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Message from the Chair

Teaching Theory to Non-Theorists

By Janet Saltzman Chafetz

Given my choice of miniconference topic and earlier essays published in the pages of this newsletter, it should be apparent that my approach to theory stresses its intimate connection with the kinds of research and applied work that our sociological colleagues do who do not define themselves as theorists. To make theory more relevant to these colleagues, we must begin by examining the way we educate the next generation of sociologists. This topic has been raised by a number of Theory Section members in the past few years as something the section ought seriously to discuss. Few departments fail to require at least one theory course of graduate students, but apparently the content and goals of such courses vary widely. Substantive courses/seminars often include at least some "middle range" theory, but probably of highly variable scope and depth. How should we go about educating students who will mostly not come to consider themselves "theorists"?

Were I in a position to design the ideal graduate curriculum for theory, I would do the following: (1) have as a prerequisite to entering graduate level theory courses an undergraduate course (or its equivalent) that focused on classical, 19th-mid-20th century sociological theories; (2) require two (semester) classes of all students, the first of which covered contemporary (mostly post 1965) theoretical issues and developments and the second of which focused on methods of theory development and the relationship between theory and research design, requiring a paper that develops the theoretical and research design sections of a dissertation-like proposal; (3) insist that all substantive seminars/

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Turner Will Edit *Sociological Theory*

Jonathan Turner, professor of sociology at the University of California, Riverside, has been named the next editor of *Sociological Theory* by the American Sociological Association's publications committee. He will edit the journal for three years, beginning in January 2000, which means his work

reviewing and selecting manuscripts will begin this summer. The next issue of this newsletter will have fuller information about the transition, including thoughts from Turner about the state of sociological theory and about how he hopes to guide the journal during his tenure.

The Top Ten Theory Query Trick Question or Innocent Inquiry?

By Christopher Schmitt

Editor's Note: Christopher Schmitt, the student at Oregon State who inspired Alan Sica's effort to compile a list of top ten readings, wrote to me for copies of the last several newsletters. In our correspondence, I was struck by his observation that most people whom he asked for a list of essential readings reacted with suspicion, as if he were asking a trick question. I asked him to reflect a bit on this, and to reflect upon some of the debate Sica's lists have generated.

Every answer offers a means to alienate listeners or politicize an otherwise innocent query.

Questions sometimes invite more than just answers. Ask anyone what their favorite books are and . . . um . . . well, it takes a little thought. The more people have read, the harder the question becomes. What a meager portion to share from a lifetime of reading! Academics also have a measure of "face" at stake by answering that question publicly, not really knowing to whom they are speaking (or who might overhear in a conference setting). There is something very telling about that kind of information. "Readers" and "non-readers" both know that, if only intuitively.

Clever guests glean information about new hosts by glancing at bookshelves and record collections, couples dating often try the same gambit, and Goffman would probably chuckle. Agendas and audience loom large in the world of questions and answers.

Editors and publishers would have other concerns as well. Do they mention books they are currently marketing? Suggest only in-house productions? What about a blend of classic and contemporary works? Postmodern? Feminist? Qualitative/Quantitative, etc.? Every answer offers a means to alienate listeners or politicize an otherwise innocent query. With so many camps, alliances, contracts and funding issues, sociology must surely qualify as a "hard" science by now. Some respondents noted the naivete of the question itself, and the point is well taken. Reading anyone's "top ten" theory books could never replace a lifetime of integrated scholarship. Theory is a taskmaster, not a thighmaster. I expect that's the point of graduate school being but the rite of passage into the field, not the true accolade of acceptance we seek from our mentors. This ritual begins in high school, when curriculum demands taking/teaching a subject (perhaps the ever-vilified statistics) without any more initial impetus or inspiration than it

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Educating Non-Theorists

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classes incorporate a significant amount of relevant general, as well as subject-specific theory; and (4) offer about four elective classes over a two-year period, each of which would focus on a different theoretical tradition in our discipline, with all students required to take at least one. If we did all this, we would be doing nothing more than that which departments routinely do to impart a knowledge of research methods (including statistics). On the basis of the job candidates my department has interviewed over the past twenty years—and in some cases hired—it is apparent to me that most neophyte sociologists have received very little of this kind of theory instruction, regardless of the prestige ranking of their doctoral institution.

To the extent that our discipline's goals are the development of better understandings of social life and the possibility of influencing public policy to reflect those understandings, we must learn to communicate theoretical ideas in ways that researchers and applied sociologists find informative and useful. Our journals require that those who would publish reports of research at least go through the motions of including a "theory section." No such requirement accompanies much applied and policy-oriented work. I suggest that, to the extent that sociologists wish to command respect from and exert influence on policymakers, their recommendations need to be theory driven as well as empirically supported. Sociologists cannot expect to develop workable solutions to social and organizational problems without understanding their underlying dynamics—a theoretical issue. Lacking good theory, only ideology can inform recommendations and influence is unlikely to expand to

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Perspectives is the newsletter of the Theory Section of the American Sociological Association. It is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October. The deadline for all submissions is the fifth day of the month before publication. We welcome news and commentary as well as announcements about conferences, journal information, calls for papers, position openings, and any other information of interest to section members.

Send submissions to: Joseph Hopper, University of Chicago, Cobb Box 164, 5845 S. Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637; phone (773) 702-3318; fax (773) 834-0493; e-mail jhopper@midway.uchicago.edu

Publishing Options in Social Theory

Rethinking Social and Political Theory in *Thesis Eleven*

By Peter Beilharz

Thesis Eleven was launched nineteen years ago to encourage the development of social theory in the broadest sense. The journal is international and interdisciplinary with a central focus on the theories of society, culture, and politics and the understanding of modernity.

Thesis Eleven publishes theories and theorists, surveys, critiques, debates and interpretations. The journal also brings together articles on place, region, or problems in the world today, encouraging civilizational analysis and work on alternative modernities from fascism and communism to Japan and South-east Asia. Marxist in origin, postmarxist by necessity, the journal is vitally concerned with change as well as tradition.

The identity of the journal, like its location, is multiple: European in the continental sense, but also transatlantic and colonial. The journal translates European social theory, mainstream and marginal, and it also takes theory from the margins of the world system to the centres. *Thesis Eleven* is multidisciplinary reaching across the social sciences and liberal arts (sociology, anthropology, philosophy, geography, cultural studies, literature and politics) cultivating a diversity of critical theories of modernity across both the German and French senses of critical theory. We publish social theory, rather than sociological theory, across the radical spectrum.

Each issue of the journal contains a review section including review articles

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Theory for the New Century in *International Sociology*

By Saïd Amir Arjomand

We should outgrow the notion that sociological theory is nothing but the perpetual exegetical elaboration of the works of the discipline's founding fathers, and should contemplate new theoretical horizons for a new historical era. Coming on the crest of continuous technological and sociocultural change, the dramatic political events of 1989 marked a turning point in world history as major as the industrial and democratic revolutions. The "long twenty-first century" they have opened foreshadows a global social transformation as momentous as the great transformation that gave birth to classical sociology. Taking over the editorship of *International Sociology* in this historical context is a great privilege and challenge.

The International Sociological Association celebrated its fiftieth anniversary last year, and its journal, *International Sociology*, now entering its fourteenth year, must meet its responsibility of publishing theoretically informed studies of the highest quality in social organization, societal change and comparative sociology. Furthermore, as sociology matures in different regions of the world, the journal will also reflect the growing varieties and refractions of classical sociological theory. At the same time, it can and should meet the intellectual challenge of our time. Major themes of classical sociological theory have gained new life with globalization, the expansion of the market economies, democracy, the rule of law

and human rights, the growth of modern culture and transformations of the world religions through the inner dynamics as well as the dialogue and clash of civilizations. We have entered a new age of institutional reconstruction in many parts of the world, and of virulent ethnic and national conflict, genocide, civil wars and social disintegration in others. It is natural for *International Sociology* to be in the forefront of research in all these fields. Such research requires the development of

We should outgrow the notion that sociological theory is nothing but the perpetual exegetical elaboration of the works of the discipline's founding fathers.

an adequate conceptual language for the understanding of the great social transformation of the long twenty-first century.

Our handicap in understanding the new age of social transformation with the concepts and mechanistic transhistorical explanations of social change forged for the experience of the industrial revolution is by now evident. The failure of much of classical and twentieth-century sociology to deal satisfactorily with temporality, culture, politics and human agency is widely acknowledged. It is equally evident that the claims of earlier theories of social change and modernization to transhistorical validity cannot be sustained in the face of divergent paths of social development and multiple modernities. It is interesting to note that very promising paradigms for understanding the role of culture, politics and agency in the new age of social transformation can be found in the interpretive and comparative explanations of

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Multidisciplinary Journal in Social Theory

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and reviews of the latest publications in social theory. We routinely carry the views of writers like Bauman, Markus, Wallerstein, Touraine, Luhmann, Jay, Castoriadis, and Heller, who have long been associated with the journal. Recent essays include Rabinbach on utopia, Gonzalez Casanova and Lara on Mexico, Wieviorka on racism, and Bobbio on revolution; recent issues include numbers on romanticism, Southeast Asia, and money; and we do theme issues, e.g. on Castoriadis, Luhmann, Canetti. We carry interviews, e.g. with Taylor and Melucci, reviews and discussion. Future contributions include Jeff Alexander on Touraine, Peter Wagner on Americanism, a review essay on the work of Craig Calhoun, issues on 'Pacific Horizons' and Southeast Asia, an issue on civilizational theory and a special issue for Agnes Heller.

We publish social theory, rather than sociological theory, across the radical spectrum.

We solicit a good deal of our material; we are less a professional than an intellectual journal. We are keen to receive suggestions for papers or clusters of papers rather than always the routine submission of academic papers out of the blue. Review takes at least three months and is peer-based, relying on intensive editorial participation. Our acceptance rates are relatively low, as many papers submitted are decent but too routinely academic and predictable, i.e. could be published almost anywhere else. So we are very happy to receive papers, but also connections of a more lateral kind to try out ideas. We'd like

Candidates Nominated for Section Offices Integrated ASA Elections Scheduled for May

The Nominations Committee has completed its work and forwarded to the ASA its slate of candidates for Theory Section offices.

The two candidates for chair are Ron Burt at the University of Chicago and Doug Heckathorn at the University of Connecticut.

The four candidates for two slots on the council are Jorge Ardití at the University of Buffalo, Lynn Chancer at Columbia University, Mark Schneider at Southern Illinois University, and Robin Wagner-Pacifici at Swarthmore College.

This year we will also elect a new secretary-treasurer to serve a three-year

term. The two candidates for this position are Murray Webster at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, and James Farganis at Vassar College.

All candidates have agreed to serve, and have forwarded biographical information to the ASA offices in Washington. Section members will receive a single ballot sometime in May for all ASA

and section elections. Candidate profiles will arrive with the ballot.

The Nominations Committee members are Guillermino Jasso (chair), Randall Collins, Rogers Brubaker, Eviatar Zerubaval, and Doyle McCarthy.

Candidates for chair:

Ron Burt
Doug Heckathorn

Candidates for the council:

Jorge Ardití
Lynn Chancer
Mark Schneider
Robin Wagner-Pacifici

Candidates for secretary-treasurer:

James Farganis
Murray Webster

to continue to develop in areas we have worked for twenty years, but we are open to new ideas, and like to cover things we haven't already.

Thesis Eleven is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by Sage Publications. Co-ordinating editors are Johann P. Arnason, Peter Beilharz, and Trevor Hogan. To submit manuscripts or for general inquiries, contact us at: *Thesis Eleven*, School of Sociology, Politics and Anthropology, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria 3083, Australia. Telephone 61 3 9479 1467 or 61 3 9479 2690; fax 61 3 9479 2705; e-mail thesis11@sociology.resfss.latrobe.edu.au.

The Ideal Curriculum in Sociological Theory

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others who are not already fellow believers.

Our goals ought to be to instill in students the idea that *all* sociology is—or at least should be—theoretical, and the knowledge and skills to make that goal a reality. I offer these comments in the hope that they will stimulate discussion and debate before and during the ASA meetings this summer.

Getting to the Point with Aphorisms

By Murray S. Davis

Social theorists have paid far more attention to a social theory's content than to its presentation. But the form of its presentation determines how its content is received. Nearly all social theories today are presented in article format, which may be the best way to elaborate a few ideas, but which is an inefficient way to disseminate the many ideas that others may find worth elaborating. (The book format, to simplify my thesis here, is merely a sequence of articles focused on a common topic.)

Social theorists can maximize the number of ideas in circulation by diversifying the formats through which they disseminate them.

Journal publication today demands that writers puff up the kernel of an idea

Writers puff up the kernel of an idea into the popcorn of an article.

into the popcorn of an article, and that readers recompress what the writers decompressed. It would be more efficient to supplement the article format with a format that simply gives the reader the basic idea, saving him or her the bother of recreating it (e.g., by underlining or highlighting the article to de-emphasize its superfluous words). The most effective of these minimal conceptual formats (which include the scientific proposition and the abstract) is the aphorism.

At the beginning of modern science, Sir Francis Bacon (*The Advancement of Learning*[1605] in *Francis Bacon: A Critical Edition*. ed. Brian Vickers. London: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 234-235) enumerated the benefits of presenting ideas in aphorisms rather than articles:

"...Writing in aphorisms has many excellent virtues whereto writing in

[articles] does not approach[:] For first, it [tests] the writer, whether he be superficial or solid: for aphorisms...cannot be made but of the pith and heart of sciences; for discourse of illustration is cut off; recitals of examples are cut off; discourse of connection and order is cut off; descriptions of practice are cut off. So there remains nothing to fill the aphorisms but some good quantity of observation... [Whereas in articles] 'such is the power of order and connection, such the beauty that may crown the commonplace,' that a man shall make a great show of an art, which, if it were disjointed, would come to little.... And lastly, aphorisms, representing a knowledge broken [i.e., incomplete], do invite men to inquire further; whereas [articles], carrying the

show of a total, do secure men, as if they were at furthest [i.e., give the false sense of security of fully understanding the subject]."

Bacon had the prescience to predict the distortion produced if the article ever supplanted the aphorism completely to become the sole literary vehicle that delivers knowledge: the intellectual excitement dissipated by articles, which elaborate relatively few new ideas, will no longer be regenerated by aphorisms, which disseminate relatively many fresh ideas for potential elaboration.

To illustrate this aphoristic mode of social theorizing, some of my aphorisms on the generation and confirmation of ideas will appear over the next few issues of *Perspectives*. Unlike articles whose goal is to win assent, these aphorisms are designed to provoke thought, if only disagreement.

Aphorisms from *THE WORLD TURNED INSIDE OUT: Pointillistic Reconceptions of Human Experience* by Murray S. Davis.

§ The natural scientist's desire to go beneath the surface of nature to discover its basic structure originates in the more fundamental desire to go behind the person's mask to discover the authentic human being. Corollary: Natural science flourishes during pretentious historical periods when people are especially prone to wear masks, making authenticity an issue (e.g., Puritan England, Victorian England, perhaps America today).

§ Since the natural sciences have much higher status than the social sciences, the social sciences can gain credibility for their paradigms by circulating them through the natural sciences: Natural selection, for instance, was first discovered in society, then found in nature, and finally reapplied to society as natural and therefore as normative.

§ Quantitative scientists who claim to be empirical are not empirical enough: not only is number just one aspect of experience, but they do not even experience most numbers they work with directly—only mediated through their instruments—and they manipulate these numbers through idealist processes (mathematical formulas) that, even though their connection with the underlying phenomena is nebulous, magically produce results they regard as true.

§ Quantification is the least insightful method by which to study

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A Journal for the New Millennium

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the transformation of societal structures and institutions of the ancient world in Max Weber's sociology of religion. But this is only one possible starting point, and *International Sociology* will remain open to the diversity of theoretical approaches. The main objective of our editorial policy will be to facilitate the gradual and painstaking growth of a new, empirically-informed theoretical language based on the observation, not just of the Western world, but of all the worlds of the new millennium. Journals such as the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, *Année Sociologique* and *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, played a major role in the development of the conceptual languages of the social sciences in the twentieth century. *International Sociology* should similarly serve as the forum for the development of the theoretical language of sociology in the twenty-first century.

Manuscripts may be sent to: Saïd Amir Arjomand, Editor-in-Chief, *International Sociology*, Department of Sociology, State University of New York, Stony Brook, NY 11794-4356. Telephone (516)751-1841; fax (516)632-8203; e-mail sarjoman@notes.cc.sunysb.edu.

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being a core/job requirement. Scholarship has become academic. This "postmodern" age doesn't make for good integration or application. What happened to reading because it taught us something we *wanted* to know, for help in seeing the big picture, or in understanding the smaller, more personal vignettes? Books mean different things as we age, but rarely lose value.

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human beings (unlike nature), for their most distinctive traits are precisely the unquantifiable ones that distinguish them from nature.

- § Positivists poke the external world and *it* tells what the poking felt like (i.e., how their experiment turned out); phenomenologists are poked by the external world and *they* tell what the poking felt like (i.e., how their experience changed).
- § If phenomenologists discover the way the world looks from the point of view of human beings, positivists discover the way the world looks from the point of view of their techniques and technology for measuring it.
- § Phenomenologically, for social scientists, the world shrinks to fill the methodology available for studying it.
- § Positivists tend to certify the kind of knowledge their current methods make easy to certify. Phenomenologists can provide the kind of knowledge worth the effort to develop new methods to certify.
- § The most acclaimed new social theorists go beyond the classical social theorists by extending their ideas. The most original ones intentionally disregard these traditional destinations and head somewhere else, leaving it to future historians to expand the

domain of social theory enough to include them in its fold.

- § Hegel, who tries to locate every idea in a philosophical system, Parsons, who tries to locate every activity in a social system, and normal science (as interpreted by Thomas Kuhn), which tries to locate every research project in a paradigmatic system, all share a common belief: only what can be systematized is real, or at least important.
- § Social scientists can discover the formal requirements of social theories by devising those that lack them: Such a *minimalist social theory* would contain propositions about the social world without: (1) applications, (2) qualifications, (3) confirmations, (4) connections with intellectual traditions, (5) locations in propositional systems, or (6) implications for future research.
- § The social theory Hobbes implicitly tried to refute: 1. Man is naturally social. 2. Human life is communal, rich, enjoyable, angelic, and long. 3. The natural state of man: peace of all with all. 4. Central problem: how is disorder possible? That sounds like Rousseau, though he had not been born yet. Apparently a social theory implicitly creates the very conceptual alternatives its future critics can attack it with.

As an aside, the actual request was for lists of favorite books, theoretical, sociological, or otherwise. With all the hubbub of a theory miniconference, many (not surprisingly) interpreted it more narrowly, limiting it to the field of sociological theory. Some went more the "roots" route, referring back to philosophy, psychology and other eclectic approaches. Surprisingly few volunteered the timeless literature of

Cervantes, Steinbeck, Shakespeare and the host of others who put skin, meat and heart back on the ol' theoretical bones.

But despite initial reluctance on the part of some, most everyone provided a list of what to read. More importantly, they debated with emotion over *how* to read it. Best of all, I have not one, but many answers to my question. Thank you all!

Theory in the Curriculum Teaching Theory For Sociology Students: Junior Notes

By *Mathieu Deflem*

Recent issues of this newsletter have offered exciting exchanges on the role of theory in our discipline. However, some elements concerning theory, especially its teaching, were absent, in part because as expert scholars we sometimes forget our mission as instructors. These risks affect all subfields of sociology, but especially sociological theory, presumably because of its somewhat esoteric qualities. We therefore need to remind ourselves often that we teach theory to instruct students, not to amuse ourselves. More generally, my suggestions are rooted in ongoing debates regarding the functions of higher education and the increasingly challenged role of the teacher (see R.N. Bellah, "Freedom, Coercion, and Authority," *Academe*, January-February, 1999). I will offer two pieces of advice that have served me well in my own teaching. As the subtitle of this essay indicates, I also confess that I am less than three years out of graduate school, blessed with the good fortune of teaching a graduate course in (contemporary) sociological theory.

1) Teaching sociological theory should be aimed at *presenting the broad diversity* of theoretical perspectives in our discipline. The recent 'top-ten' lists in this newsletter sometimes seemed to reveal more about the particular stance of the author than about our collective mission as representatives of a theoretical tradition. Yet, in our teaching of theory, particularly, we should be inspired by a broad representational concept of theoretical work, much like the model Donald Levine suggested a few years

ago (*Perspectives*, Summer, 1997). Particularly under present conditions of an ever-increasing theoretical pluralism, theory instructors need to be more responsible than ever in recognizing and presenting theoretical diversity. It cannot be legitimate, nor is it unavoidable, that general courses in sociological theory are conducted from the particularistic theoretical perspective the instructor favors and/or is more familiar with. A course that devotes four times more attention to Marx than to Durkheim because the teacher happens to be an adherent of Marxism cannot rightfully claim to offer instruction in classical sociological theory. The syllabus of such a class can be added to a teaching compendium on 'Teaching Sociology from a Marxist Perspective' but not on teaching theory for sociologists.

Instructing theory should be based on instructors' skills and knowledge of the field, not their positioning in rival camps. In my own graduate course on contemporary sociological theory, I therefore define the subject matter broadly as theories that 'follow and are somehow rooted in the classics.' Also, the variety of theories reviewed is explicated as being necessarily selective but not arbitrary, surveying both the more traditional schools and some of the most recent developments.

2) In our teaching (as through our research) we should *strive towards de-mythifying* sociological theory. We often lament the ambivalent place of theory in the discipline. As practitioners of theory, we sometimes feel underappreciated despite the very best of our efforts. But the ghettoization of theory is as much a function of the way theorists present their work as of the manner in which they are perceived by others. Particularly troublesome is the fanciful manner in which theory is often portrayed as a complex muddle of big words that lack any clear referent.

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The State of Social Theory

A review of the current state of sociological theory, written by Charles Camic and Neil Gross, is featured in the 1998 edition of the *Annual Review of Sociology*, Volume 24, edited by John Hagan and Karen S. Cook. The abstract is reproduced below.

CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: Current Projects and Conditions of Possibility

By *Charles Camic and Neil Gross*

This paper characterizes the field of sociological theory since the mid-1980s as the site of eight active and diverse intellectual projects. These projects are (I) to construct general analytical tools for use in empirical social research, (II) to synthesize multiple theoretical approaches; (III) to refine existing theoretical research programs; (IV) to stimulate dialogue among different theoretical perspectives; (V) to enlarge and reconstruct current theoretical approaches conceptually, methodologically, socially, and politically; (VI) to analyze a range of past theoretical ideas; (VII) to offer a diagnosis of contemporary social conditions; and (VIII) to dissolve the enterprise of sociological theory. We discuss the contours of these projects and identify some of the major ideas and theorists associated with each. We conclude with a brief discussion of the organizational structure of the contemporary theory field, observing that most current theoretical projects are formulated with insufficient attention to their conditions of possibility.

Demystifying Theory for Students

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But stylish references to the obscure schemas of fashionable European theorists with poorly pronounced names do not contribute to the validity of theory, nor to its acceptance by our peers. Such an attitude can only alienate sociologists, theorists included.

One of the most beneficial ways to demystify theory is to relate our concerns to those of the various substantive sociological subfields (see J.S. Chafetz, "Communicating with Non-Theorists," *Perspectives*, October, 1998). Even Talcott Parsons realized that theory is "justified only by its usefulness in understanding the facts of empirical experience" (*The Structure of Social Action*, 1949 edition, p.69). Yet, we cannot conceive of outreach to the research community as a one-sided discussion in which the theory expert would have privileged status. We can only talk with somebody to whom we listen. Thus, we should ourselves—more than we do now—actively engage in applying theory to the substantive issues that move societies.

I obviously agree with Andrew Abbott that theory is always about the book of

social life (*Perspectives*, October, 1998, p.4). But I would add that theory is also about how to read and how to write. We should apply theory, but we should also study and instruct the techniques and tools of being theoretical and doing theory. In my own teaching, the course objectives are *both* to reach an accurate comprehension of a theory in its own terms and to apply and empirically examine theoretical ideas to substantive social issues. The required readings, therefore, include conceptual papers as well as applied works.

In relation to teaching, demystification also involves integration of theory in the sociology curriculum and departments. There should be a place for theory as an indispensable component of the instructional program in all departments, for we teach theory for all sociologists. This is not a call for a despecialization. Our discipline needs specialists in analyzing and developing theory, just as badly as it needs specialists in analyzing and developing new statistical procedures: some, but not a lot. But our discipline needs all scholars of social life to always also be specialists in using and applying theory. In our teaching, we should not aim to produce advanced students in sociological theory, but advanced scholars in sociology, some of whom are theorists.

Theory Section Day Tuesday, August 10, 1999

The 94th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association will take place August 6-10, 1999 in Chicago, Illinois. The theory section miniconference and other sessions organized by the section, the section business meeting, and the section's annual reception will be held on Tuesday, August 10. The chair has put together an outstanding miniconference that will address questions about how to communicate with other researchers in sociology and with policy-oriented researchers. There will also be a topics session and a roundtables session. Full program information will be listed in the July issue of this newsletter. Two awards will be presented at the annual reception: the Theory Prize (this year being given for an article) and the Shils-Coleman graduate student award. All section members are welcome to the annual business meeting as well, where we will nominate and vote on several important positions for section committees.

Theory Section Committees 1998-1999

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