisory Committee for Labor and Diplomacy.

In the post-World War II period, this foreign policy program has led to the AFL-CIO's foreign policy leadership helping to overthrow democratically elected governments—Guatemala (1954), Brazil (1964), Chile (1973); to support dictatorships in countries such as Guatemala, Brazil and Chile (after their respective military coups), as well as in countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and South Korea; and to support efforts by reactionary labor leaders to help overthrow their democratically-elected leaders as in Venezuela in 2002. It has also included providing AFL-CIO support for U.S. Government policies around the world, including support for apartheid in South Africa

This book argues that these activities—done behind the backs and without the informed knowledge of American trade unionists—acts to sabotage the very principles of trade unionism that these leaders proclaim to be advancing. It shows how labor activists have been fighting this sabotage, and calls for all Americans to support these efforts

William G. Roy. 2010. *Reds, Whites, and Blues: Social Movements, Folk Music, and Race in the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Music, and folk music in particular, is often embraced as a form of political expression, a vehicle for bridging or reinforcing social boundaries, and a valuable tool for movements reconfiguring the social landscape. *Reds, Whites, and Blues* examines the political force of folk music, not through the meaning of its lyrics, but through the concrete social activities that make up movements. Drawing from rich archival material, William Roy shows that the People's Songs movement of the 1930s and 40s, and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s implemented folk music's social relationships--specifically between those who sang and those who listened--in different ways, achieving different outcomes.

Roy explores how the People's Songsters envisioned uniting

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Abstracts (continued)

people in song, but made little headway beyond leftist activists. In contrast, the Civil Rights Movement successfully integrated music into collective action, and used music on the picket lines, at sit-ins, on freedom rides, and in jails. Roy considers how the movement's Freedom Songs never gained commercial success, yet contributed to the wider achievements of the Civil Rights struggle. Roy also traces the history of folk music, revealing the complex debates surrounding who or what qualified as "folk" and how the music's status as racially inclusive was not always a given.

Examining folk music's galvanizing and unifying power, *Reds, Whites, and Blues* casts new light on the relationship between cultural forms and social activity.

LaDawn Haglund. 2010. *Limiting Resources: Market-Led Reform and the Transformation of Public Goods*. Penn State Press.

The provision of public goods such as education, electricity, health, sanitation, and water was once regarded as primarily the responsibility of governments, but in the 1980s privatization of such services spread and reliance on market mechanisms instead of governments became common in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries. The record of the past twenty-five years of market-led development, however, has not been encouraging. Not only has it failed to improve public services significantly, but it has also undermined democratic institutions and processes, reproduced authoritarian relations of power, and suppressed alternatives made possible by an increasing global acceptance of the importance of economic and social rights. In *Limiting Resources*, LaDawn Haglund seeks an understanding of public goods that can better serve the needs of people in developing countries today.

Haglund critiques the narrow conception of public goods used in economics. She uses case studies of electricity and water provision in Central America to illuminate the conditions for success and the causes of failure in constructing adequate mechanisms for the supply of public goods. The book concludes with suggestions for ways in which a reformulated conception of public goods can be applied to promote justice, sustainability, and economic and social rights in developing countries.

Mark R. Warren. 2010. *Fire in the Heart: How White Activists Embrace Racial Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Fire in the Heart uncovers the processes through which white Americans become activists for racial justice. This first study of its kind reports accounts of the development of racial awareness drawn from in-depth interviews with fifty white activists in the

fields of community organizing, education, and criminal justice reform. The interviews demonstrate how white Americans can develop a commitment to racial justice, not simply because it is the right thing to do, but because they see the cause as their own. Warren argues that motivation to take action for racial justice is moral and relational and shows how white activists come to find common cause with people of color when their core values are engaged, as they build relationships with people of color that lead to caring, and when they develop a vision of a racially just future that they understand to benefit everyone—themselves, other whites, and people of color. The book also considers the complex dynamics and dilemmas white people face in working in multiracial organizations committed to systemic change in America's racial order, and provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of the role that white people can play in efforts to promote racial justice. Book website: <http://mark-warren.com/fireintheheart>

Donald W. Light (ed). 2010. *The Risks of Prescription Drugs*. New York: Columbia University Press.

A new book from Columbia University Press describes the under-reported epidemic of adverse reactions to prescription drugs that lie behind the politics of pharmaceutical regulation. Adverse drug reactions cause more than 2.2 million hospitalizations and 110,000 hospital-based deaths a year in the U.S. alone. Adverse drug reactions rank with stroke as a cause of death, and adding serious reactions outside hospitals and in nursing homes would increase the total significantly. *The Risks of Prescription Drugs* describes how the FDA developed so that most drugs approved provide few or no advantages over existing drugs to offset their risks of side effects. Women, older people, and people with disabilities are least used in clinical trials, yet most affected by adverse reactions. Adverse reactions to widely used drugs, such as psychotropics and birth control pills, as well as biologicals, result in official warnings against adverse reactions only after widespread use. A final chapter outlines six changes to make drugs safer and more effective.

Stephen Kalberg. 2010. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

For more than 100 years, Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* has set the parameters for the debate over the origins of modern capitalism. Now more timely and thought provoking than ever, this esteemed classic of twentieth-century social science examines the deep cultural "frame of mind" that existed at the birth of modern capitalism and to this day influences attitudes toward work in northern America and Western Europe.

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Abstracts (continued)

In this volume, Stephen Kalberg revises his internationally acclaimed translation--using shorter sentences and more lucid language--to make the work even more accessible to students and other readers. Capturing the essence of Weber's style as well as the subtlety of his descriptions and causal arguments, this is the only translation of the revised 1920 edition of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* published since 1930.

To draw readers into the material, this engaging volume includes extensive introductions by the editor, a chronology of Weber's life, a glossary, and numerous clarifying endnotes. Detailed commentaries discuss the controversies Weber addressed, explain his complex causal argument by reference to the general contours of his sociology, summarize the history of "the Protestant Ethic debate," and examine the significance of "the Protestant Sects" essays.

RECENT ARTICLES

Youyenn Teo (Ed.). 2010. "Asian families as Sites of State Politics." *Special Issue in Economy and Society* 39(3)

Youyenn Teo. 2010. "Shaping the Singapore Family, Producing State and Society." *Economy and Society* 39(3): 337-359.

Baby bonuses, tax incentives and other policies devised by the Singapore state to encourage marriage and boost fertility have attracted much attention: on one hand, demographers have pointed to their limited effects in reversing demographic trends. On the other hand, they are taken as evidence of a strong state with huge capacity for 'social engineering'. These two contrasting perspectives suggest that the state's effects are more complex than either view captures. The article brings together the two 'truths' about family policies to demonstrate the full range of its effects. Drawing on in-depth interview data, it shows that negotiations of the structural context produced by family policies generate self-consciously Singaporean meanings and normative practices, at the same time that they clarify and legitimize the state's often paradoxical positions towards the family. Ultimately, family policies give ideological and practical content to both 'state' and 'society'.

Mildred A. Schwartz. 2010. "Interactions Between Social Movement and U.S. Political Parties." *Party Politics* 16(5): 587-607.

Interactions between US political parties and social movements range from those that emphasize closeness to those that seek to preserve distance. Although previously unrecognized in organizational analysis, these strategies are similar to ones of bridging and buffering. Where they differ both from inter-organizational relations among firms and from among other non-profits, this is

due to the importance movements attach to autonomy, manifested in their antagonistic reactions to political parties and rooted in the importance they attach to ideology.

Robert B. Smith. 2010. "Why Nazified Germans Killed Jewish People: Insights from Agent-Based Modeling of Genocidal Actions." *Current Perspectives in Social Theory, Vol. 27: Theorizing the Dynamics of Social Processes*. Pp. 275-342. Harry F. Dahms and Lawrence Hazelrigg (Eds). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishers.

This paper explicates the logic of a computational agent-based model bearing on the willingness of perpetrator agents to conduct genocidal actions against Jewish people during World War II. Given realistic distributions of benefits and costs and sufficient time, as a joint consequence of these distributions and interpersonal influence the model readily creates agents who are avowed anti-Semites, Nazis, and perpetrators of the genocide, even transforming agents characterized initially by lower levels of anti-Semitism. Whereas many agents initially exhibit dissonance (i.e., a disjunction) between their attitudes and choices, toward the end of this period their anti-Semitic attitudes and choices become consonant (i.e., internally consistent). Experiments and parameter studies using this model indicate that different distributions of benefits and costs, changed legitimacy of authority, and different values of anti-Semitism of influential agents can modify the growth of prejudice, Nazism, and genocidal choices in these Monte Carlo runs. The results clarify the conflicting interpretations of Goldhagen and Browning concerning the genocidal actions of a battalion of perpetrators and the role of propaganda in reducing moral costs. Six hypotheses that focus the testing of the model can be generalized creating insights about other genocides.†

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Call for Submissions: States, Power, and Societies Volume 16 #2-3.

We invite your commentaries and suggestions for symposia for the next volumes. I have invited contributors for the last three issues but would be delighted to have input from section members. Please continue to send abstracts of your recently published books, articles, completed dissertations, announcements of meetings, or other opportunities that you think would be of interest to our section members. Your input is welcome!

**Please send your comments and submissions to Kathleen C. Schwartzman
(polsoasa@email.arizona.edu)**