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THE ASA  
THEORY  
SECTION  
NEWSLETTER

October 2002

# Perspectives

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 4

## Section Officers

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(see inside for phone, fax, &amp; e-mail)

Message from the Chair

## The Value of Theory

Linda Molm, University of Arizona

I'm sure that all of you who attended the recent ASA meetings in August returned with the same sense about the Theory Section as I did: that we are a vital, successful section, in excellent shape intellectually and financially. At a time when many other sections are struggling for survival, the Theory Section's membership, as of early September, was 630. Our past chair, Gary Alan Fine, put together an exciting program for the 2002 meetings, including a mini-conference on "Sociological Theory and Research" that included sessions on the relation of theory to both qualitative and quantitative research. This theme, like that of Gary's predecessor, Doug Heckathorn, was broadly inclusive of a range of different kinds of theoretical and empirical work.

There is a very good reason for the breadth of recent mini-conference topics: One of the most distinctive intellectual features of our section is the enormous diversity among our members in the kind of theoretical work that we do — indeed, in what we do and do not consider "theory" — and in how we use theory in our scholarly endeavors. We think of ASA sections as uniting scholars with common interests and points of view, but in the Theory Section, interests and points of view are highly variable. In many ways, our section is a microcosm of our discipline, representing the full diversity of theoretical perspectives — including classical, formal, contemporary, critical, postmodern, marxist, feminist, and more — and the full range of scholarly work using those perspectives. We have members who construct and de-

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## Nominations Invited for New Editor of *Perspectives*

The publications committee of the Theory Section (Robin Stryker, chair, Linda D. Molm, and Gary Alan Fine) is inviting applications and inquiries from section members interested in becoming the next editor(s) of *Perspectives*, the section's newsletter. The current editors, J. David Knottnerus and Jean Van Delinder, will publish their last issue in July 2003, and the first issue under the new editor will be in October 2003. Term of appointment is three years. The newsletter has been one of the central functions of the section, and has been recognized as one of the best section newsletters in the association. We

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velop theories, who interpret and critique theories of others, who use theory to guide empirical research, who derive theory from empirical research, and who use theory to challenge social institutions and other schools of sociological research. And I suspect that's far from a complete list of all of the ways we value and use theory.

Our diversity makes us an intellectually rich section, with a wealth of ideas and numerous opportunities for debate and growth. If you believe that you learn more from others who don't think like you, rather than from those who do, then you're in the right place. But communication across the different viewpoints of our members is often lacking. Even when mini-conference themes include sessions representing a broad range of theoretical work, it's all too easy to go to those in your own camp and avoid the others. Thus, I've tried to design the theme — and form — of our 2003 mini-conference to promote more interaction among, and learning from, the diverse perspectives of our membership. The theme of the 2003 mini-conference is "The Value of Theory." It will be comprised of three integrated sessions, each focused on one of three broad "schools" of theory: classical, formal and critical (with the latter broadly defined to include critical, postmodern, and feminist theory). I've asked Ira Cohen to organize the classical session, Cecilia Ridgeway to organize the formal session, and Charles Lemert to organize the critical session. Each is putting together a panel of distinguished scholars who will give their views

on the value, functions, and contributions of that school of theory. To provide continuity across the sessions and promote attendance at all three, I've asked each of the organizers to serve as a commentator at the other two sessions. Thus, each of the sessions will promote a dialogue among these three often contentious

**Our diversity makes us an intellectually rich section, with a wealth of ideas and numerous opportunities for debate and growth.**

branches of the section, with audience members contributing to the mix. It should be lively, fun, and informative. Intellectual sparks may fly, but that's all to the good. In addition to the three-session mini-conference, Jane Sell is organizing an open submission paper session on "Recent Advances in Theory," and Noah Mark is organizing our roundtables. I appreciate the hard work of all of these organizers.

While the mini-conference is unlikely to produce many converts to a fundamentally different view of theory, it should promote a better understanding of why we hold such divergent positions on what theory can and should be. My guess is that the reason is directly related to the title of the mini-conference, i.e., our different understandings of the value of theory: how we use theory and how theory advances our scholarly objectives. That is certainly true of different research methodologies. Much of the conflict that occurs between qualitative and quantita-

tive researchers, experimental and survey researchers, and structural versus processual field researchers stems from our tendency to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of one research tradition by the objectives of another. But if the objectives differ — as they do — then the criteria for evaluation should differ too. I believe the same is likely to be true of different schools of theory. We may question whether the objectives of other schools are worthy, and whether they will help to advance our discipline, but understanding that different kinds of theory may be used to meet different objectives is at least a step in the right direction.

Technological advances in the ability of our section membership to communicate with one another can also promote better understanding of our different approaches. ASA now provides all sections with both an Announcement List for the purpose of disseminating announcements and information to section members by email, and an Open Discussion List to be used as a forum for intellectual exchange. I plan to use the announcement list to assure that all members are fully informed of our activities and to try to increase attendance at both the mini-conference and the section's business meeting. Those who have announcements of interest to the membership should forward them to me for dissemination. The Open Discussion List, unlike the announcement list, is not "prepopulated" with email addresses of section members. Instead, section members who are interested in participating in the discussion list must subscribe to the listserv by using the instructions included elsewhere in the newsletter (see p. 6).

In closing, let me thank the many members of the section who help to keep it strong and growing. In particular, I'd like to thank Gary Alan Fine, our past Chair, for organizing a successful program and keeping the section running smoothly, and the two Council members whose terms ended this year — Jorge Ardit and

*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: J. David Knottnerus and Jean Van Delinder, Department of Sociology, CLB 006, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078-4062; fax (405) 744-5780; phone (405) 744-6106 (Knottnerus) or (405) 744-4613 (Van Delinder); e-mail [jdk2307@okstate.edu](mailto:jdk2307@okstate.edu) or [jlvan@okstate.edu](mailto:jlvan@okstate.edu)

## Section Officers' Biographies:

**N**ewly elected Theory Section Chair, Linda Molm, is Professor of Sociology at the University of Arizona. She has a long-standing interest in the experimental analysis of theories of social exchange, power, inequality, and justice. She recently completed a decade-long project on the study of coercive power in exchange relations, supported by the National Science Foundation. In her current research, she is investigating the impact of different forms of social exchange (negotiated, reciprocal, and generalized) on the development of trust and commitment in social relations, the role of risk in the process of building trust, and the perception that exchanges are fair and legitimate. She has just completed a four-year term as co-editor (with Lynn Smith-Lovin) of *Social Psychology Quarterly*.

Chair-Elect Michèle Lamont is Professor of Sociology at Princeton University. She has published widely in the fields of cultural sociology, inequality, race and immigration, comparative sociology, the sociology of knowledge, and contemporary sociological theory. Her most recent book is *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration* (winner of the 2001 Mattei Dogan Award for the Best Comparativist Book, Society for Comparative Research). Her ongoing projects include a study of criteria of evaluation used by members of funding panels in the social sciences and the humanities (funded by NSF); a pilot study of the anti-racist strategies used by African-American leaders; and, a short book on Culture and Inequality, to be published by W. W. Norton.

### Conference Call for Papers

On April 11-12, 2003, the Communitarian Network will be sponsoring a conference "The Ways We Celebrate: Holidays and Rituals as Seedbeds of Social Values," centered on holidays and rituals - their importance within society and as a field for academic study. At the conference, to be held at George Washington University, academics, journalists, social commentators and other distinguished individuals will consider issues related to the role of holidays and rituals in society in a series of presentations, panels and papers. Sessions and papers will be grouped along the lines of the following topics:

1. The role of holidays and rituals in socialization and reinforcement of values
2. Holidays and rituals as community builders and as diversifiers
3. The role of holidays and rituals in changing gender and kinship relations
4. What holidays and rituals teach us about the limits and opportunities for social engineering
5. Holidays and rituals: public vs. private

If you wish to present a paper, or serve as a chair or organizer of a session, please send a few lines describing your interest. All approved participants must register via post or e-mail. The cost of registration is \$50.00 before January 1, and \$75.00 thereafter. For additional information, and to submit paper proposals, papers, and registration forms, contact:

Elizabeth Tulis, The Communitarian Network, 2130 H Street, N.W., Suite 703, Washington, D.C. 20052 etulis@gwu.edu. 202.994.8167

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hope to continue that tradition.

If you have any interest or wish to nominate a colleague, contact Robin Stryker (stryker@atlas.socsci.umn.edu), Linda Molm (molml@email.arizona.edu), Gary Alan Fine (g-fine@northwestern.edu) or J. David Knottnerus (jdk2307@okstate.edu) and Jean Van Delinder (jlvand@okstate.edu).

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Robin Wagner-Pacifici — for their contributions over the past two years. And, a big thank you to the members who have agreed to chair or serve on section committees in the coming year (listed on p. 3). I appreciate your hard work on behalf of the section, and look forward to working with you and other section members in the year ahead.

### Theory Section Committees 2002-03

Nominations Committee:

Barbara Meeker (chair)  
Harry Dahms  
Gary Alan Fine  
Neil McLaughlin  
Richard Williams

Theory Prize Committee:

Michael Macy (chair)  
Randall Collins  
Paul DiMaggio  
Lynette Spillman  
Murray Webster

Shils-Coleman Prize Committee:

Shane Thye (chair)  
Spencer Cahill  
Ann Mische  
Gretchen Peterson  
Joachim Savelsberg

Membership Committee:

Robert Shelly (chair)  
Nina Eliasoph  
Christine Horne

## 2002 Theory Prize Award for Outstanding Book

R. S. Perinbanayagam, Hunter College of the City University of New York for *The Presence of Self* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000)

*The Presence of Self* by R. S. Perinbanayagam (Hunter College of the City University of New York) was awarded the 2002 Theory Prize by the Theory Section of the American Sociological Association. *The Presence of Self* completes a three-volume study of signs and signifying practices. Drawing on and then extending the ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce, George Herbert Mead, Kenneth Burke, Mikhail Bakhtin, Susanne Langer and others, Perinbanayagam focuses on social acts as essential and fundamental to being, specifically being human. Perinbanayagam places the act as rhetorical and dialogic to make the case for the self as a social being, and the act as communication. Perinbanayagam creatively draws upon sociological classics to articulate a novel research agenda, demonstrating how sociologists can draw on unconventional resources of literature and poetry. Chair, Theory Prize Committee, Jane Sell, Texas A&M University.

## New Book Announcement

*New Directions in Contemporary Sociological Theory*, Edited by Joseph Berger and Morris Zelditch, Jr.

### *Part I. Introduction*

Chapter Theory Programs, Teaching Theory, and Contemporary Theories by Joseph Berger and Morris Zelditch

### *Part II. Affect and Status*

Understanding Social Interaction with Affect Control Theory by David R. Heise

Expectation States Theory: An Evolving Research Program by David G. Wagner and Joseph Berger

### *Part III. Norms, Exchange, and Networks*

From the Emergence of Norms to Aids Prevention and the Analysis of Social Structure by Douglas D. Heckathorn

Network Exchange Theory by David Willer, Henry Walker, Barry Markovsky, Robb Willer, Michael Lovaglia, Shane Thye, and Brent Simpson

### *Part IV. Social Movements and Revolutions*

The Resource Mobilization Research Program: Progress, Challenge, and Transformation by Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy

Recent Developments in Critical Mass Theory by Pamela E. Oliver and Gerald Marwell

Theory Development in the Study of Revolutions by Jack A. Goldstone

### *Part V. Institutional Structures*

The Development and Application of Sociological Neo-Institutionalism by Ronald L. Jepperson

The Selectorate Model: A Theory of Political Institutions by Bruce Buena de Mesquita, James D. Morrow, Randolph Siverson and Alastair Smith

### *Part VI. Theory Construction and Theory Integration*

Theoretical Integration and Generative Structuralism by Thomas J. Fararo and John Skvoretz

Seven Secrets for Doing Theory by Guillermina Jasso

### *Part VII. Reflections on Careers in Theory*

Reflections on a Career as a Theorist by Peter M. Blau

The Itinerary of World-Systems Analysis, or How to Resist Becoming a Theory by Immanuel Wallerstein

### Special Features:

- Chapters are authored by eminent sociologists in a style accessible for a wide readership.
- Covers a broad range of sociological concerns, from the investigation of power and status processes, to social movements and revolutions, to organizational and institutional structures, to world-systems analysis.
- Each chapter describes “programs” of research which consist of interrelated theories and relevant empirical research.
- Most chapters describe the evolution of the theoretical research from its inception, through its growth, to its present status.

Joseph Berger and Morris Zelditch are professors of sociology at Stanford University.

August 2002 - ISBN 0-7425-0869-2 or ISBN 0-7425-0868-4

## Causal Theory vs. Descriptive Theory

Loren Demerath, *Centenary College of Louisiana*

Distinguishing between different kinds of theory, even valuing one over another, is something most of us engage in frequently and informally with colleagues and students. I hope this essay stimulates slightly more structured discussion than exchanging barbs over the watercooler. Here are my two cents:

Paralleling Ragin's (1987) distinction between case-oriented and variable-oriented research, I argue that we should distinguish between two kinds of theory: *causal theory* and *descriptive theory*. While these types of theory are different, they also serve each other — albeit not equally. Understanding the difference between two theories helps to undermine an unfair dichotomy between two types of research; namely, research which is structural, quantitative, and deductive, on the one hand, and that which is processual, historical, qualitative, and inductive, on the other hand. A better understanding of how the two kinds of theory that characterize these types of research are distinct, yet complimentary, should reduce the acrimony between these camps, and lead us all to produce more of both types of theory in our own work.

*Causal theory* generally explains variables at one point in time with reference to prior occurring variables. As examples, Durkheim and Weber explain suicide rates and capitalism respectively with prior occurring (or at least co-evolving) religious practices and beliefs. *Descriptive theory*, meanwhile, creates categorization schemes, leading to nominal variables, typologies, and narratives. Durkheim created a classification scheme of religion based on how social order buffers the effects of anomie. Weber created a classification scheme of religion based on

how work ethics are shaped by different religious theologies.

Durkheim and Weber obviously needed their respective classification schemes to construct their causal theories. But while we often need descriptive theory to construct causal theory, the reverse is not the case; to construct descriptive theory we do not need causal theory, and we are often better off without it all together. This point underlies the advice of Glaser and Strauss (1967) that we should use a minimum of prior conceptualizations of a phenomenon when constructing “grounded theory.” But such theory often fails to become causal, as researchers fear losing their groundedness. Instead, causes are identified in non-abstract, contextualized, atheoretical terms. I would argue, though, that being “ungrounded” is a necessary quality for causal theory as a different kind of theory that ultimately complements grounded descriptive theory and propels it forward.

To illustrate how causal and descriptive theory are incomparable yet complementary, I will use an analogy for each type of theory. We construct causal theory as if in a laboratory; protecting the elements we work with from contamination from other elements not through sealed doors and windows, but through abstraction. We keep the lab sterile by only allowing in elements that have been conceptually distinguished from others, and are each characterized by a single dimension. Once that is done we are able to posit and explore relationships between the elements.

We construct descriptive theory through ethnographic fieldwork, arriving at local truths the same way we arrive at experiential truths, by familiarizing ourselves with a context so thoroughly we acquire an intimate understanding of the details and nuances of that reality, right down to the feelings we experience in response to it. Then, through theoretical abstraction we create categorization schemes that comprehensively account for what we observe and experience, and are generic enough to be used to categorize

phenomena in similar realities we did not experience. Note that both kinds of theory construction use abstraction. But, descriptive theory depends on *contextualization* to make its scheme comprehensive. Causal theory, in contrast, depends on *isolation*.

The compatibility of these two kinds of theory lies in causal theory's need for dimensions of variation, and descriptive theory's ability to identify such dimensions. Categorization schemes begin the process by abstractly grouping different kinds of phenomena, sometimes including an ideal type, and then positioning one specimen relative to others. An ethnographer's intimate knowledge of a single society, for example, allows him to describe the society accurately. But he constructs descriptive theory when he describes his scene in abstract terms. Often combining that description with the abstract descriptions of other ethnographers, he can then seek out dimensions of variation within which to locate his own cases. He has thus created an abstract categorization scheme on the basis of his and others' intimate “grounded” knowledge of a phenomenon. The theorizing occurs at that point when the ethnographer describes his case abstractly enough to describe all other cases of that kind using the same terms.

Having constructed descriptive theory the same ethnographer can leave the field and enter the lab to construct causal theory. Of course, the lab is a fiction and the ethnographer may actually still be in the field collecting data, but a switch occurs nonetheless. Constructing causal theory is like pulling a plant from the ground and shaking off the dirt to see its roots, for here we must shake the context from our variables to isolate their dimensions. Knowing those dimensions then allows us to posit relationships with other abstracted phenomena. The abstraction gives us a clean and efficient view of variables in relation to each other. If we fail to remove factors not present in the theoretical model, or allow those factors

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 into the model before we are ready, we might be unable to conceptualize a relationship at all. However, once a relationship is identified, other variables can be included in the picture, allowing us to expand and refine the theory.

What are those extraneous variables that we exclude from our isolated lab? In effect, any variable has been insufficiently abstracted as long as it lacks a single dimension of variation. For example, when we insufficiently theorize the concept of vocational work, and end up with a nominal variable that consists simply of different occupations, we are able to do little with it if the dimensions of work in which we are interested are hidden within those occupational categories. Any nominal variable is problematic in this way, in contrast to dichotomous, ordinal, or continuous variables that identify variation along a single dimension (see Ragin 1987 for a full treatment of this issue). [Thus, while the nominal occupation variable offers little precision theoretically, more is offered by a dichotomous or ordinal employment status, or continuous occupational prestige. Obviously, any number of variables can be constructed that are more precise than occupation as there are

any number of dimensions involved in work.] Isolating a single dimension is what is important for the purposes of constructing causal theory with that variable. Constructing such variables and isolating those dimensions is akin to preparing elements for manipulation in the lab.

And that is why lab work relies on fieldwork, and causal theory relies on descriptive theory. If the ethnographer is unable to describe his society in abstract terms and position it in relation to other societies similarly described by others, the lab theorist reading her work will be left to distill the society down to certain basic dimensions herself, with increasing risks of error. As long as she is in the lab, the causal theorist lacks the rich contextualization needed to make the subtle distinctions required.

The tradeoff, though, is that in the field, the descriptive theorist lacks the isolation from context to focus on singular dimensions. It is easier to say that one should shake the context off a variable than to do it. Perhaps this is why most of us concentrate on one over the other. We often end our theory construction with a descriptive categorization scheme, or don't construct our causal theory with variables

we've developed ourselves. But when we do both descriptive and causal theory, we're less likely to play one of two parts: the causal theorist who calls on future research to test the validity of her propositions, or the descriptive theorist who makes no connections between his findings and larger causal theories. When doing both, like Durkheim in *Suicide*, or Weber in *The Protestant Ethic*, we end up with a seamless whole moving from rich context to parsimonious relationships. In combining description with causality, the resulting theory is both grounded and powerful.

#### References:

- Durkheim, Emile. [1897] 1951. *Suicide*. New York: The Free Press.
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Ragin, Charles C. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Weber, Max. 1958. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

## Section Discussion List

In addition to the list used to send announcements to all section members, ASA provides each section with an Open Discussion List to be used as a forum for intellectual exchange. Theory Section members who are interested in participating in the section's discussion list can subscribe to the listserv — and later, if you choose, “unsubscribe” — by sending an email according to these instructions:

1. Address the email to [majordomo@listserv.asanet.org](mailto:majordomo@listserv.asanet.org)
2. Leave the subject field blank.
3. In the text area or body of the message, type in the following, leaving the rest of the message body blank:

**subscribe soc\_theory** (to subscribe to the discussion list),

OR

**unsubscribe soc\_theory** (to later remove your name from the discussion list)

4. After subscribing to the list, you will receive an e-mail confirmation from [majordomo@listserv.asanet.org](mailto:majordomo@listserv.asanet.org). You will be given an authorization key and instructions to respond back to majordomo. This step is to prevent users from subscribing other users without the latter's knowledge. Once this confirmation is sent back to majordomo, you will receive two messages from majordomo welcoming you to the subscribed list.

## *The Responsive Community*

Is the War Against Terrorism a just war? Can the use of military force be considered morally necessary? The Fall, 2002 issue of *The Responsive Community* will feature two letters, one signed by 60 intellectuals supporting the war on terrorism, another from 100 intellectuals arguing against the war. The Fall issue will also feature book reviews and articles on curtailing civil liberties in the name of national security, teaching ethics in business schools, and religious organizations' influence on public policy. Order by calling 1-800-245-7460, visiting <http://www.gwu.edu/~ccps> or emailing [comnet@gwu.edu](mailto:comnet@gwu.edu).

## 2002 Shils-Coleman Memorial Award Winner

*Michael Mayerfeld Bell, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

**T**he Shils-Coleman Memorial Award is given each year by the Section on Theory to the best submitted social theory paper by a current graduate student. This year's award goes to Adam Isaiah Green of New York University for his paper "Gay But Not Queer: Toward a Post-Queer Study of Sexuality."

Green's paper provides a sympathetic critique of the contribution of queer theory to the sociology of sexuality. While lauding the "critical intervention" that queer theory has made, particularly in interrogating conceptions of normative sexuality, Green argues that a single-minded use of queer theory's deconstructive methods "glosses over the institutional character of sexual identity and the shared social roles that sexual actors occupy." Green finds that queer theory's "discursively burdened, textual idealism" leaves us with a surprisingly undersocialized understanding of sexuality. The tools of queer theory, while indeed useful, do not shed much light on "the socio-historical forces that shape sexual practice and identity," he writes. Moreover, he finds that queer theory's deconstructionist and subversive agenda often diverts its practitioners from empirical complexities and the "complex developmental processes attendant to sexual identification." Ultimately, he concludes by calling for a "post-queer" study of sexuality that incorporates the critical insights of queer theory while maintaining the grounded footing of empirical sociology....If scholars of sexuality are to account for erotic subjectivities, practices and communities, they must more fully engage the social landscape in which erotic actors are situated." The Award Committee was joined in its enthusiasm for Green's work by the journal *Theory and Society*, which has now accepted his paper for publication.

The Award Committee also awarded an Honorable Mention to Karen Danna Lynch for her excellent paper "Schemas and Schematic Thematization: Keys to Understanding Multiple Role Enactment."

## Theory Prize

The prize will be given for an outstanding article, chapter, or published or publicly presented paper. Only titles from the four years prior to the award year are eligible for the Theory Prize, that is, 1999 to 2002. The deadline for applications is February 15, 2003. Please send nominations to: Theory Prize Committee Chair, Michael Macy, Department of Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853  
Email: [MWM14@CORNELL.EDU](mailto:MWM14@CORNELL.EDU)

## We Are Interested in Your Ideas!

Members of the theory section and others with an interest in social theory are encouraged to submit ideas for essays to be published in *Perspectives*. Essays are usually 1000-1500 words in length and can contain references.

Email inquiries and essay suggestions to the editors:

J. David Knottnerus -  
[jdk2307@okstate.edu](mailto:jdk2307@okstate.edu)

Jean Van Delinder -  
[jlvan@okstate.edu](mailto:jlvan@okstate.edu)

## Yale and Cultural Sociology

We are proud to announce the formation of a new Center for Cultural Sociology at Yale University. The Center seeks to crystallize the current opening of sociological theory and research to the methods and theories of the other human sciences. Through ongoing colloquia, workshops, and conferences, the center will develop and publicize an interpretive approach to the various social domains. We aim also to provide a welcoming interactive and personal site for cultural sociologists from both the U.S. and abroad. We will provide a website with a bulletin board and we will also offer visiting fellowships (without funds but with facilities) to colleagues who wish to take their sabbaticals at the CCS.

Jeffrey C. Alexander, Director CCS  
Philip Smith, Associate Director CCS  
Isaac Reed, Coordinator CCS

## Weber in Oklahoma

*The Daily Oklahoman* [Oklahoma City]  
Thursday, September 29, 1904

### WOULDN'T STAY

A GERMAN PROFESSOR'S VISIT AT  
GUTHRIE WAS SUDDENLY TERMINATED

**SAYS GREER NO  
"SHENTLEMAN"**

Had Intended Calling on the Editor  
But Heard He Used a Gun on Another  
Editor, and That settled it

SPECIAL TO *THE OKLAHOMAN*

**G**uthrie, Okla. Sept. 28 -- Fred Van Dyne, proprietor of the Hotel Royal here, vouches for the truth of the following, which is alleged to have occurred within the limits of that hotel some time yesterday. After the arrival of the 11:40 Santa Fe train from the north, the hotel runner brought to the hostelry a man of prominence, who registered as Prof. Von Webber of Heidleberg University, Germany. He had quite an amount of luggage brought to the hotel and stated he would remain in the city a week and would then go to Muskogee.

He claimed to hold down the chair of economics at Heidleberg and to be traveling through the United States to get posted on conditions here in his line.

After Von Webber had been in his room about an hour, according to Van Dyne, the former hurriedly came down stairs and ordered his luggage removed at once to the Frisco station for transportation to Muskogee. Van Dyne was of course surprised and said so, and Von Webber made the following explanation:

"I came here to stay a week and was then going to Muskogee. I have a letter of introduction to a newspaper man here, the editor of the State Capital, but since I came to the city I see by the papers that he carries a gun and that he drew a gun on another editor. I cannot see how a man who carries a gun can be a 'shentlemans' and, therefore, I will not meet him, but will go at once to Muskogee."

Van Dyne says that all manner of argument to change the German's idea of the affair was unavailing, and he took the first train out of town.

[The editors would like to thank Alan Sica and Stephen Kalberg for calling this story to our attention. Guthrie is 30 miles from Stillwater, home to Oklahoma State University, and the editors. To read a first hand account of Weber's 1904 visit to the United States see Marianne Weber's biography, pages 279-304. Marianne's biography also documents other impressions of Oklahoma's frontier culture, as well as their adventures while visiting such diverse places as Chicago, New Orleans, New York, and rural Tuskegee, Alabama.

Weber, Marianne [1975] 1988. *Max Weber: A Biography*. Translated and edited by Harry Zohn. New Brunswick: Transaction.]

## Call for Papers: International Social Theory Consortium

Social Theory 2003 - International Social Theory Consortium  
Fourth Annual Conference - May 18-21, 2003  
Hilton Tampa Bay/North Redington Beach Resort

The purpose of the International Social Theory Consortium and its annual conference is to organize the International Social Theory community and to provide an opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange in social theory. This call for papers is addressed to scholars, faculty, and students who work in any of the areas and traditions and social and political thought with an interest in communicating with other social theorists. As this conference is in Florida, we are especially interested in papers that deal with the theme of the conference, Social Theory in the World and Worlds of Social Theory, which is designed to focus on questions about the differences between traditions in social theory, such as between Europe and the United States, as well as differences in conditions under which social theory is produced and consumed between different regions of the world. Conference organizers invite submission of abstracts for papers of 150 words as well as proposals for panels and sessions that address the concerns of the social theory community. The meeting is open to anyone with an interest in social theory, and in the past participants have come from programs all across the humanities, arts, and social sciences, theology, history, law, and philosophy, as well as architecture, business, and public policy.

Please send abstracts or queries by January 31 to the Center for Social and Political Thought, Department of Philosophy, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620, USA, to Eileen Kahl, ekahl@luna.cas.usf.edu or fax 1-813-974-5914 or submit through the consortium website at [www.socialtheory.org](http://www.socialtheory.org)