Message from the New Editor of Sociological Theory
Activist Editing with an Open Mind

By Jonathan Turner

I am honored to be named editor of Sociological Theory. Years ago, Randall Collins and I conceptualized the journal (sitting in a bar in Pasadena, for reasons that I do not remember), but in the end, he did all of the work in making the journal a reality (I am much better at conceptualization than doing anything in the empirical world). The section owes Randy a debt for his work in creating the first book-format issues and, later, the regular journal-style issues.

I have no grandiose plans for the journal, but I do have a number goals that I will seek to realize. First, I would like to see the journal expanded to four issues a year from the current three. This will be a top priority which, I gather, will be complicated by the renegotiation of the contract with the publisher by ASA (although this might be a very good time to put the pressure on). Second, I would like to expand the size of each issue to at least one additional article, and perhaps more. Third, I will seek to change the format somewhat to a more traditional format where the contents are on the cover.

As for editorial policies, my biases are well known, and, obviously, I will be sympathetic to articles that try to explain empirical events. I will actively seek

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Studying Theorists’ Views of Theory

By Steven Brint and James LaValle

Theory has been a notoriously divided field in sociology virtually from the beginning. This is true both in relation to the philosophical assumptions of theorists and their substantive conclusions. Indeed, the field can be divided in an almost limitless number of ways. Philosophically, the conflicts between formal theorists, empirically-grounded positivists, historicists, and interpretivists are still far from being settled. Substantively, are there four major schools, as Collins’ Four Sociological Traditions argues? Or are there seven major schools (and 37 important variants), as the latest edition of The Structure of Sociological Theory suggests? Should we be moving toward synthesis, or do the hopes of some for theoretical consolidation remain premature?

Although important divisions in the field are evident, the views of theorists as a body about these divisions and about the purposes of theory are not as evident. We can see that a variety

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Studying Emotions Requires Theory and Method

This note is in response to a passing comment made by Andrew Abbott (in the October issue), in the context of his essay on the top ten theorists. I agree with him when he states that top tens in social science usually ignore emotions. But he goes on to say that emotions’ “best investigators are without question novelists.” I agree that precise, lifelike descriptions of emotional states lie near the core of a novel’s appeal, and that such descriptions are also valuable in helping us to understand emotions. But they are not enough for social science, since novelists, even modern ones, lack theory and method. Indeed, theory and method are anathema to them.

But without theories and methods, advances have been slow to the point of standstill. As Virginia Woolf remarked more than half a century ago, the passions are still uncharted. In the last forty years, there have been several social science studies which advanced knowledge of emotions, mainly through detailed descriptions of emotional states using verbatim texts: two examples would be studies by Norbert Elias and by Helen Lewis. Both of their works also employed the rudiments of a theory and a method. But their treatment of theory and method was exceedingly spare compared to their detailed analysis of the textual data. Their work was innovative and original, but interpretation of it still suffers from the relative absence of explicit theory and systematic methods.

In my opinion, the study of emotions which shows the best balance between theory, method, and data, treating each almost equally, is a study of four marital quarrels by Suzanne Retzinger: Violent Emotions: Shame and Rage in Marital Quarrels. She used videotapes of quarrels to analyze the interchange of emotions between marital partners. Her theory is derived from classic (Simmel and Marx) and current studies of emotions. Her method for identifying hidden emotions was developed by combining earlier studies of verbal and nonverbal cues. In terms of balance between theory, method, and data, I think that this book is the best yet written about emotions, far better than anything of mine. Like the work of Elias and Lewis, it represents a significant advance over Tolstoy, Lady Murasaki, Austen, and Eliot in charting of the passions.

Tom Scheff

Letters to the Editor

Survey of Section Members Underway

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of different work is published, but this in itself does not measure the current state of thinking about theory in the field. Indeed, a tendency may exist for theorists to exaggerate the importance of their opponents. In a divided area, everyone feels embattled to a significant degree. But what are the real lines of division? How many theorists are aligned with each position? Are these lines of division correlated with demographic characteristics or organizational positions? And, perhaps most important for future development, is there a greater consensus among theorists than many of us have been led to believe?

These are the issues and questions that led us to develop a survey to investigate theorists’ views of theory. We fully recognize that theory development is and should be far from an opinion poll, but we also believe that the field can profit from the collective self-understanding conveyed through the results of a survey.

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New ST Editor will be an Activist One

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such articles, and I invite authors to submit theoretical explanations to me, once I assume editorial responsibilities for new submissions over the summer. While I have strong opinions about what sociological theory should be, I am open to other kinds of intellectual activities that define sociological theory. Commentary and analysis of the masters, metatheorizing on the theories of others or schools of thought, epistemological debates, critical theories of all varieties, and other types of theoretical work are welcome.

I am also open to special issues, symposia, commentaries, and other formulas that will increase dialogue and discussion in theory. In particular, I would be receptive to symposia on important theoretical works, on a significant theorist, or on a particular style or genre for doing theory.

As for editorial style, I will be an activist editor. There are two ways to edit a journal. One is to send articles that are submitted out for reviews and let the reviewers be judge and jury on an article’s acceptability. The second is to use the reviews as one input into a decision-making process that ultimately is in the editor’s kitchen. I am the second type of editor. I will try my best to get reviews from those who would be sympathetic to the particular genre in which an article is written, but I will also make my own independent judgment on the merits of the article. In this vein, I am not a big believer in “revise and resubmit,” perhaps because my own work almost always has suffered this fate. I am much more likely to reject or offer a conditional acceptance (if certain criticisms are met) and not send the article out for review again (beyond my own re-reading). This editorial philosophy places more discretion in my hands,
Theory at the ASA Meetings

Miniconference Spotlight on Theory for Non-Theorists

By Janet Saltzman Chafetz

An exciting set of three miniconference sessions should keep you at this summer’s ASA meetings until the last minute of the last day. The conference will begin with a session organized by Doug Heckathorne on “Improving Theory Education for Graduate Students,” at which Robert Antonio, Willie Jasso and Alan Sica will join Doug in a panel discussion. For the past few years, the issue of graduate theory education has been touted by many section members as one that requires examination, discussion and possible reformulation. Given my interest in how we can better communicate with non-theorists, I am eagerly awaiting the opportunity to hear how some of our colleagues, who have thought seriously about this issue, propose that we should begin that process by educating students who will mostly not become theorists themselves. There should be ample opportunity for audience members to add their diverse perspectives, resulting in what I expect—and hope—will be a contentious and therefore stimulating experience.

This session will be followed by one organized by Jon Turner on “Using Theory in Sociological Practice and Policy Formation,” in which papers will be presented by Jon, Ron Burt, Cecilia Ridgeway and Willie Jasso. Sociologists often bemoan our relative lack of influence on public policy. It seems to me that in order to command respect from, and the ear of, decision-makers, theory-driven, empirically supported recommendations are absolutely required. Bring your applied sociologist colleagues to this one!

I have organized the final session, “Communicating with the Research Community,” which is a somewhat more eclectic mix of papers to be presented by Donald Light, Murray Milner, David Sciulli, Randy Collins and Murray Webster. What they share in common is their scholarly excellence and the fact that they ground theory in concrete issues of contemporary social life. We should therefore end the miniconference with a keen sense of how, as theorists, we are making—and can better make—our work relevant and useful to colleagues throughout the discipline. I remain committed to the fundamental notion that sociological theory should, can, and sometimes does vitalize the research and applied components of our discipline, and the miniconference will be a wonderful showcase of that commitment.

The 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association will take place on August 6-10, 1999 in Chicago. The Theory Section has scheduled a miniconference consisting of three sessions, a session on “doing sociology”, a roundtables session, a business meeting, and a reception to be held jointly with the Section on Mathematical Sociology. All Theory Section events will be held on Monday, August 9 and Tuesday, August 10. Several other theory sessions have been organized by the ASA Program Committee as well, with topics ranging from the classics to new innovations in theory.

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MINICONFERENCE: COMMUNICATING WITH NON-THEORISTS
Monday, August 9 and Tuesday, August 10

I. Improving Theory Education for Graduate Students
Session 439. Monday, 4:30 p.m.-6:15 p.m.
Organizer and Presider: Douglas D. Heckathorne, University of Connecticut
Panel:
Robert Antonio, University of Kansas
Guillermina Jasso, New York University
Alan Sica, Pennsylvania State University

II. Using Theory in Sociological Practice and Policy Formation
Session 463. Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m.
Organizer and Presider: Jonathan H. Turner, University of California, Riverside
The Case for Sociology as an Engineering Discipline. Jonathan H. Turner, University of California, Riverside
Reputation as a Policy Variable. Ron Burt, University of Chicago
Status, Expectations, and the Level Playing Field. Cecilia L. Ridgeway, Stanford University

III. Communicating with the Research Community
Session 483. Tuesday, 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Organizer and Presider: Janet Chafetz, University of Houston
Explaining Status Relations: The Cases of Brahman, Nerds, and Sociological Theorists. Murray Milner, Jr., University of Virginia
Reconsidering Institutionalism. David Stiilli, Texas A&M University
Seven Cross-Disciplinary Ideas of the 20th Century Human Sciences. Randall Collins, University of Pennsylvania
The Importance of Rules of Correspondence in Theory Testing. Murray Webster, Jr., University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Deriving Policy Implications from Comparison Theory. Guillermina Jasso, New York University
Theory Section Offerings beyond the Miniconference

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Other Sessions Organized by the Theory Section

Doing Sociology: Issues in Theory and Practice

Session 506. Tuesday, August 10, 12:30 p.m.-2:15 p.m.
Organizer and Presider: Joan A. Iwaw, University of Miami
Talcott Parsons and the Disunity of Sociology. Harry F. Dahms, Florida State University
On Pretending Not to Know: Leo Strauss and the Historical Sense. James R. A. Brott, Rowan University
On Blau’s Interpretation of Simmel. Sandro Segre, Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy

Rowan University

On Blau’s Interpretation of Simmel. Sandro Segre, Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy
"On Pretending Not to Know: Leo Strauss and the Historical Sense. James R. A. Brott, Rowan University"

Theory Section Refereed Roundtables

Session 522. Tuesday, August 10, 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
Organizer: Harry F. Dahms, Florida State University
1. Rationality, Trust, and Society
Table Presider: Michael Christopher, Hawaii Trends Research Institute
A System Cybernetic Approach to Individual and Organizational Level Trust Formation. Malaya L. Oliver, Hebrew University, Israel
Self-Organization Theory and the Emergence of Social Solidarity and Rationality from the Unintended Consequences of Human Action. Michael Christopher, Hawaii Trends Research Institute

2. Perspectives on Marriage and Middle-Aged Women
Table Presider: Laura L. Sundell-Bahr, University of California, Riverside
Middle-Aged Women and Multiple-Role Anarchy: A Durkheimian Theoretical Argument for the Addition of a Fifth Type of Suicide. Laura L. Sundell-Bahr, University of California, Riverside

Table Presider: Susan Chimonas, University of Michigan
Sociology after the Demise of Humanism: A Lesson from Contemporary Science Studies. Daniel Breslau, Tel Aviv University, Israel

4. Theory and the Orient
Table Presider: Farzin Vahdat, Brandeis University
Is Critical Theory Relevant to Contemporary Middle East? Fazin Vahdat, Brandeis University
Orientalism and Sociology: The (Un)Happy Marriage? Jaejoun Won, University of California, Berkeley

5. Contemporary Theory: On Bourdieu and Coleman
Table Presider: A. K. Lareau, Temple University
Social Capital: Untangling the Differences between Coleman and Bourdieu. A. K. Lareau and Erin McNamara Hovat, Temple University
The Linguistic Bias in Bourdieu’s Theory. Nilo Kauppi, Academy of Finland

6. On Realism and Weber
Table Presider: Michael Meacham, Valdosta State University
In Defense of Realist Assumptions. Pidi Zhang, Georgia Southern University

7. From Neo-Marxism to Post-Marxism: Marcuse and Lacla
Table Presider: Paul C. Fuller, State University of New York, Buffalo
Post-Marxism: Underdetermination in Discourse Theory. Paul C. Fuller, State University of New York, Buffalo
From “Social Implications” to One-Dimensional Man: Herbert Marcuse’s Theory of the One-Dimensional Society. Black Hawk Hancock, University of Wisconsin, Madison

8. Theory and Culture
Table Presider: Thomas J. Burns, University of Utah
Epistemology and Culture: Some Social Implication of Human Cognition. Thomas J. Burns, University of Utah, and Terri L. E. Moore, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga

9. Instances of Critical Theory: Foucault and Habermas
Table Presider: Jorge Arditi, State University of New York, Buffalo
Self-Cultivation as a Microphysics of Reverence: Towards a Foucauldian Understanding of Korean Culture. Jorge Arditi and Minjoo Oh, State University of New York, Buffalo
Irreconcilable Paradigms of Critique?: The Unfinished Debate between Habermas and Foucault. Markus S. Schulz, Bauhaus University, Germany

Contemporary Academic Feminism in the UK and the USA, 1980-1998: Developing a...
The ASA Meetings in Chicago
Feminist Theory, Critical Theory, Teaching, and More

In addition to the theory sessions organized by our section, several other sessions devoted to sociological theory have been organized by the ASA Program Committee. They include sessions on feminist theory, critical theory, classics of sociological theory, and postmodern theory; there are also sessions devoted to teaching theory. These sessions are listed below.

**Intellectual Production and Social Theory**

Session 16. Friday, August 6, 8:30-10:15 a.m.
Organizer and Presider: Harvey Goldman, University of California, San Diego
The Experiential Bases of Social Thought. A. Rad Szakolczai, University College, Cork, Ireland

Whence Durkheim’s Nietzschean Grandchildren? A Look at Robert Hertz in the Durkheimian Genealogy. A. Rad Szakolczai, University of California, San Diego
Predecessor Selection and the Making of the Canon: Spencer’s Critics, Then and Now. Valerie A. Haines, University of Calgary

**Critical Theory**

Session 34. Friday, August 6, 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Organizer and Presider: Moishe Postone, The University of Chicago

The Critical Theory of the Modern State: Marcuse’s Departure from Frankfurt Orthodoxy. Stanley A. Ronowitz, City University of New York Graduate Center


Feminist Welfare Reform: Intimate Realms and Rationality. Suzanne T. Reading, University of California, Santa Cruz

Discussion: Peter Beliharz, La Trobe University, Australia

**Social Structure, Social Relationships, and Moral Order: Weber, Durkheim, and Others**

Session 60. Friday, August 6, 12:30-2:15 p.m.
Organizer: Harvey Goldman, University of California, San Diego
Presider: Steven A. Turner, University of South Florida

Stratification Theory and Research in Weimar Germany. Sandro Sgro, University of Genoa

Rationalism in the Wild West: Max Weber, Capitalism, and the Frontier. David N. Smith, University of Kansas


**Teaching Graduate Theory Courses**

A Teaching Workshop
Session 196. Saturday, August 7, 2:30 p.m.-4:15 p.m.
Aneke Kane, University of Texas, Austin

**Feminist Theory**

Session 229. Sunday, August 8, 2:30 p.m.-4:15 p.m.
Organizer: Joan Alway, University of Michigan
Presider: James A. Holstain, Marquette University

Gender Politics in Contemporary Taiwan: A Reflection of Feminist Methodology. Yun Fan, Yale University

Discussion: Jennifer Pierce, University of Minnesota

See MORE SESSIONS on Page 6

**Other Meetings Offer Theory Too**

The Society for the Study of Social Problems meets just before and during the ASA meetings in Chicago. They have organized two sessions that may be of special interest to section members. The first is focused on feminist theory, the second on social problems theory.

**Feminism and Social Problems**

Session 14. Thursday, August 5, 1:00-2:45 p.m.
Location: The Fribourg Suite at The Swissôtel
Organizer and Presider: Carol Brooks Gardner, Indiana University

Co-parenting and Gender Equality: A Reexamination of Nancy Chodorow’s Contribution. Mary G. Gwendy


Feminist Caucuses: Theorizing Challenges. Benita Roth, Binghamton University


**Social Problems Theory at Century’s End**

Session 48. Friday, August 6, 3:00-4:45 p.m.
Location: The Vevey Suite at The Swissôtel
Organizer: Donileen R. Loseke, University of South Florida
Presider: James A. Holstain, Marquette University

The Practical Relevance of Social Constructionism? Gale E. Miller, Marquette University

Heroic, Tragic and Comic Stances in Social Problems Analysis. Joel Best, Southern Illinois University

Appropriating Problems: The Use of People and Conditions in Social Problems Discourse. J. William Spencer, Purdue University

Constructionism Reconsidered: Toward a Dialogic Model of Social Problems Claim-Making. Lawrence T. Nichols, West Virginia University
Sessions in Chicago Will Feature Theory

MORE SESSIONS from Page 5

**Postmodern Theory**

Session 306. Sunday, August 8, 4:30-6:15 p.m.
Organizer: Douglas Kalmar, University of California, Los Angeles
Presider: Ben Agger, University of Texas, Arlington
Society, Science, and Human Identity: Postmodern Paradigm Shifts and Coevolution. Steven Best, University of Texas, El Paso
The Empirical Use of Postmodern Theories. Douglas Godman, University of Maryland
Discussion: George Ritzer, University of Maryland

**Frontiers of Theory**

Open Refereed Roundtables
Session 274. Sunday, August 8, 2:30-4:15 p.m.
Organizer: Christopher K. Vanderpool, Michigan State University

**On the International Scene**

**Moscow Conference on Intellectuals and Society**


This conference is the third in a series of international conferences about intellectuals and society. It is being organized by the Interregional Centre for Advanced Studies in cooperation with the Moscow State University, the Historical Division of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Editorial Board of the journal Problems of History. The aim of the conference is to bring together researchers working in various fields for an interdisciplinary discussion on the past, present and future of intellectuals. The conference will examine the following themes: (1) intellectual labor, (2) psychological and sociological portraits of intelligentsia, (3) humanist values and economy, (4) intelligentsia in the labyrinth of cultural evolution in the twentieth century, (5) the university as citadel of knowledge versus the marketplace of professions, (6) the moral and ethical responsibility of intelligentsia for advanced studies in science and humanities applications, and (7) intelligentsia and the world. For more information, contact the conference organizer: Alexander I. Studenikin, Department of Theoretical Physics, Moscow State University, 119899 Moscow, Russia, telephone 7-095-939-50-47, fax 7-095-939-29-91, 932-88-20, studenik@srdlan.npi.msu.su; or Andrey Egorov, secretory of the conference, ane@srdlan.npi.msu.su.
How to Submit to Sociological Theory

As of July 1, 1999 send manuscripts to Sociological Theory, Department of Sociology, University of California-Riverside, 900 University Avenue, Riverside, CA 92521
How Theorists See Theory

**SURVEY from Page 2**

Therefore, we received permission from Janet Chafetz, the current chair of the theory section, to mail surveys to a random sample of members of the ASA theory section with the intent of understanding more about theorists’ views of theory.

In March, half of the American members of the ASA’s Theory Section (231 people) received a three-page questionnaire asking for answers to 12 substantive and four demographic questions. (We wanted to keep the questionnaire short in the hope of increasing the response rate.) So far as we know this is the first survey study of theorists’ views of theory. The substantive questions asked theorists to name (1) the key authors they teach in courses on the classical period, (2) the works they consider most important from the classical period, (3) the works they would consider dropping from the “canon” of the classical period, (4) works they would consider adding to the “canon”, (5) the key authors they teach in courses on the contemporary period, and (6) works they consider to be part of the “emerging canon” of contemporary theory. The questionnaire also asked theorists to discuss (7) the emphasis of their courses in contemporary theory and to characterize (8) their own identity as a theorist in relation to 24 types of theorizing. We asked three questions about theorists’ understanding of Max Weber because we have a particular interest in the contemporary reception of Weber. (We intend to write a paper on Weber’s social theory and the reception of his work in American sociology.) The demographic questions asked theorists about their current position, institutional affiliation, age, and sex. We may also code region based on postmarks.

We have no interest in the names of the respondents to our surveys. For this reason, we asked that all surveys be returned to the project’s administrative assistant, Robin Whittington, rather than to us. Robin has the only copies of the list of names keyed to identification codes, and she has removed any identifying marks from the returned surveys.

After two mailings, the response rate to the survey has been just over 50 percent. We have more than 110 returned questionnaires. This response rate, while acceptable, is not as high as we would like. During the next month, we will therefore be contacting those of you who received copies of the questionnaire but did not respond. We hope that most of you who have not returned the surveys will want to participate, but we understand that some theorists may not find surveys an appropriate means of understanding theorists’ views of theory. Interestingly, we apparently have had a very good response from senior theorists, but not as strong a response from graduate students and new professors.

We hope to have the data analyzed by next September. If so, we will have a second installment in the fall edition of the newsletter detailing the findings of the survey.

**ROUNDTABLES from Page 4**

Comparative Perspective. Rachel Torr, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

10. **EUROPEAN & AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES**
Table Presider: Jeff Livesay, Colorado College
From Normative Structures to Moral Action: Bauman, Giddens, and Wolfe on Remoralization. Jeff Livesay and Monica Desmond, Colorado College
Returning to the Theoretical Dialogue: Mead’s Impact on Sociological Thought. Anne Eisenberg, University of North Texas

11. **POSTMODERNIST PERSPECTIVES**
Table Presider: Steve Sherlock, Saginaw Valley State University
Where Do You Want to Go Today: Computers and the Tourist Gaze. Steve Sherlock, Saginaw Valley State University
This is Leave-Taking: Mothers, Signatures, and Counter-Memory. Douglas Sadao Aoki, University of Alberta

12. **VALUES, BANKERS, AND CONSUMER CAPITALISM**
Table Presider: Paul Kamolnick, East Tennessee State University
Carnivals of Consumer Capitalism. Lauren Langman, Loyola University
Judenhass and Capital Fetishism, or: Why Anti-Semites Hate Bankers. David N. Smith and Christopher W. Gunn, University of Kansas
Simmel’s Conception of Value: Exposition and Critique. Paul Kamolnick, East Tennessee State University