

# Perspectives

Newsletter of the ASA Theory Section

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## Enter 'Postcolonial Theory'<sup>1</sup>

Julian Go, *Boston University*

Something called “postcolonial theory” is slowly making its appearance in North American sociology. It has long been a trend in North American literary departments. It has also surfaced in the writings of European social theorists (Bhambra 2007; Boatcă, Costa and Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2010). But it has also reared its head in our journals, books and conference sessions (e.g. Connell 2007; Decoteau 2013; Go 2013a; Steinmetz 2008). Reactions to this emergence range from enthusiastic to cautiously interested, or from apathetic to derisively dismissive. The variety of reactions is matched only by the varied perceptions of what postcolonial theory actually *is*. Is it about studying post-colonial societies? Is it merely a critique of Orientalism? Is it about adding new variables like colonialism to our historical accounts? Is it about celebrating intellectual diversity? Is it about digging for and embracing non-Western or “Southern” social theorists?

Recognizing that metaphors from oceanography have become useful for periodizing intellectual history, let me take at a preliminary cut at the question by positing two “waves” of postcolonial thought. The first wave came from anticolonial activists and thinkers in the mid-twentieth century: Franz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Albert Memmi, CLR James and many others (including W.E.B. DuBois). The second wave came from humanities departments starting roughly in the 1980s. This is where the names of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and in history Dipesh Chakrabarty arise. It is this second

“trendy” wave that caught academic as well as some popular attention, appearing in the pages of the *New York Times* for instance.

There are important differences between these two waves. The second wave was firmly ensconced in the US professional academy while the first was mostly rooted in the colonies where some of the proponents led anticolonial revolution: literally guns in one hand, manifestos in the other. But the two waves share common themes that form the basis for postcolonial theory. Foremost, they shared an interest in the epistemic, representational, and cultural dimensions of imperialism and its legacies. Postcolonial theorists surely drew from Marxism and were attentive to the economic bases of Western imperialism (postcolonial theory thus shares ground with, say, world-systems or dependency theory). But they placed more emphasis upon other features of Western dominance. One of the innovations of Fanon, for instance, was to highlight the cultural and psychological dimensions of colonialism. He was particularly interested in colonial racism, racism’s psychological impact upon colonized peoples and colonizing agents, and the mutual constitution of the identities of the colonizer and colonized (Fanon 1968 [1961]). Likewise, Said’s *Orientalism* is seminal because it unearthed how epistemic structures representing the Orient (as regressive, static, singular) were not epiphenomenal or a side-show to imperialism but rather facilitated and enabled it in the first place (Said 1979). If this is right, we can think of postcolonial theory as a *loosely coherent body of writing and thought that critiques and aims to transcend* (continued on page 2)

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## Interview with Robert Bellah

Arvind Rajagopal, *New York University*

*In Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (Harvard, 2011), Robert Bellah seeks to locate the development of ritual and myth in the natural evolution of our species and then examines the social evolution of religion up to the Axial Age. <sup>1</sup> He compares the origins of the world-religions that survive today, and so offers up an extraordinarily insightful analysis of religion that offers important conceptual resources for confronting diversity in our time, in my opinion, while avoiding the Christianity-centric accounts one often encounters in such studies. What follows below is a highly edited version of an extended interview undertaken over email. For the uninitiated, Robert Bellah (a student of Talcott Parsons) gained his reputation as an expert on modern Japan and later became an influential scholar and public commentator on the contemporary United States, notably with *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, 1985 (co-authored with Richard Madsen, Steven M Tipton, William M Sullivan, and Ann Swidler). (continued on page 7)

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## Go, continued

*the cultural and epistemic structures constitutive and supportive of empire and its legacies.*

To be sure, postcolonial theory is interested not just in Orientalist discourse but in all of the cultural logics of empire. It unearths and critiques all types of discourses, *epistemes*, cultural schemas, representations and ideologies that were part and parcel of Western imperialism – whether embodied in everyday discourse, novels, works of art, scientific tracts, or ethnographies. As Young (2003) notes, therefore, postcolonial theory mounts an assault upon the entire culture of western global dominance – including its claims to privileged knowledge.

This emphasis upon culture, knowledge, and representation is important to keep in mind because it partially explains postcolonial theory's growth within the humanities. If imperialism is also about culture, then cultural expertise is necessary for critiquing it.

It also helps us see how postcolonial theory has been associated with the poststructuralist and postmodern turns. In its critique of imperial knowledge, postcolonial theory shares some ground with the postmodern critique of the Enlightenment, grand narratives and identitarian thinking that valorize the universal at the expense of particularity (Gandhi 1998: 41). Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* was not just a critique of colonialism. It was a simultaneous assault on Nazi Germany. Both Hitler and Western colonialism, Césaire suggested, exemplified forms of epistemic and physical violence embedded in the totalitarian tendencies of Enlightenment thought. The more recent postmodern version of postcolonial theory comes in the work of Homi Bhabha (1994). Drawing from Derrida's so-called deconstruction as much as Foucault, Bhabha's analyses of colonial discourse is meant not just to critique colonial knowledge but also to suggest colonial knowledge is merely an instance of Enlightenment rationalism more broadly. His work thus celebrates ambiguity, liminality or "hybridity" which, according to Bhabha, unsettles the categorical binaries typical of colonial discourse and Western

rationalism alike. While imperial discourse aimed to "know" a foreign culture in order to dominate it, Bhabha's postcolonial theory aims to recognize and work with the "insurmountable ambivalence" – as he put it – in any such representational apparatus.

Understanding postcolonial theory's emphasis on knowledge, power, and culture also helps us situate its complex relationship to Marxism. As noted, postcolonial theorists were Marxists through and through. But if Fanon and Cabral drew unabashedly from conventional Marxism (and were avowed Communists), they also criticized it for overlooking the epistemic, cultural and racial dimensions of colonialism (Cabral 1974; Fanon 1968 [1961]). Edward Said later criticized Marxist categories for their putative failure to attend to racial, cultural, or sexual difference and for producing, in Said's words, "universalising and self-validating" histories; histories that depend "on a homogenizing world historical scheme that assimilate non-synchronic developments, histories, cultures, and peoples to it" (Said 2000: 210). We could argue that Marxist thought describes history in this way because that's exactly how capital operates. This is implicit in Chakrabarty's postcolonial reading of Marx (Chakrabarty 2000). But, in my view, most postcolonial theorists would agree with neo-Marxist and even many conventional Marxist accounts of capitalism. The difference is that postcolonial theory seeks to go beyond those accounts, not by disputing them empirically, but by asking how else we might represent the world without merely imitating in our theory the logic of capital in practice (cf. Chibber 2013). Can we faithfully analyze capitalism while also recognizing the limits of our categories and knowledge (and potentially of capital itself)? Yes, capitalism does violence but can we represent history and society without blindly reproducing that violence on an epistemic level?

There is a certain reading of postcolonial theory today that reduces it to another brand of positive empiricism. In this view, postcolonial theory is mainly about offering new causal explanations that

*(continued on page 6)*

## George Herbert Mead at 150

Daniel Huebner, *American University*

This year is the 150th anniversary of the birth of philosopher and social theorist George Herbert Mead (born February 27, 1863), and the occasion was marked by a three-day conference held at the University of Chicago from April 18-20, organized by Hans Joas, Andrew Abbott, Dan Huebner, and Christopher Takacs (<http://www.meadconference.com>). The conference sought to identify new avenues for scholarship and to provide a venue for “emerging” scholars. As a way of organizing a review of the conference, I highlight three of the major directions examined in the papers and discussions around (1) cognitive development, (2) relationality and ecology, and (3) temporality and historical contingency.

One promising new direction lies in bringing the findings of contemporary cognitive sciences into dialogue with the embodied and social theory of mind developed by Mead and other earlier theorists. This was the topic of presentations by Frithjof Nungesser (Univ. Graz), Roman Madzia (Masaryk Univ.), Kelvin Booth (Thompson Rivers Univ.) and Ryan McVeigh (Royal Bank of Canada), and featured in many discussions throughout the conference. Mead’s work was compared and contrasted with recent empirical findings, and there appeared to be a general consensus among the discussants that recent research into mirror neurons, micro-muscular mimicking of expressions, and other related issues offered a chance for rapprochement between contemporary research and Meadian views of cognition by challenging the dominance of a “computational” view of the mind. For example, identifying the neuromuscular mechanisms through which we understand others seems to provide a new way of specifying the connection between the physiological coordination of social action and the cognitive processes of “taking the role of the other.”

Linguistic anthropologist John Lucy (Chicago) drew upon his empirical work on language learning to reinterpret and question Mead’s formulation of language. He sought to demonstrate that

there was an identifiable period in development during which the structures of a child’s language begin to manifest effects on the ways the child attends to things in the world, and he argued that this matches Mead’s transition between the “play” and “game” stages. Yet, Mead’s work tended to treat variations in mind as the result of variations in social organization without examining the ways in which the “medium” of language could, itself, be a quasi-independent source of cognitive structure. Thus, contemporary research on the relativity of linguistic structures could help us reexamine and reinterpret Mead’s theory of language and cognitive development.

Related issues were also taken up in the keynote address on April 18, delivered by philosopher Charles Taylor (McGill). Taylor proposed that, by placing Mead in a “long march” of modern thinkers who sought to overcome the problems of “monological” philosophy, he could acknowledge the unique contributions by Mead to a “dialogical” tradition while also opening a space to question how contemporary findings could more adequately ground a fundamentally dialogical approach. He detailed how research on language development since Mead’s time supports a view in which childhood social cognition begins with the formation of shared attention spaces with caregivers, followed by the progressive development of capacities to recognize different perspectives on that space. This conception, traced in the works of Michael Tomasello and others, offers a more “hospitable background” for the older dialogical theories of Mead and others, Taylor argued, by providing an empirical framework in which to locate both intersubjectivity and unique perspective. Discussion of Taylor’s paper raised questions as to whether such a phenomenological grounding of scientific research was necessary and whether this approach represented any essential advance over Mead’s own theory of role-taking and self-objectivation in social action.



Another novel focus of conference presentations was the various attempts to reexamine the nature of relational or ecological aspects of Mead’s thought in the context of environmental, cosmological, and ethical concerns. Brad Brewster (Wisconsin–Madison) and Anthony Puddephatt (Lakewood Univ.) proposed that Mead’s theory of fundamental “sociality” and the objective location of perspectives in nature could provide an avenue for linking the social sciences with environmental science and activism. As part of his social theory, Mead developed an understanding of the integral connection between humans and their physical and organic environments akin to that of early conservationists, and this theory could be made the basis of claims about the obligation of human communities to multiple ecologies, conference presenters argued. Daniel Cefaï (EHSS) sought to show the importance of Mead’s examination of “fields of experience” organized by “universes of discourse” to the development of notions of “social worlds” in the work of Chicago sociologists. Cefaï used the dissertations of sociologists trained at Chicago in the 1930s-50s to trace in detail the theoretical complexity of ecologies of social worlds, including their multiplicity, their various forms, and their intersections.

Joshua Daniel (Chicago) offered a unique interpretation of how Mead’s theory of self could inform an “ecological” conception of conscience. He proposed that conscience may not have its ultimate function in resolving moral perplexity but in allowing humans to “endure” perplexing situations and participate in a variety of morally ambiguous roles. Mitchell Aboulafia (Manhattan) explored some additional ethical implications of Mead’s work by tracing the tension between Mead’s insistence upon moral responsibility in his philosophy and his non-essentialist theory of the self. *(continued on page 8)*

## Book Review: The Explanation of Social Action by John Levi Martin 2012 Theory Prize for Outstanding Book Winner

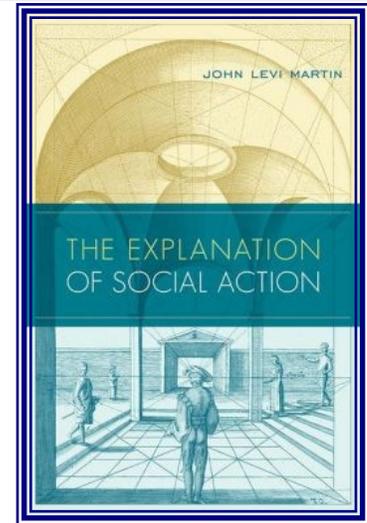
Matthew Norton, *University of Oregon*

This is a bold book, and a book that at times gets carried away with its own boldness. In it you will find that the corporatist qualitative/quantitative consensus that reaches its pinnacle in the fetishism of mixed methods is built on a foundation of causal logic that is not just wrong, but silly. You will find that the dominant social scientific theory of action is predicated on a foundation of “paranoiauthoritarian” Freud-Durkheimianism, such that what you likely think of as an explanation both fails to explain and in doing so perpetrates the obliteration of the very aspects of social life that should be our focus. Counterfactualism is fallacious. Constructivism has been overtaken by the will to theoretical abstraction and the erroneous conviction that the relation between meaning and world is arbitrary. The book does not search out common ground with alternative theoretical perspectives; it attempts to destroy the ground they stand on and remake it in light of an alternative understanding of sociological explanation. So it’s a bold book. It is also a deeply and persuasively argued book that should be a touchstone in thinking about what we ought to be doing when we are doing sociology.

I should note here that the style of argumentation in *The Explanation of Social Action* is wonderfully intricate, balancing its stark accusations of error and ignorance with careful argument-construction. The book is a genuine pleasure to read; a *tour de force* combination of argumentative complexity and stylistic clarity. It is thus more convincing than its arguments baldly stated might seem. To state the arguments baldly, though, the contours of *The Explanation of Social Action* are as follows. We contemporary sociologists sustain the consensus delusion that explanation is a matter of determining the causal relations between abstract, theory-derived concepts. The paradigmatic form that this foundational understanding of causality takes is the third person explanation that organ-

izes abstractions into the form of causal laws purporting to explain the regularities of social life. We adduce our explanatory variables until enough of the variance is accounted for and then proclaim the phenomena in question explained. This consensus, according to Levi Martin, is doubly damned to error. First, it plunges us into a theory of cause based on the ever so shaky foundation of counterfactual comparison of the form “would we see y in the absence of x?” The argument is dense here but some of the problems with counterfactualism that Levi Martin identifies includes the logical necessity of an infinitude of necessary causes for any given event (everything preceding an event is in some sense necessary for that specific event), and the impossibility of varying single factors even in the imagined counterfactuals that we create (how sure can we be that dropping out of school causes lower income for Jones when the counterfactual world in which she didn’t drop out *must imply a quite different Jones in other respects as well?*). Second, the consensus insistence on third-person explanations based on causal abstractions alienates our explanations from the very ground that they ought to occupy: the phenomenological validity of social actors’ experiences. Levi Martin argues that explanations attributing causal force to abstractions that are foreign to the subjective experiences of social actors are an exercise in social scientific fantasy, dependent on some vision of causal force that is never specified because it does not exist. The upshot of this consensus on the counterfactually tested causality of abstractions is, “a science in which statements are made about the connection of imaginary elements in an imaginary world, and our justification is the hope that these will explain no case but rather an unknown portion of every case” (321).

What’s a sociologist to do?



Our explanations should instead focus on motivation and the production of social effects. Thus, the title. The explanation of social action, according to this argument, is not just a subset of explanation, it’s what explanation is, or should be. More problems beset us though, for the exclusion of phenomenologically valid first-person explanations focused on motivation from the sociological consensus is no oversight or accident. Rather, it is the result of a deep suspicion of the adequacy of actor’s experience that Levi Martin traces to two sources. The first is the Freudian understanding of unconscious motivations of which the actor cannot be aware. From this perspective, only the analyst can fathom the vagaries of motivation, and we can reasonably don the mantle of expert, if authoritarian, explainers. The second is what Levi Martin calls the Durkheimian grid-of-perception theory of cognition. According to this view, actors’ experiences of the world are mediated by culturally determined grids of perception that are inherently arbitrary. The standard view of cognition he references is the idea that we experience raw data in the world and make sense of it in terms of arbitrary, language-like concepts in our heads. This is not only wrong in its understanding of cognition, according to Levi Martin, it is pernicious in the license it gives analysts to find the really real causes of things (*continued on page 9*)

## Book Review: Status, Power and Ritual Interaction: A Relational Reading of Durkheim, Goffman and Collins by Theodore D. Kemper

Omar Lizardo, *University of Notre Dame*

*Status, Power and Ritual Interaction*, is one of the most ambitious entries into the sociological study of emotions and micro-interaction since Randall Collins' *Interaction Ritual Chains*. The main achievement in the book is to shed light on a staggeringly wide set of empirical phenomena from what at first sight appears to be a deceptively simple set of principles (p. 27). An additional but equally impressive, accomplishment of the book (as given by the book's subtitle) is to show that the model can be used to both build analytical theory and clarify extant theoretical systems. The book is thus structured as both a (re)introduction to the basic status-power model that Kemper has been developing and refining for the better part of three decades (chapters 2 and 3) and a detailed polemic against what is arguably the most influential model for the study of micro-interaction in contemporary sociology. Namely, the Durkheimian model of interaction-as-ritual (IR) as it comes to us via the fateful reinterpretation of the Durkheimian tradition in the work of Goffman and Collins. Chapters 4 and 5 take on the master himself, and attempt a (generally fruitful) reconsideration of Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence from Kemper's relational perspective. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 engage in an ambitious critical re-reading of Goffman's dramaturgical cum ritualistic model of interaction in the situation; the bulk of the book (chapters 9 through 13) consists of a detailed critique and reconstruction of Collins' IR model in status-power terms.

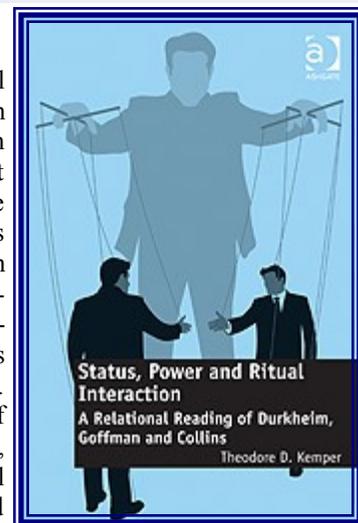
According to Kemper, actors come into interactional settings with the goal of navigating and manipulating an interactional order arranged according to two primary relational dimensions: status and power. Kemper relies on a maximal definitional strategy in defining these two terms: status and power are conceived as covering a wide range of interactional strategies, patterns of behavioral comportment, cognitive assessments, and emotional responses (p. 17 - 25). An impatient critic might at this point dismiss the book for defining the two main terms in such a vague and ambiguous fashion. But the fact that Kemper succeeds in shedding light on (sometimes exceedingly detailed) descriptions of natural social situations (including conversational strips, historical episodes and ethnological data) while maintaining an impressive amount of conceptual consistency in the analytical distinction between status and power throughout, tells me that in spite of some slippage here and there, these two dimensions are carving the nature of social nature at the joints. The reader is bound to never look at his own (or other people's) interaction life and history in the same way again.

What then is the difference between status and power? Status refers to the extent that a person may be able to extract recognition, prestige, honor, privilege, and (voluntary) compliance in interaction from others who confer these benefits willingly onto others. Thus, behaviorally, status has a dual dimension since at the level of interaction a status order consists of persons either conferring status on others that they believe deserve it, or claiming status for themselves (that they believe is owed to them). Abstracting from concrete interaction settings, status then may appear as a "scalar" quantity providing a summary scan of the extent to which a person is accorded or may claim status benefits given the position that he or she occupies in the social order.

Power differs from status in one key respect. While the use of power may also be used to obtain benefits for the individual or group, power use is distinctive in that it must conquer the active (or potential) *resistance* of other persons. Thus, an actor has power to the extent that s/he can claim access to resources (which may include other persons and their interactional submission) against their will and possible resistance. Power thus attaches to both persons and positions in "imperatively coordinated associations" where persons may be coerced to follow orders or else face punishment.

The relational part of the status-power model links to both a theory of motivation, and via this channel to a sociological theory of emotions. Motivation links to emotion in the sense that persons are motivated to regulate their emotions by enhancing positive experiences and avoiding negative ones. The theory of motivation is simple; in interaction, persons seek to either keep the status they already have (more accurately, the status that they are *accustomed* to receiving given their medium-term history) or enhance it, while at the same time avoiding episodes of status loss or withdrawal. Thus, status confirmation and status enhancement lead to positive emotions (contentment, pride, happiness), while status loss leads to negative emotions and moods (sadness, depression when nothing can be done about it or anger when power can be used to recoup the lost status). In general, persons are loss-averse in the sense that a loss is more poignantly felt than a corresponding gain and in the sense that they would rather not resort to power use to meet their status need. According to Kemper, persons also seem to have (rough) motivations for consistency across different statuses. Importantly, persons are also motivated to accord status to those who they feel deserve it (building an altruistic foundation into the theory). Thus, persons experience positive emotions when they confer status on worthy others and experience negative emotions (anger, embarrassment) when persons whom they perceive should be accorded status are denied that privilege.

As already intimated, for Kemper, there is no autonomous motivation for power-use; instead, the primary motivation for using power (at a relational level) is to compel others to bestow status when others resist doing so. Power contests (especially across groups) lead to "arms races" and mutual escalation effects that do not settle until one side is able to defeat (*continued on page 10*)



## Go, continued

“bring colonialism back in” or merely propose different historical accounts of capitalist development in the non-Western world. Arguing with postcolonial theory, therefore, means arguing against its presumed empirical accounts. In my view, this approach to postcolonial theory misses the point. Rather than only seeking to cull new empirical evidence in order to challenge conventional narratives (of capitalism or modernity), postcolonial theory should be recognized first and foremost as a critique or deconstruction of the standpoint, categories, and assumptions by which those narratives and histories are constructed in the first place.

This relates to the final point about postcolonial theory. Though it takes aim at imperial knowledge and colonialism’s multidimensional structures, it is motivated by concerns in the present. Imperialism is not over. “We live,” says Gayatri Spivak, “in a post-colonial neo-colonized world” (Spivak and Harasym 1990: 166). Therefore, consciousness must be decolonized even if formal political decolonization happened long ago. Postcolonial theory finds motivation here: it seeks new representations and knowledges that do not fall prey to the misrepresentations and epistemic violence attendant with imperial dominance. This is why it is labeled *post*-colonial theory. It is not because it assumes that colonialism is over. It is because it seeks theories (knowledges), ways of representing the world, and histories that critique rather than authorize or sustain imperial and persistent colonial formations. Put simply, postcolonial theory seeks to elaborate “theoretical structures that contest the previous dominant western ways of seeing things” (Young 2003: 4).

Perhaps this is why postcolonial studies is frustrating for some social theorists and sociologists. It is, after all, a normative project – and normative sociology has not had a good reputation in mainstream sociological theory. In any case, we should at least recognize postcolonial theory for what it is: an attempt, however misguided or naively ambitious, to contribute to the larger ongoing movement to decolonize knowledge and globalize theory.

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1. Thanks to Claire Decoteau for inviting me to contribute to the newsletter. Portions of this piece appear in Go (2013a; 2013b).

## Rajagopal, continued

*I first encountered Robert Bellah when I was in graduate school at UC Berkeley, as a teacher and adviser. As an historical and cultural sociologist on modern India, I have found him better informed and more curious about the applicability of social theory, both grand and little, to the whole world in a way that is truly rare. In response to an interviewer for the Atlantic Monthly blog who asked Bellah what prompted him to write this book, Bellah apparently replied, "Deep desire to know everything: what the universe is and where we are in it." In an age of increasing specialization, encountering a teacher with a grand vision, and an ambition to understand everything, is a good thing.*

**AR:** May I start by asking if you would offer a very brief account of technological evolution, or your view of the idea of technological evolution, and how that looks alongside your argument about religious evolution. That is, do these different forms of evolution mutually reinforce each other, or, how do they differ?

**RNB:** Evolution takes place when new capacities are attained but how those capacities are used and how they are related to earlier capacities is very complex and not at all unilinear. Even the notion that the attainment of new capacities is "progress" is doubtful, since it all depends on how the capacities are used. And much of history is cyclical, with rises and falls, and though basic capacities are "never lost," substantive losses, cultural and even technological, occur.

**AR:** Although there has been religious and moral evolution, their zenith might have been reached a millennium or two before modern scientific and technological developments. In this sense our problem is not only one of unrequited modern values, but of unrequited values of the axial age too. Can you comment on this?

**RNB:** My position is very close to that of Charles Taylor in his *A Secular Age*. He rejects the "subtraction theory" that modernity peels away all the superstition and prejudice of the past to get down to real human nature. He insists the modern project in its ethical form is unintelligible except as coming out of the Jewish-Christian-Greek traditions. He then argues that in some ways modernity has actually gone farther in institutionalizing "the Gospel" than the previous tradition ever had, but the price is high. New capacities allow new evils and the denial of the great traditions threaten to trap people in an immanence which may be a modest "bourgeois happiness" but can be devastating nihilism. One of my tasks is to formulate "the modern project" more clearly than I can at the moment. Habermas has spent his life doing this, yet has come more and more to respect religious traditions that cannot in the end be entirely "translated into rational argument." For him Kant is close to everything, and to a degree he is right. But I need to think about Adam Smith (no simple utilitarian, and with a lot of anxiety about what the market would do), Hegel, and popular religious and ideological

movements. But the notion that there was ever one simple, clear, modern agenda that simply marches through history with a few detours like the holocaust, I can never accept.

**AR:** Your argument, as I understand it, is that between the Paleolithic and Axial ages, we can see evidence of a movement from mimetic to mythic to theoretic culture (drawing on Merlin Donald) that combines what went before it. I think this argument can offer an important response to arguments currently being made theorists like Bruno Latour, who conceptualize religion through distinctions of mind and world, and can be clarified if we specify the numerous connections between these two terms that are actually to be found in the practice of any given religion. The three phases of mimetic, mythic and theoretic provide rigorous means of specifying what these mediating entities might be. Moreover your argument that "nothing is ever lost," that evolution is also accretive, provides a way of thinking across different forms of mediation that is more deeply historical and analytically precise than anything currently available. Can you comment on this reading of your argument?

**RNB:** You are absolutely right that I am trying to make an end run around the debate over "religion" that has been going on in religious studies and elsewhere, at least since Wilfred Smith attacked the term. By giving an evolutionary (even perhaps in Foucault's sense a genealogical) account of religion, I can avoid all the terminological chaos. Religion is rooted in the body (body-mind-world continuum) as far back as animal play, and then with mimetic culture, it becomes ritual, elaborated richly when mythic culture is added so that it concerns "the general order of existence" (Levi-Strauss's statement that myth must understand everything to explain anything). The axial age brings in a critical/transcendent perspective while reorganizing but not abandoning the mimetic and mythic, so the whole debate over the term "religion" falls apart. If Latour is doing something like this, I think we are on the same track. Of course my evolutionary story always relates ritual/religion to the social context and is especially sensitive to changing economic and political conditions, which, I think religion neither causes nor is caused by, but to which religion must adapt: in the archaic age by grappling with the complex relation of god and king, and in the axial age by criticizing the simple fusion of religion and power, though that problem never goes away. As Bjorn Witrock says, the promissory notes of the axial age have still not yet been redeemed.

**AR:** To take this a bit further, do you think modern, Protestant-influenced conceptions of religion in their distrust of idolatry end up reifying one model of religion while losing sight of its historic character, and valuing an abstract idea of religion? This, I think, makes it hard to accommodate the plurality of religious traditions that in fact inhabit the world.

*(continued on page 11)*

## Huebner, continued

After rejecting several formulations, Aboulafia developed a case for a nascent “narrative” sense of self in Mead’s work. If we conceptualize the self as narrative, he proposed, then we can better understand how the self is diverse and mutable while also retaining a notion of unity upon which to base the individual’s moral claims.

David Woods (GreenWoods Associates) examined Mead’s role as a public intellectual in order to examine the formation of democratic social capital in urban centers. In particular, he used Mead’s record of reform activities to elaborate an understanding of the city as a center of social development and to identify mechanisms for broadening democratic inclusiveness. Robert Westbrook (Rochester) built on some of the same issues as he made a case for Mead’s unique contributions (alongside John Dewey) to an “epistemological” theory of democracy. Westbrook argued that Mead pioneered a theory in which inclusive democratic participation incorporated the values of all interested inquirers and in which such inquiry provided more adequate assessments of the consequences of social actions. Hence, Mead developed a defense of democratic inclusiveness on the basis that it made for “smarter” politics.

A third direction for scholarship combined a concern for the historical processes of making knowledge about Mead with an explication of Mead’s own theory of temporal processes of knowledge-making. Dmitri Shalin (Nevada–Las Vegas) traced some of the important moments in the canonization of Mead in sociology, especially the emergence and dominance Herbert Blumer’s “Symbolic Interactionism,” as a way identifying the distinct approaches Mead developed (e.g., phylogenetic, ontogenetic, etc.) in his work, which have been either conflated or ignored in scholarship. Trevor Pearce (Wisconsin–Madison) identified the early exposure of Mead to evolutionary ideas, highlighting their importance for his resolution of intellectual problems

and their contribution to his later work. And Charles Camic (Northwestern) examined the neglected posthumously-published volume, *Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, based on notes from a course of the same title, as it was related to the intellectual context of the early University of Chicago. Camic utilized several offerings of the course by Dewey and Mead to trace the increasing emphasis on research science and evolution and the diminishing emphasis on nineteenth-century social sciences in Mead’s accounts. All of these participants sought to explain essential aspects of Mead’s thought and its influence by locating his ideas in their historical contexts.

Dan Huebner (American, Bowie State) utilized newly discovered student notes from Mead’s courses and other historical data to make the case that Mead contributed self-consciously to the formation of the “history of science” as a field of inquiry, and that his views offered a thoroughly social formulation of the development of scientific knowledge, although now available only in fragments. Hans Joas (Freiburg, Chicago) explored the partial convergence between American Pragmatism and European Historicism in formulating a theory that could effectively overcome the dichotomy between objectivism and relativity in historiography. Joas identified conceptual tools in the work of Josiah Royce, Ernst Troeltsch, and Mead that could account both for the intersubjective and temporal nature of human experience and the formation of universal ideals through which to interpret and organize that experience. And Michael Thomas (Chicago) explored related issues by tracing the divergence between A. N. Whitehead’s and Mead’s theories of perspective and relation in temporal processes. Common among these participants was the attempt to treat Mead’s own theories of temporality as a key to understanding Mead’s intellectual contributions.

A unique highlight of the conference was the attendance of seven

members of the Mead family, who participated throughout the conference, asking questions and sharing family lore. Despite the notorious Chicago weather conditions, many attendees participated in a walking tour of the Hyde Park neighborhood led by Dan Huebner, which sought to highlight the significance of many of its places in the life of George Herbert Mead. On the tour, G. H. Mead’s grandson, James Mead, contributed some of his own unique recollections about the neighborhood and his family.

Many of the papers and discussions at the conference challenged the typical assumptions about the proper contributions attributed to Mead and his place in the pantheon of philosophers or social theorists. Although there were no pre-existing plans to publish the conference proceedings, participants expressed significant interest in putting together a collection of some of the most promising new contributions to scholarship relating to Mead.

## Norton, continued

behind the arbitrary, cultural perspectives of actors. In opposition to the hostility to social actors ingrained in the Freud-Durkheimian perspective, Levi Martin turns to a trifecta of alternative theories of cognition – the Russian activity school, gestalt psychology, and pragmatism – to develop an understanding of actors' experiences of the social world as essentially valid. The social world is made up of the bundles of qualities available to our experience, and according to this view, we perceive qualities that really are in the world. This isn't a naïve realism or a retrenchment to a pre-constructivist understanding of objectivity. Our experience of the actually existing bundles of qualities in the social world are based on our previous experiences, they are funded as Levi Martin puts it. How is this different from constructivism? It is different in that it places actors' experiences at the center of explanation rather than undermining them from the outset.

Levi Martin presents his model of explanation under the title of a social aesthetics that would consist of a study of how actors take in the qualities of the social world. Aesthetics is the best model for this because its theory of understanding is based on judgments about how particular patterns of relations fit into general, intersubjectively valid patterns. Focusing on aesthetics gets us to think about how actors willfully orient themselves toward the intersubjective elements of the social world rather than treating them as dupes of arbitrary perceptual strictures. Field theory provides an important example of social aesthetics, though Levi Martin acknowledges that social life is only occasionally organized into a formal field. Fields are good examples of social aesthetics because they are defined by the mutual orientation of actors to certain intersubjectively valid qualities. The contention underlying this proposal for focusing on social aesthetics is that sociological explanation is really a matter of explaining actors' motivations, and those motivations are best understood from the ecological perspective of the social world that the actors experience. This involves bundles of relations that actors individu-

ally and jointly experience as social objects, it involves not a denial of the reality of subjectivity and bias, but an assertion that bias and subjectivity is the ground of perspectival experience, and it involves intense, game-like interaction over perceived qualities in the social world. These and other aspects of experience form the basis of explanation for Levi Martin. How, then, would Levi Martin's explanations differ from third-person explanations based on a counterfactual understanding of causality? Of utmost importance is that they would be based on elements with phenomenological validity in actors' experience – in place of abstractions, the elements of explanation would be concrete. Because Levi Martin adopts a motivational, first-person view of causality, actors have to actually experience "causes," and the question of explanation thus becomes a question of how the qualities of the social world afford certain experiences and how regularities of experience and motivation emerge. That is to say, it becomes a question of social aesthetics.

Radicalism is exciting, and all the more so if it is well argued. I do wonder if *The Explanation of Social Action* is at times carried away in all the excitement. While the case for the dominance of third-person causal statements in sociology is sound, amongst the sub-disciplines there are far more allies of Levi Martin's general position than one would think from the reading. One of the book's earliest and best exhortations is its call for a return to an understanding of motivation as the form of causation most important for a social science. But cultural and historical sociologists, among others, have been toiling in these very explanatory vineyards for some time. And while Levi Martin briefly addresses the building theoretical movement around the concept of mechanisms, the potential complementarities with social aesthetics are barely considered. His concluding description of how he sees the explanation of social action reminds me of nothing so much as Geertzian thick

description, the effort to describe in sufficient depth and detail so that we can understand the meanings that shape actors' experiences of situational realities and ultimately their motivations. The assault on abstractions as elements of explanations in these pages also seems needlessly uncompromising. Many who have ascribed cause to an abstraction might well agree that they meant their abstraction as a short-hand referent to a bundle of causal factors that would have phenomenological validity. When we say that capitalism causes jogging, surely one is meant to think that it is some bundle of experiences that are regular phenomenological features of lives lived in societies with bundles of economic relations in a general form that we call capitalism causing all of the jogging. Even if that is not what one is meant to think, not much is lost in the translation.

Gripping about the boldness that is the work's best feature is hardly fair, but it is germane to the practical question of the extent to which people are able and willing to incorporate *The Explanation of Social Action* into their understanding of cause and the conduct of their sociological investigations. "Why would people read this book?" is the sort of question to which Levi Martin thinks we should give a certain sort of answer. In the form he prefers, I propose: because the experience is of an encounter with something profound that demands a response.

## Lizardo, continued

the other and extract the appropriate (interactional, material, symbolic, etc.) concessions. Power links to emotions by exploiting the safety/security system: when persons are faced with others with the potential to use overwhelming power against them, the resulting emotion is fear/anxiety; thus persons are motivated to avoid situations where they are relatively powerless in relation to their interaction partners (unless trust is present). When persons feel that they have enough power to extract concessions from others (and are thus not under threat) they feel content and secure. In this manner, fear and anxiety (or radical shifts in the distribution of power) may motivate persons (via security and existential threat motivators) to attempt to increase their own power. The primary social mechanism for power enhancement is coalition formation (strength in numbers).

The status-power model analytically decomposes every episode of micro-interaction (from an individual's "internal conversation" to large-scale collective action involving thousands of actors) into the thicket of perceived status obligations and power considerations that each individual (or group) has to take into account at a given moment. In this sense, the status-power model follows a strategy of "decomposition" (into relational commitments) without reduction which is the hallmark of sound theorizing in social psychology. Given the dogged emphasis of relational considerations as the primary drivers of behavior (via the emotions-motivation link), the status-power model is (deservedly) suspicious of the Durkheimian penchant to short-circuit *from* some structural feature of the situation (e.g. co-presence, rhythmic attunement, amassment, mutual awareness) *to* some affective and cognitive outcome (e.g. commitment to the interaction order, collective effervescence, social solidarity, increase/decrease in emotional energy).

One way to (simplistically) summarize the extended (and highly nuanced) argument laid out in the core sections of the book is that the interaction-as-ritual model fails to the extent that it invokes either such direct effects of the situation---or in the case of Collins, sub-situational factors operating at very short time-scales---upon individual cognitive affective outcomes. In addition, the interaction-as-ritual models errs in postulating that individuals are motivated primarily by a commitment to sustain the integrity of abstract interactional entities (e.g. Goffman's "situation") rather than by concrete commitments to their status obligations and power considerations of either co-present or implied others (whether individual or collectives). For Kemper, rather than bottoming out at solidarity, interaction bottoms out at the level of *the status/power relation*. This happens both in terms of the individual's assessment that she has complied with the (culturally specified) status obligations and has adequately navigated around the other's power *and* that others have done the same in relation to her (accorded the status that she deserves and taken into consideration the power that she wields). It is not that ritual does not exist or is not an important mechanism in the status-power model, it is just that it is not the *sine qua non* of social interaction.

In my view, Kemper's most devastating attack upon the IR model consists of showing how the model systematically fails to specify what a "successful" interaction is (and thus fails to theorize the relational sources of both positive and negative emotions) by taking a criterion for success from the ritual arena and over-generalizing it to all interaction. Kemper shows in a convincing way that this can only get us so far. In particular, it is easy to come up with countless examples of situations that would be classified as failures from the IR stance (because they do not result in increased emotional energy, solidarity bonding across the parties, or an increase in commitment to the social order) but are perfectly "successful" (because they balance the relevant relational books) in the status-power sense. Embarrassingly, this happen to constitute the *great majority* of interactional situations, rendering the IR model (when all is said and done) a *special* theory that seems to apply only to a highly delimited (and increasingly exceptional in post-traditional societies) range of interactions.

For instance, it is precisely because the micro-foundations of IR theory rely on a mechanism designed to explain why persons will *willingly* (and in many ways automatically and unconsciously) bestow status on an object or person (the Charisma of the Durkheimian sacred), Kemper can argue that when dealing with situations of power use, the IR model can only retain its coherence by (incoherently) re-describing power-use situations as themselves an example of ritual. But if power use is also ritual, then the status and power dimensions collapse upon one another, robbing the theorist of any leverage for explaining why a person that is the subject of another's power may want to escape their grip. Not only that, because status and power are collapsed, predictions that pertain to status effects on emotions are mistakenly attached to episodes of power use (and vice versa). This includes, for instance, the (absurd) IR claim that persons experience a perverse---essentially masochistic---pleasure and connection with their superiors when subject to the power of another, or that persons in power experience a strange sort of Durkheimian solidarity with those subject to their commands (in addition to fouling up the sociological theory of anger by creating spurious categories that mix anger due to status loss with anger connected to power use). Even the treatment of such relatively simple relational matters such as sex and love (chapter 14) are seen in a new (and more convincing light) when we shake off the conceptual shackles of the IR model and delve into it with an eye towards paying attention to the relational dynamics of status and power.

A book of such scope and ambition is of course bound to have its flaws; this book is no exception. While Kemper does a great job of connecting the so-called "basic" emotions (fear, anger, happiness, pride, sadness) to the relational theory, the treatment of what have recently been dubbed the "self-conscious" emotions (in particular shame, embarrassment, and guilt) is not as effective. For instance, shame is at one point curiously theorized as occurring "when an actor accepts more status than he [sic] feels he deserves" (p. 249). This is inconsistent with what is known about the cognitive (self-denigrating talk) and behavioral (social withdrawal, self-damaging acts) dynamics of shame. Feelings of shame are likely to arise from negative beliefs about the *core self* that render it *undeserving* (because of an appraisal of the self as *inherently* defective) of *any* status considerations (*continued on page 11*)

## Rajagopal, continued

**RNB:** I totally agree with you about Protestantism as an effort to "lose" things that can't be lost without turning religion into some kind of quasi-theory, that then will be refuted by science or turned into a kind of "religious naturalism" that loses what makes religion another reality beside the world of daily life. That *Religionswissenschaft* in Germany and the US was overwhelmingly Protestant set religious studies off on the wrong track from the beginning (the anti-Catholic animus was intense) and has resulted in many of our continuing problems.

**AR:** I'd like to ask you, on a larger view of things, where you think the discipline of sociology is going. Your long and very public engagement with it gives you a specific perspective on the question.

**RNB:** Whatever else one might say about Talcott Parsons, he was never provincial. He thought sociology included the world and its contents. His general theory of action included culture, society, personality, and the behavioral organism (the human organism insofar as it is capable of learning). I never heard him say "That is not sociology." Whether it was law or psychoanalysis, or even biology, it was all included in the very big tent of "action." This generosity of interest was reflected in his relation to his students. He was permissive and supportive of almost anything a student might want to do. He was a teacher and later friend of Harold Garfinkel. He was a friend of Kenneth Burke, the literary critic. And one could name others one might not expect.

Although Talcott contributed greatly to the elevation of Durkheim and Weber as founders of sociology, and used them as role models in the breadth of his interests, one has to wonder how much of that spirit survives in contemporary sociology. Even as a graduate student I was surprised when I was approached by a graduate student from another institution at an ASA meeting to be greeted with "I am a symbolic-

interactionist" and you are a "structural-functionalist." My immediate reaction was to deny I was any such thing. In the Harvard department of social relations, anthropology, and social and clinical psychology were included together with sociology, so I wasn't sure if I was even a sociologist, much less a follower of any other parochialism. Today we have not only students of social movements, but followers of the resource-mobilization theory of social movements. Of course research lineages can be found in every science, yet in biology we have Stephen Jay Gould and E. O. Wilson, who have combined special fields and general approaches to biology, and have been challenged on both accounts. Such people are not absent in American sociology, though a little more frequent in Europe. A work like Randall Collins's *The Sociology of Philosophies* is magisterial in the grandest of traditions. Collins is exemplary not only in that great book but in much of his work for his serious concern with historical and cross-cultural comparison. So much of American sociology is bogged down in America alone, with a time span of a generation or less. Of course there is an infinite amount to know even within those limits of time and space, but so much is lost if you spend your life there. Weber famously declared that we are in the age of specialists and that work like his own will soon be outdated. Yet we still read Weber and not the specialists on whom he relied in his great comparative and historical works. We comment forever on him, but how many of us use him as a role model?

1. The "Axial Age" (Ger. *Achsenzeit*, "axis time") is Karl Jaspers's term describing the period from 800 to 200 BC, during which, according to Jaspers, similar developments in religion and philosophy occurred in the Middle East, India, China and Ancient Greece, although without any recorded communication between these regions. See Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History*. Tr. Michael Bullock. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953 (1<sup>st</sup> English ed.).

## Lizardo, continued

on the part of others. Shame thus has to do with an inability to see the self as worthy of status (and thus a refusal to accept it even when it is accorded)—and not with the receipt of more status than one deserves. The failure to theorize shame in an effective way might be connected to Kemper's socio-centric, and somewhat dogmatic, argument against the existence of such a core self -- an argument that is inconsistent with the relevant neurobiological and phenomenological evidence.

Kemper treats guilt (Pp. 249-250) in an equally narrow way, essentially as the result of using "excess power in a social relationship." This is on the right track but incomplete; evidence dealing with recalls of guilt inducing episodes suggests that persons typically feel guilty when they threaten an existing *significant* (in status terms) relationship by engaging in actions that lead that person to experience negative emotions (e.g. hurt feelings, sadness, embarrassment, shame). In Kemper's own terms, it is more accurate that *we feel guilty when we hurt a person (reference group) to whom we also accord status (care about)*. This *may* happen (as Kemper notes) via excessive power use; however, it may also happen via a status withdrawal behavior that causes our relationship partners to be hurt. In this respect, status dynamics may be more significant in the production of guilt than power use.

These are, however, relatively minor blemishes on what is overall a first rate intellectual effort. This book is highly recommended for anybody interested in cutting-edge theorizing on the dynamics of emotions, motivation, and micro-interaction. Most importantly, this is a substantively fruitful theoretical proposal, with myriad of empirical applications across a wide range of fields in the social sciences.

## THEORY SECTION SESSIONS

### **Theorizing Context**

*Scheduled Time: Sun Aug 11 2013, 12:30 to 2:10pm*

Session Organizer: Michael Sauder (University of Iowa)

Presider: Gabriel Abend (New York University)

Mission and Market: Valuing Social Enterprises as Hybrid Organizations

\*Emily A. Barman (Boston University)

Nested Ethnography and Cross-contextual Processes: The Case of Medical Status Orders and Linked Practices

\*Daniel A. Menchik (Michigan State University)

Personal Attachment and Global Climate Change: promoting bicycling in Helsinki, Los Angeles, and Paris

\*Nina Eliasoph (University of Southern California), \*Eeva Luhtakallio (University of Helsinki)

Regulatory Wranglers: Lay Theorizing About Context in HIV Clinics

\*Carol Heimer (Northwestern University)

The Asymmetry of Legitimacy: Analyzing the Legitimation of Violence in 30 Cases of Insurgent Revolution

\*Eric Schoon (University of Arizona)

### **Theorizing Innovation**

*Scheduled Time: Sun Aug 11 2013, 10:30 to 12:10pm*

Session Organizer: Jeannette Anastasia Colyvas (Northwestern University)

Presider: Hokyu Hwang (University of New South Wales)

Less-Institutionalized Social Structures: A Network-Cultural Lens to Study Emergence

\*Neha Gondal (The Ohio State University)

Phoenix from the Ashes: The Death and Life of an Institutional Innovation

\*Constance A. Nathanson (Columbia University), Henri Bergeron (Center for the Sociology of Organizations, CNRS, Paris)

Innovation for a Reason: How Authority Structure Shapes Organizational Change at Mondragon Cooperative Corporation

\*Trevor Daniel Young-Hyman (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Power Consolidation, Cultural Set Points, and the Internet: the shift from public to mass.

\*Justin C. Van Ness (Notre Dame)

Discussant: Gabriel Rossman (University of California-Los Angeles)

### **Theorizing Materiality**

*Scheduled Time: Sat Aug 10 2013, 8:30 to 10:10am*

Session Organizer: Terence Emmett McDonnell (University of Notre Dame)

Presider: Terence Emmett McDonnell (University of Notre Dame)

Nonhumans and the Constitution of the Social Self

\*Colin Jerolmack (New York University), \*Iddo Tavory (New School for Social Research)

Whither the Object in Art and Science?: Toward a Theory of Material Aesthetics

\*Gemma Mangione (Northwestern University)

Symbol and Materiality in Cultural Production: The USAFA Cadet Chapel, Monumentality, & Religious Pluralism

\*Mary Ellen Konieczny (University of Notre Dame), \*Meredith C. Whitnah (University of Notre Dame)

Democracy's Devices: Circulation, Publics, and the Participatory Imagination

\*Diana Bevin Graizbord (Brown University), Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz (Brown University), Gianpaolo Baiocchi (Brown University)

## THEORY SECTION SESSIONS: Regular Sessions

### Critical Theory

*Scheduled Time: Mon Aug 12 2013, 10:30 to 12:10pm*

Session Organizer: Lynn Sharon Chancer (City University of New York-Hunter College)

Capitalism, Crises and “Great Refusals: Critical Theory, Social Movements and Utopian Visions

\*Lauren Langman (Loyola University-Chicago)

Reconfiguring the Foucauldian Genealogy of Power: The Dispersion and Productivity of Sovereignty in the Modern Age

\*Marc W. Steinberg (Smith College)

Resistance versus Emancipation: Foucault, Marcuse, Marx, and the Present Moment

\*Kevin B. Anderson (University of California-Santa Barbara)

The Missing Pragmatic Link: What ANT’s Concept of Power Can Do for Critical Sociology

\*Alexandra Marie Kowalski (Central European University)

### History of Social Thought

*Scheduled Time: Tue Aug 13 2013, 2:30 to 4:10pm*

Session Organizer: Sharon Hays (University of Southern California)

Presider: Sharon Hays (University of Southern California)

Capitalism and the Jews in the Social Thought of Marx and Engels

\*Chad Alan Goldberg (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Is there anything new to say about Émile Durkheim?

\*Marcel Fournier (Universite de Montreal)

Re-Examining the Rise of Functionalism: Key Events in Social Anthropology, Physiology and Sociology, 1922-1952

\*Lawrence T. Nichols (West Virginia University)

Discussant: Jeff Weintraub (University of Pennsylvania)

### Social Theory

*Scheduled Time: Tue Aug 13 2013, 10:30 to 12:10pm*

Session Organizer: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

Presider: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

Rethinking Social Theory and Globalization for the 21st Century

\*Ralph Schroeder

The Biographical Dimension of Sociological Imagination

\*Dmitri Shalin (University of Nevada-Las Vegas)

The Social Construction of Invisibility: A Case-Study in the Sociology of Attention

\*Eviatar Zerubavel (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

Unsettled Rhythms: The Temporal Dynamics of Culture in Times of Crisis and Uncertainty

\*Benjamin Harrison Snyder (University of Virginia)

Discussant: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

## THEORY SECTION SESSIONS: Regular Sessions, continued

### **Social Theory: Mind, Meaning and Action**

*Scheduled Time: Tue Aug 13 2013, 8:30 to 10:10am*

Session Organizer: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

Presider: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

Bridging the micro and the macro: Archer's objections to structuration theory revisited  
\*Serena Liu (University of Essex)

Cultural Theory and Its Spaces for Invention and Innovation  
\*Jason L. Mast (University of Warwick)

Max Weber's Reception on the part of Symbolic Interactionism  
\*Sandro Segre (University of Genoa, Italy)

Theory of Mind: A Pragmatist Approach  
\*Norbert F. Wiley (University of Illinois-Urbana)

Discussant: Ira J. Cohen (State University of New Jersey-Rutgers)

### **Lewis A. Coser Memorial Lecture and Salon**

*Scheduled Time: Sat Aug 10 2013, 10:30 to 12:10pm*

Panelist: Ivan Ermakoff (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Session Organizer: Robin E. Wagner-Pacifici (New School for Social Research)

### **Theory Section Roundtables, Saturday,**

**August 10, 2:30-3:30**

### **Theory Section Business Meeting, Saturday,**

**August 10, 3:30-4:30**

## Junior Theorists Symposium— August 9, 2013

Kellen Auditorium, 66 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue,  
New School for Social Research, NYC

**8:30 – 9:00 Coffee and Bagels**

### **9:00 – 10:50 Knowledge and its Production**

*Monica Lee* (University of Chicago): "The Duality of Philosophers' Social Lives and Ideas"

*Alvaro Santana-Acuña* (Harvard University): "The Invisible Hand of the Scientist: Theorizing the Modern Platform of Knowledge"

*Dan Hirschman* (University of Michigan) "Stylized Facts in the Social Sciences"

**Discussant:** Wendy Espeland (Northwestern University)

**10:50 – 11:00 Coffee**

### **11:00 – 12:50 Institutions and Power**

*Damon Mayrl and Sarah Quinn* (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid and University of Washington) "The Practical Boundaries of the State: The Politics and Mechanisms of the 'State Effect'"

*Joseph West and Eric Schoon* (University of Arizona): "From Prophecy to Practice: Mutual Selection Cycles in the Routinization of Charismatic Authority"

*Camilo Leslie* (University of Michigan and American Bar Foundation): "Toward a Sociology of Trustworthiness"

**Discussant:** Paul DiMaggio (Princeton University)

**12:50 – 2:00 Lunch**

### **2:00 – 3:50 Meaning and Signification**

*Matthew Norton* (University of Oregon): "Mechanisms and Meaning"

*Jordanna Matlon* (Institute for Advanced Study - Toulouse): "Complicit Masculinity in the African Periphery"

*Angèle Christin and Marianne Blanchard* (Princeton University and Sciences Po): "From 'Champs' to Field: Lost in Translation?"

**Discussant:** Robin Wagner-Pacifici (New School for Social Research)

### **4:00 – 5:30 After-panel: Theory past and future**

Claire Decoteau (University of Illinois - Chicago)

Neil Gross (University of British Columbia)

Greta Krippner (University of Michigan)

Iddo Tavory (New School for Social Research)

Richard Swedberg (Cornell University)

**5:30 – until the last theorist drops: Beer, wine, and good conversation**

## Members' News and Notes

### New Publications

#### Articles

- Athens, Lonnie. 2012. "Mead's Analysis of Social Conflict: A Radical Interactionist's Critique." *The American Sociologist* 43: 428-447.
- , 2013. "Park's Theory of Conflict and His Fall from Grace in Sociology." *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies* 13: 75-87.
- Blute, Marion. 2013. "The Evolution of Anisogamy: More Questions Than Answers." *Biological Theory* 7,1: 3-9.
- Bortoluci, José and Robert S. Jansen. 2013. "Toward a Postcolonial Sociology: The View from Latin America." *Political Power and Social Theory* 24: 199-229.
- Cheris Shun-ching Chan. 2012. "Culture, State, and Varieties of Capitalism: A Comparative Study of Life Insurance Markets in Hong Kong and Taiwan." *British Journal of Sociology* 63(1):97-122.
- Decoteau, Claire Laurier. 2013. "Hybrid Habitus: Toward a Post-Colonial Theory of Practice." *Political Power and Social Theory* 24: 263-293.
- Go, Julian. 2013. "Introduction: Entangling Postcoloniality and Sociological Thought" *Postcolonial Sociology: A Special Volume of Political Power and Social Theory* 24: 3-31.
- , 2013. "For a Postcolonial Sociology." *Theory and Society* 42, 1: 25-55.
- , 2013. "Decolonizing Bourdieu: Colonial and Postcolonial Theory in Pierre Bourdieu's Early Work." *Sociological Theory* 31, 1: 1-26.
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#### Other Announcements

Michael Strand accepted a tenure-track position at Bowling Green.

