

## ***Abstracts for forthcoming Sociological Review 100th Anniversary Conference***

**Barbara Adam** – *Cardiff University*

### **Politics of Posterity: Challenge for Social Theory and Practice**

We live in a social world whose pace is accelerating. While the focus of most aspects of our intensified social life is narrowing down to the present, futures created on a daily basis cast ever longer shadows. In this situation a chasm is opening up between the production of massively expanding futures and a predictive capacity that is getting ever shorter. The paper is concerned with this drifting apart of knowledge and practice and explores that challenges this presents for social theory, ethics and political practice.

Successive technological developments have hastened the pace of social life and in conjunction with economic pressures have dramatically reduced the futures horizon to a point where the present becomes the primary focus for decisions and policies<sup>1</sup>. This acceleration-based present orientation has a number of interdependent consequences. First, the faster the pace of social life in general and innovations in particular, the greater is the scale of the accompanying social change. Increased pace and scale of change means that the past becomes an ever less reliable guide to the future. Secondly, the faster the pace, the more energy and attention are focused on the present. At the same time, however, the effects of contemporary technologies tend to extend ever further into the long-term future. Thus, for example, products of nuclear power remain radioactive for an estimated one hundred thousand years. Synthetic chemicals move through the food chain affecting all beings for an unlimited period. Carbon dioxide emissions contribute to climate change for an unspecified period. Genetically modified organisms have the potential to mutate until the end of time. Accompanying these multiple temporally constituted tensions seems to be a generalised sense of disquiet about responsibility for socio-political actions: how to dispose of nuclear waste safely and responsibly, how to change the direction of energy policies to avert a worsening of climate change, how to secure food supplies for future generations without initiating irreversible environmental damage

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to Adam 2004 and Adam and Groves 2007 see also Adam, *Timescapes of Modernity. The Environment and Invisible Hazards* (Routledge 1998) for those processes.

along the way, how to make decisions for generations of unborn who are without voice or vote.

Beyond these practical issues the paper is concerned with conceptual matters. First, it scrutinizes the taken-for-granted knowledge systems that guide future-oriented actions. Secondly, it critically examines the conventional ethics that are drawn upon to establish what is right, good and just in the politics of posterity. Through explication of implicit assumptions about and relations to the future, the paper renders visible what thus far has been hidden from view. Importantly, from the stand-point of the future present, it accords reality status to the layers upon layers of futures that are already on the way. As the 'not yet' the future is conventionally positioned in the realm of ideas, imagination, hopes and fears: immaterial in the dual sense of the word. Conceived as latent processes, futures in the making become real; phenomenal reality combines with effecting reality.

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**Maria Adamczyk** - *Jagiellonian University*

### **The ugly people**

My paper will focus on a specific “case study” -an internet group of “ugly people” named **“forum for the ugly people”** (forum dla brzydkich ludzi) on the biggest internet portal –Gazeta Wyborcza(www.gazeta.pl)- in Poland. What makes you ugly? Is ugliness political? Where does sickness, aesthetics and politics intervene (meet) when it comes to labeling oneself ugly? On what basis do you define ugliness? (How deeply contextual is it? What are the “figures” of “beauty” in Poland?)

Is a self -definition “I am ugly” a result of deeply internalized “social eye”, a label you get from numerous (starting in childhood years) social encounters and interactions, or rather the symptom of body dysmorphic disorder? Does our Roman-Catholic, nationalist but globalized (and “medialized”) society treat ugliness as a sickness, as a disease that must be cured (the absence of health, causing the feeling of suffering)? What forms of treatment does it offer and what ugly people think of it? Medical surgery? Extreme metamorphosis? Psychotherapy? On what basis one can define ugliness as a disease? How (will provide examples) does ugliness handicap everyday experience of the ones so - labelled. Is there a form of solidarity between the ugly? Ugly vs. beautiful people, does gender matter when it comes to ugliness? On the forum for ugly people is there a homogeneous

ugly group or rather a few subcategories of ugly (will explain)? What compensations, what ego- defense- mechanisms are deployed by the ugly people? Who is ugly? How does the ugly prism (filter) affect daily lives of the ugly?

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**Joao Aguiar** - *University of OPorto (Portugal)*.

**Postmodernism: the *aesthetization of everyday life* as a symbolic-political device to explain the political and symbolic retraction of Western's working classes**

Several decades ago, Walter Benjamin conceptualized fascism as the «aesthetization of politics» (Benjamin, 2008). In his perspective fascism appeared not just as a political current based on violence and repression of the working class movement but, most notably, as a way to transform the politics of violence in (a form of) art. In his argument, Benjamin centred his analytic lens on the repercussions of fascism in the field of artistic production. An artistic production marked by the defence of violence for the sake of violence. Futurism was, in his point view, a major artistic trend in exploring this political vantage point.

Nowadays, postmodernism deals, among other features, with what some authors call the «aesthetization of everyday life» (Featherstone, 1996; Lash and Urry, 1999). Considering the obvious historical and political differences, we would like to explore the links between these two main vectors of aesthetization in the reconfiguration of politics of the working class. In other words, looking to the on-going financial and economical globalization, based on the principles of neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005), and to the erosion of the collective role of class identity among workers, we can affirm these factors to be pivotal in the working class's loss of social and trade-union capacity to mobilise as a class.

In this paper we have the goal to analyse the role of the symbolical and ideological universe of the aesthetization of everyday life in the «formation» (Thompson, 1991; Skeggs, 2004) of this new scenario in the midst of Western working classes. In other words, we consider that the study of the cultural logic of post-modernism (Jameson, 1993) – in all its social, cultural and artistic extent – will give us relevant clues for the analysis of the multiple factors that has relegated working class to a state of a certain invisibility in political and social actuality.

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**Fernando Artavia** – *Free University of Berlin*

### **Political rituals. Can we learn something from the Art History?**

Regarding the actual necessity of imagining new forms of analyzing the politics, this contribution takes up again the concept of “style”, typical of the art history, to apply it in the sociological analysis on the use of power and decision making. I assumed that in politics so important are the forms as the contents, and that in a democracy the ends do not justify the means, and therefore social scientists must develop a theoretical and methodological instrumentarium that allows them grasp the procedure variations in the use of power, but at same time going beyond the purely formal and legal.

First I make a brief review of the main problems and critics about the concept of “style” in the field of art history. I also remark why, despite all the disadvantages of the concept, it is still used by most of art historians. Then I make a retrospective balance on earlier attempts of introducing the concept of “style” in the political analysis (Jeremy Richardson, Grant Jordan, Robert Harinam, etc.), and the bad luck they had due to some limitations that will be discussed and that have left unused the potentialities that this category can have for sociologists and political scientists.

Later I propose an operative definition about what I understand by “political style” and a basic ideal typology of different political styles, based on the levels of centralization and concentration of power in decision making processes, and the imposition, negotiation and consultative practices. With the analysis of a pair study cases it is developed and exemplified in more detail the so called “democratic cesarism”, a political style considered of particular relevance for the research of the dominant personalism and patrimonialism in most of presidential regimes in Latin America.

Finally, I go back to some cautions to take into account when using the concept of “style”, trying to avoid the vaguety and extreme flexibility of its earlier uses in political science, but also its high level of nomativity in art history.

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**Margaret Austin Smith** - *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

### **Perceptions of European Identity among EU Citizens: An Empirical Study**

EU citizens' perceptions of European identity say much about the process of European integration and the development of EU institutions. This study explores European identity as it is described by EU citizens who positively identify themselves with Europe and the EU. This objective is approached through the following research questions: in which contexts are individuals aware of feeling "European" and in which contexts are they aware of feeling their respective national identities? How does European identity relate to national identity? To what extent is European identity developed by EU policy and to what extent does it emerge through individuals themselves? What kinds of communicative actions stimulate European identity? And how does foreign language proficiency affect sense of European identity? This research is significant for the reason that understanding how individuals identify with others influences how they perceive their own interests and therefore influences how they act and organize politically.

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**J. I. (Hans) Bakker** - *University of Guelph*

**Peirce, Pragmaticism and Public Sociology: Translating an Interpretation into Praxis**

**Abstract**

The main goal of this paper is to provide a way for translating Peirce's ideas into applied sociology, public sociology and political action. The fundamental thesis is that greater comprehension of the usefulness of a Peircian semiotic perspective and "fallibilism" will help to promote the right kinds of social action and collective responsibilities. As a philosopher, C. S. Peirce interpreted the world, but he did not attempt to change it. Peirce, borrowing from Kant, uses the Greek words which in English are pronounced Pragmaticism and Semiotics. How can we take a unifying "perspective" like Peirce's theory and incorporate it into "method" (both Methodology and techniques)? How does that Methodology/method help us to improve: (1.) sociology as an empirically-based, rigorous discipline (a human "science") and (2.) various forms of praxis, especially applied sociology and public sociology? Praxis can include many forms of political activity. Those forms of political activity include a continuum of types of collective social action, from "conservative" and "liberal" to "feminist," "radical" and "Neo-Marxist" (e.g. conservation of fundamental human rights and liberties, reform within liberal parliamentary democracies, transformation within neo-conservative regimes, applied sociology in professions and occupations like social work and criminology, Feminist critique and action, GLTB action, Neo-Gramscian critiques, and Michael Buroway's "public sociology" in the narrow, technical sense.) While it is well known that American Pragmatism (e.g. William James, John Dewey, G. H. Mead) influenced Symbolic Interactionism, it is not as well known that Peirce's version of Pragmatism (i.e. Pragmaticism) cannot be separated from his mature version of Semiotics. There is no specifically "Semiotic Symbolic Interactionism" today, although there is a "social semiotics" that does not quite get at the same underlying epistemological questions. Many "Interactionists" are apolitical, in part because they emphasize the study of interaction and de-emphasize the study of semiotic signs. Most research in SI is based on an acceptance of the existing social construction of reality. Many excellent descriptive, ethnographic studies based on "fieldwork" have been done. But they have tended to simply accept the status quo. (This has also led to a Post-modernist version of SI among students and colleagues of Norman Denzin.) Many Symbolic Interactionists have very little patience

with the semiotic study of symbols and other kinds of signs. They do not report the process of signifying outside of the specific context of an ethnographic field study of a particular sub-culture or group. But that is highly misleading since it deviates from Herbert Blumer's stated axiomatic assumptions about SI and tends to mis-represent G. H. Mead's highly philosophical view of the "significant symbol" as an aspect of "Social Behaviorist" epistemology. The process of signifying is highly political. Nevertheless, even if we fully grasp what Mead and Blumer mean by "symbol" in terms of Peirce's semiotics, how can we translate that theoretical awareness? We can use it to not only interpret the world, but also to change it. Good theory and methodology is the most practical way to promote useful social action, applied sociology and public sociology. Anything less than Peircian Pragmaticism and semiotics tends to lead to fragmentation of "paradigms" or Post-modernist nihilism. Peirce is not the only thinker to present a useful Pragmaticist approach to semiotics. (One could explore the relationship between Peirce and Karl Popper, for example.) But for this paper it will be enough to simply call attention to the value of Peirce's theory and methodology for various forms of praxis.

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**Michaela Benson** - *The Sociological Review Fellow, Keele University*

### **Postcolonial Traces in the Search for a Better Way of Life: the Context and Trajectory of North American Migration to Panama**

In this paper I will present the historical and material conditions that have given rise to the increasing migration of US citizens to Panama. I demonstrate that the long history of foreign intervention and interference in local affairs and politics has paved the way for residential tourism development in this developing country, with their historical relationship to the US playing a particularly prominent role. My exploration of what happens when first world consumption practices come face-to-face with the developing world demonstrates the extent to which postcolonial imaginings give residential tourism and lifestyle migration in Panama a particular shape and flavour.

The last decade has seen the aggressive and rapid development of residential tourism in Panama, particularly in Boquete, recently voted as one of the top retirement havens in the world (Kratz 2005). Looking to

attract affluent US citizens, the Panamanian government have put in place a program of favourable visa conditions, and have allowed the development of exclusive gated communities. In Boquete, residential tourism developments are specifically targeted at North American Migrants, marketed to present destinations as exclusive paradises. However, on the other side of the equation, and often overlooked in the planning of these developments are members of the local community who cannot afford to buy these new properties, and are not allowed to enter without invitation, but often work for the incomers, tending their gardens and cleaning their houses for a weekly wage of around \$40. The developing world context means that widening disparities in wealth are all too apparent, alongside evident ethnic, racial, and cultural discrepancies. Given this particular context, it is unsurprising that extensive social, economic and political transformations result. Migrants enter at the top end of the local social hierarchy as elite incomers; they employ local social actors to serve them in their homes, while they lead lives of relative luxury; other than that, they do not need to come into contact with ‘the natives’.

These brief insights into the development of residential tourism, the potentials for life within the destination (at least for incomers), and the impacts on the local population, superficially bear some resemblance the development, promises, and impacts of colonisation. In this paper I explore the usefulness of examining residential tourism and lifestyle through a theoretical framework inspired by postcolonialism. Using Panama as a paradigmatic case, I argue for a renewed perspective on residential tourism and lifestyle migration, which accounts for the hidden colonial legacies (L’Estoile 2008) that underpin it.

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**Jon Binnie, Christian Klesse** (*both at Manchester Metropolitan University*)

**Imagining Solidarities – Transforming Politics. Transnational Solidarities and Sexual Politics in Poland**

This paper is based on an ongoing empirical research project on transnational activism around LGBT politics in Poland. Transnational activism has been significant in resistance against the banning of LGBT pride and equality marches in 2005 and 2006; violent attacks by the Far Right against LGBT activists on other marches, and homophobic public discourse about LGBT people in Poland associated with the rise of the Law and Justice Party and the League of Polish Families. Activists from abroad have participated in equality marches; in events such as cultural festivals and academic conferences, and have raised funds for Polish LGBT organisations. In this paper we explore, how transnational ‘sexual’ solidarities overlap with other forms of local and transnational solidarities. We critically explore the usefulness of past and current sociological theories on solidarity for the purpose of understanding political activism based on various coalition politics, which exceed any simple rationalisations based on assumption on ‘identities’ and ‘interests’. At the same time, we aim to capture the overt or hidden negotiations of power differentials which complicate the loose ‘network solidarities’ (Carol Gould), which have emerged and continue to re-emerge in order to enable the annual organisation of the marches and cultural festivals we have been studying.

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**Lynda Birke** - *University of Chester – copy as word.doc to be posted soon*

**Falling off the perch; on pursuing relationships with nonhuman others**

Fences are not only boundaries, they are also places to perch. Having sat on the fence between biology and feminist/social studies of science for years, I can testify that it is uncomfortable, but has the merit of affording views. Those views are, I would argue, imperative for thinking through our relationships with nonhuman animals. For all the recent calls to bring animals into social sciences, it is not always clear

that the experiences of these animals - what their lives and imaginings are.

Here, I will draw on my view from both sides to explore how certain nonhumans (companion animals, and in particular horses) become embedded in social networks and relationships. How do they, or we, mobilise others in producing these networks in ways that in turn produce good human/animal relationships? I will draw on examples from recent cultural/social changes in the horse industry, including the rise of what has been called “natural horsemanship” (see Latimer and Birke, 2009), which seem to redefine (and contest) what counts as good for the horse. To 'bring animals in' thus means tracing these networks and relationalities, both human and nonhuman. If, like woodworm, we make enough holes along these networks, then maybe my perch will come tumbling down.

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**Paul Blokker** - *University of Trento*

### **The Intangible Nature of Political Culture: From the Disappearance to the Differentiation of the Political**

In normative political theory, one can identify two meta-understandings of political culture in two types of approaches to the question of democracy. One could label these approaches universalist and cultural-hermeneutic. Universalist approaches are for a good part engaged in the search for a singular, universal truth, and a singular and unitary model of justice. Such approaches attempt the design of a normative model of democracy that is based on a singular principle, or set of principles, of which it is argued that they are closest to true human nature and will hold over time and space. Cultural-hermeneutic approaches to the question of democracy rather have it the other way around, i.e., they argue that, in contrast to the idea of a singular rationality for all democratic societies, one should acknowledge the ultimate emergence of and embedment in democracy in local culture and interaction. In both approaches, however, the political culture that is supposed to hold together the democratic polity, and provide for shared understandings of ‘politics’ and the ‘political’, loses its political character. While in universalist approaches the assumption is that political culture will

increasingly conform to an ultimate form of polity through a process of rationalization, which involves the diminishing of conflict over the political and, in the final instance, its disappearance altogether, in cultural hermeneutic approaches the assumption is that political culture can only be authentic if reflecting a local, historically developed culture, and therefore understandings of the boundaries and nature of the political are predetermined. In the paper, I argue that both approaches are ultimately not able to grasp the complex nature of political culture, and formulate an alternative way of conceptualizing political culture, and its relation to the political. I argue that the conceptualization of political culture would better start from the acknowledgement of the irreducible plurality of political cultures, understood as publicly available discourses on the political and democracy, and, in this, the continuous struggle over the meaning of democracy. The impossibility of defining once and for all forms of engagement in a democratic polity, and the nature of the political, both between and within societies, is acknowledged. I conclude by arguing that the 'democratic adventure' is better conceptualized as indeterminate, as based on a conflictual dual imaginary distinction, and as always corroborated by a variety of political cultures.

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**Rebecca Boden** - *Cardiff School of Management and Debbie Epstein, Cardiff University*

## **The Imagination of Freedom/Freedom to Imagine**

### ***Abstract***

The first fruit of [the sociological] imagination – and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it – is the idea that the individual can understand his (sic) own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period. (Wright Mills, 2000 [1959]: 5)

In *The Sociological Imagination*, Wright Mills insisted that social scientists have a political obligation to 'translate personal troubles into public issues and public issues into the terms of their human meaning' (Wright Mills 2000 [1959]: 187). In this paper we argue that, while imagination of the kind that can lead to real change has always been rare, in the present conjuncture

social scientists have been sorely lacking in the ability to imagine a future beyond capitalism and have signally failed to fulfil Wright Mills' injunction that sociology should be, ultimately, political. This bodes ill, in our globally economically troubled times, for the prospects of civilisation principally because, in Stengers' words (cited in Gibson-Graham 2006), hope is the space between probability and possibility and, without the capacity to imagine different possibilities, there can be no hope.(Bettelheim 1991 [1977]).

In this paper we argue that the sociological imagination cannot exist without the freedom to imagine: to think the (im)possible, to make leaps of imagination that can give rise to differently imagined futures. Within the academy, such freedom is characterised as 'academic freedom'. This particular form of freedom, we posit, is victim to smoke and mirrors: academics imagine that they are free but are, in fact, ensnared by the illusion of freedom (Rose 1999). That illusion is generated by the hegemonic power within the academy of the neoliberal discourse of the market, held in place by the technologies of managerialist control, audit and accountability (Boden and Epstein 2006). Indeed, the end result of the neoliberalisation of the academy is the failure of the sociological imagination to imagine a world beyond the markets (academic and otherwise) and their managerialist accoutrements, which stultify the imagination and deaden the possibilities of a political sociology.

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**Craig Browne** – *University of Sydney*

## **Between Democratic Creativity and Creative Democracy**

This paper contends that attempts to interlink notions of social creativity and democracy have given rise to novel interpretations of the political. It will develop this contention through explicating the similarities and differences between the ideas of creative democracy and democratic creativity. Creative democracy is associated with the tradition of pragmatist philosophy, especially with the work of John Dewey and George Herbert Mead. Whereas democratic creativity constitutes a point of reference for a number of distinctive, though nonetheless related, programmes in contemporary French social and political theory. Specifically, Cornelius Castoriadis, Claude Lefort, and Marcel Gauchet sought to articulate a politics of democratic creativity that either differs from political models based on liberal notions of autonomy or constitutes a radical re-conceptualisation of liberal notions of the political. The insights of these perspectives into social imaginaries and the symbolic horizon of politics will be compared with Charles Taylor's recent account of modern social imaginaries, focusing specifically on the contrasting images of religion, revolution and civil society. It will be likewise argued that the common understanding of pragmatist notions of creative democracy, as a variant of progressive liberal democracy, underestimates its distinctive features and radical democratic questioning of the political. Pragmatist philosophy has been an important informant of theories of deliberative democracy and recent initiatives in critical social theory have consolidated aspects of the notion of creative democracy. However, neither deliberative democrats nor critical theorists have fully explored the implications of Mead and Dewey's conception of democracy as instituted and emergent meaning. Despite the substantial differences between theories of creative democracy and democratic creativity that will be highlighted, each of these perspectives assumes that social creativity is such an important dimension of politics that it is necessary to incorporate this notion into the criteria of democracy. The implications of these arguments for social and political theory will be demonstrated in relation to the following shared themes: the rethinking of creativity and imagination, the critique of hierarchy and its legitimations, the distinctive concern with the immanent conditions of the eclipse of democracy, and the contention that democracy derives from particular epistemological orientations and ontological interpretations.

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**Massimo Cerulo** - *University of Calabria*

## **The Daily Life of the Professional Politician**

Is it possible to think the politics *also sociologically* (Bourdieu 2000)? In this communication I try to answer to this question.

This report is based on my PhD research (Cerulo 2009). During more than one year of ethnographic research in the field, using the shadowing technique and interviews, I followed sixteen Calabrian politicians: 11 men and 5 women. The aim of my study was to observe the daily life of these professional politicians, trying to view politics in a *sociological way* (Auyero 2006; Tilly 2006): that is, assuming the point of view of the sociologist of the daily life. The main results of my research can be summarized in four points: 1) the calabrian political class seems to be strongly “self-referred”. It has a particular difficulty to represent the citizens; 2) the calabrian political class seems to live in a “world apart”(Schutz 1962). The behaviors and habits of politicians are different from normal citizens’ behavior. Citizens consider them like “advantage strangers”; 3) the politician is a person of habit, not very inclined to changes and hazard. During his formation he learns the art and he receives. He subsequently gives up the experience (cf. Simmel 1908) and he lives into a world “taken for granted”; 4) the emotions and the sentiments of the politicians are “commercialized” (cf. Illouz 2007; Hochschild 2003): the subjects have problems to manifest their “authentic” sensations.

It therefore appears that there is not way to imagination in the everyday life of the professional politician. The politician field seems to spread an inescapable determinism.

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**Bogdan Costea** – *Lancaster University*

### **Politics of Excess: Imagining Human Resourcefulness, Work and Performance Today**

This paper investigates the politics of managerial discourses about the nature and human shape of work over the last three decades. The political gesture underlying them is novel: their sustained aim has been to reconstruct the dialectic of labour as a series of acts of self-understanding, self-examination and “self-work”. The “self *qua* self” has become constituted as the central object of management technologies – in the shape of a new, enhanced ‘human resource’. The concrete human form invoked by these discourses is that of endless potentiality and resourcefulness in work. It is manifest in the proliferation of concepts such as “excellence”, “total quality”, “performance”, “knowledge”, “talent”, “innovation”, “entrepreneurial spirit”, or “wellness” – to mention but a few central tropes. I will discuss the way in which this politics of human excess aims to reconfigure the social processes of work and of its politics and governance by projecting a new horizon of “human resourcefulness” as a store of unlimited potentialities.

The paper examines some of these current vocabularies and practices. It shows how they rearticulate discursively the human subject as an endless source of performativity by configuring work as the site of complex and continuous self-expression.

In order to decipher the ways in which this came about, I shall examine management’s wider historical–cultural context. I will situate managerialism within the framework of modernity and argue that it operates within a particular vein of this cultural epoch – namely, what I term

*derecognition of finitude*. It is this feature of the modern cultural synthesis that provides the ground for current elaborations of images of endless human resourcefulness by managerialism.

By appropriating a new central conceptual agent – the *Self* as always possessing qualities in excess, qualities that can be actualised through work – managerialism seeks a new way to legitimise its own expansion: instead of appearing as an authoritarian instance forcing constraints on work, it now presents itself as a ‘guide’ *sui generis* in overcoming work as self-renunciation and transforming it into a continuous process of self-affirmation/assertion (at the limit, work is presented as becoming virtually therapeutic, as a route to wellness). Work is no longer allowed to appear as an expenditure of the self; rather it is recast by managerialism as a meaningful investment in self-realisation.

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**Justin Cruickshank** -*Birmingham University*

### **Neo-Pragmatism and Imaginative Social Science: Overcoming The Metaphysical Itch?**

Rorty rejects theory taking this to be a form of realism that seeks to define the essential features of the really real realm. Theory may be described as giving in to the western metaphysical itch, by trying to go beyond mere appearances to pin down something more real. Rorty eschews this in favour of arguing that the self is contingent and that all knowledge claims are expressions of the intersubjective norms which the self is located within. Some followers of Rorty follow this approach by arguing that a social scientist must be able imaginatively to recreate their identity and perspectives rather than using theory to ‘map’ the social world. It is argued that this approach fails to appreciate how theory may be developed in a nominalist rather than a realist fashion and thus it fails to realise how theory may be used imaginatively to solve problems. It is also argued that those who reject theory end up advocating an extreme nominalism that ironically replicates the realist approach to theory by resulting in conceptual closure.

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**Sociological Perspectives of Child Labour: does it natural or cultural?**

Sociological perspective appeared as a result of ‘social responsibility’ discourse. The main aim of this discourse is to look at children in the context of social rather than economic development. According to ‘social responsibility’ discourse, child labour is “ a problem of social exclusion leading to work that exploits, alienates and oppresses children, often because they are socially excluded in the first place.” (Weston, H. ed 2005: 29) Lavalette (1999) states that the new sociologists of childhood and child labour have focused on the exclusion of children from social life, the devaluation of children’s activities, children’s rights, adult power and the need to give the children ‘a voice’ in the research and political process. According to sociological perspective, childhood is not a ‘walled garden’ (Holt, 1974), which represents an idealized world free from oppression and exploitation. (Lavalette, 1999) This world simply does not exist and because of the fact of biological immaturity, children are excluded from decision making of all levels of society and subjected to various forms of punishment in order to control their behavior. (See Lavalette, 1999: 18, Franklin, 1986 and Wilson 1995) Thus, it is generally assumed that socially inferior position of children is natural. However, numerous studies show that there are societies where children are active participants in family, productive and social life. So, it would be wrong to claim that child labour is inevitable or natural in modern capitalist societies and it must be theoretically and historically contextualized and the social, political and economic arrangements that determine its forms must be carefully and critically examined. It is important to note that children across different times and cultures have nothing in common so any prospect of human liberation from exploitation and oppression is lost and two ideas of Foucault and Weber is valid: there is the power- knowledge apparatus in every society where individuals oppress each other and power domination is produced from various sources. (Lavalette, 1999) Thus, it would not be right to impose our values onto interpretations of children’s experiences of the past and the ones in different cultures. This paper simply investigates sociological perspective of child labour by discussing if child labour is natural and inevitable or cultural phenomenon.

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**Leila Dawney**- *University of Exeter* and **Tehseen Noorani** – *University of Bristol*

## **Social Imaginaries and Therapeutic Self-work**

Our paper explores the concept of the social imaginary as a means of understanding the way in which bodies and worlds interact in the production of therapeutic spaces. Firstly we provide a theoretical means of thinking about the 'body' that 'imagines', through a Spinozist formulation of the social imaginary. This formulation is positioned as a critique of recent work by Castoriadis and Taylor on social imaginaries which we consider insufficiently nuanced. The Spinozist concept of the imagination allows us to consider imagining as an affective process which colours one's experience of the world. The work of imagining and investing in imaginaries also provides a means of rethinking the relationship of oneself to oneself and the process of identity-work. For us, the social imaginary exists in relational spaces of constant transition, is worked upon and through in everyday life, and specifically here in the therapeutic process of "bettering oneself". In particular we explore the Spinozist idea that all entities, groups and individuals, strive to persevere and grow through working on imaginaries in the narrativisation of experience according to regimes, vocabularies and technologies of the therapeutic.

We are interested in how individuals and groups work on particular imaginaries and in so doing produce novel forms of self-governance that elude the traditional lexicon of identity-theorising. In this way a focus on the social imaginary and the process of imagining allow us to think the political in the negotiation of the multiple and conflicting spaces of the imaginary. We use examples from our own very different empirical research to provide illustration, drawing on the therapeutic spaces/landscapes of the self help group and the coastal footpath in our discussion of the value of the social imaginary as a tool for cultural and social analysis.

In the first case study, we look at how self help groups assemble sets of strategies, symbols, spatial distributions and rules of conduct, and in so doing produce ways of governing distressing affects that can no longer be held hostage to the choice between professional medicine and anti-psychiatry. The second case study focuses on the employment and negotiation of social imaginaries constituting a relation to self/body/nature/landscape in the embodied experience of walking along a

coastal footpath and the way in which these imaginaries contribute to a therapeutic framing of specific assemblages of bodies and landscapes.

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**Maria Puig de la Bellacasa**, *Cardiff School of Social Sciences*

### **Ethics, ethology and politics: Caring in nature cultures**

Reference to ethics is increasingly explicit within science studies and approaches to knowledge politics. In this paper I explore the decentering of normative perceptions of ethics. For instance, in science and technology studies attention to concrete practices and to entanglements of relationality and distributed agency bring the ethical beyond its focus on individual intentionality. Contemporary studies of human and non human relations in naturecultures privilege doings rather than norms, ethos rather than values. Care ethics focus on the everyday ethical doings that sustain and form collectives as well as foster an ethical obligation towards the neglected. These approaches go beyond individual actions and normative frameworks and do not approach the ethical as a distinct dimension of moral, social and political concerns. Together, care and ethological ethics call for a conception of ethics that meddle with the political rather than with the realm of Morality.

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**Ranji Devadason** - *University of Bristol*

### **Engineering the political imagination: negotiating ethnic categories and community cohesion in North London**

By quantifying tacit aspects of social life which were previously left beyond the remit of political science, Putnam's theory of social capital is thought to be conducive to new forms of governance that characterise the current era. The use of the metaphor of capital to represent social ties and values in part explains its discursive hold on the contemporary political imagination. Furthermore, the quantification of social behaviour it entails lends itself to systematic comparison across cities, regions and countries, as well as social categories, thus, underlining its explanatory potential. In Britain, the riots in the northern towns in the summer of 2001 prompted concerns about the

density of social bonds *within* ethnic groups in tandem with a deficit in bridging ties *between* ethnic categories, in ethnically diverse cities. The resultant emphasis upon ‘community cohesion’ in British policy and politics derives from the belief that a shared sense of belonging, alongside diversity, is the crucial step towards tackling ethnic divisions and inequalities. However, it is clear that top-down, state endorsement of community cohesion may fail to inspire the types of sustained grassroots’ connections associated with social capital which are so prized by Putnam as the bedrock of civil society.

Preliminary fieldwork in North London revealed that significant local disparities exist with regard to the ways in which community cohesion initiatives are implemented in different local authorities. Public ‘investment’ in distinctively ‘ethnic’ social capital – namely, ethnic voluntary organisations and infrastructure – varies considerably between local authorities. Accordingly, ethnic minority residents’ engagement in their local politics depends on historically established practices and institutions which facilitate – or inhibit – participation. This paper draws on structured interviews with 47 voluntary associations in North London to examine these themes. The research set out to analyse patterns of political engagement of three established ethnic minority groups in London – Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Indian – in keeping with the comparative, cross-national design of the *Local Multidem* study.<sup>2</sup> However, the London sample includes organisations which are not defined by shared ethnic or national origins but comply with policy definitions (e.g. ‘BME’ or ‘Asian’) and thereby, potentially, contribute to bridging and linking capital, rather than necessarily sustaining bonding ties. These organisations often depend upon state funding and policies, which – in turn – makes them accountable to their local authorities. The paper considers whether organisations which define themselves in inclusive terms – as serving a range of minority groups or on the basis of other social categories (e.g. youth, women, and neighbourhood) – exert more influence in local decision-making processes than those which are defined by specific ethnic or regional origins. It thus reveals whether the political imaginaries of *bridging* and *bonding capital* resonate with minority experience and political engagement in north London.

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<sup>2</sup> Results presented in this paper have been obtained within the project *Multicultural Democracy and Immigrants’ Social Capital in Europe: Participation, Organisational Networks, and Public Policies at the Local Level* (LOCALMULTIDEM). This project is funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme’s Priority 7 ‘Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society’ as a STREP instrument (contract no. CIT5-CT-2005-028802).

<sup>1</sup> Results presented in this paper have been obtained within the project *Multicultural Democracy and Immigrants' Social Capital in Europe: Participation, Organisational Networks, and Public Policies at the Local Level* (LOCALMULTIDEM). This project is funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme's Priority 7 'Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society' as a STREP instrument (contract no. CIT5-CT-2005-028802).

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Dillon – abstract to follow shortly

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**Aram Eisenschitz** - *Middlesex University*

### **Imagining the Political.**

A commanding strategy in a capitalist society is of depoliticisation. All aspects of society are subject to this approach: family, gender relations, food, environment, culture or democracy. In an economic crisis, however, these institutions are subject to tensions and struggle because of mounting pressure to re-politicise them. By politicisation is meant that these institutions cannot be regarded in isolation but become part of a larger structure which informs power relations and affects individual life chances. The result is that they are recognised by increasingly large numbers of people to be a part of the process by which capitalist social relations are reproduced and which consequently affects all aspects of daily life. Politicisation is an element of the politics of knowledge – how is social reality conceptualised around these depoliticised concepts during times of growth and how do these constructions unravel during crisis?

Depoliticisation, by contrast, is the process whereby capitalism demonstrates that it is not a holistic system and that the actions of the state are independent of the accumulation process. This process lies behind the intellectual division of labour: a holistic knowledge is fragmented into academic disciplines including sociology. In crisis, these boundaries are disputed because their claims to autonomy from capitalist processes are put in doubt.

The paper will illustrate the idea of politicisation by a study of regeneration. Continuing failure during the 1990s meant that policies for urban renewal were subject to pressures to abandon physical conceptualisations – which channelled attention away from political issues - and address poverty and powerlessness by more political social policies. But these strategies again avoided politics – the social agenda was constructed in ways that emphasised individualist rather than collective approaches to change. Regeneration also returned to physical strategies by adding a cultural dimension such as arts centres. Culture becomes another political area of intervention because it allows urban renewal in ways that reinforce existing relations of power but in a low key manner. The problems there are consequently perpetuated by a politics of knowledge orchestrated by applied sociology.

The paper will use various elements of regeneration such as local government and local democracy to show how knowledge, under certain conditions, can obscure a class politics. Yet in crisis the social relations that underlie the state's actions become visible and consequently attempts to construct political alternatives are made. Sociology, therefore, has a highly political position as gatekeeper of social knowledge which influences people's subjectivity. In recession this process is likely to become central to disciplinary debate. It is important, therefore, not to look just at how we conceptualise politics, but how politics influences the way sociology conceptualises social reality.

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**Raquel Sosa Elizaga**, *National Autonomous University of Mexico*

**Imaginining politics. The politics of imagination: the experience of Mexico's Legitimate Government**

An original form of political activity is present from 2006 onward in Mexico. After the electoral fraud, nearly three million people joined the peaceful civic resistance and gave birth to the Legitimate government. This is a social and political organization meant to denounce and oppose whatever violations to people's rights are intended on the part of the imposed government, but also to protect the national patrimony against

privatization. Representatives of this Legitimate government have constituted municipal committees all over the country. Their task is to keep the communication, organization and political struggle necessary to initiate a deep transformation of Mexico's public life. The basic principle by which these committees and the representatives are organized is to discard the traditional ways of doing politics, and transform politics into a true public service activity. This principle is fulfilled through a strong group feeling, which could be well described by the concept of *asabiya*, used by Ibn Khaldun on the fourteenth century. Memory, tradition, common grieves but particularly a strong will and hope of a better life for all in the future are in the roots of this movement.

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**Isis Sanchez Estelles** - *University of Essex*

The research about impact of social movement is underdeveloped in the social movement theory; this paper aims to contribute to the research in this area, explaining the impact of the antiwar movement in Spain during 2001-2004.

It is said that the terrorist attacks in Madrid on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2004 gave the victory to the Socialist Party (the centre-left) against the Popular Party (the centre-right). Some experts argue that as the vast majority of opinion polls predicted the winning of the Popular Party, the final results were due to the terrorist attacks, (Lamo de Espinosa, 2004). Another group of experts argue that the intervention in the war in Iraq was crucial in triggering a huge mass movement and public opinion against the decision of the Aznar government. It is claimed that the participation in the war and the support given to Bush's policies by Aznar lead to a change in the preferences of the electors; changing from the Popular Party to the Socialist Party, (Monteron, J, R, Lago, I 2005, Santamaría, 2004, Sanz A and Sanchez, A 2005). My research has the aim to argue for the hypothesis of the second group of experts. I will base my research on two concepts of the political process approach to social movements: cycles of protest and political opportunities structure. Firstly, I will explain how the antiwar movement is inserted in a cycle of protest against the PP during 2001-2004. Secondly, I will analyse the structure of political opportunities explaining how the support of the Socialist Party in the movement was a clue to the impact of the movement as well as other elements of the political system including the structure of the

mass media. I will explain by these two concepts that there were reasons for a change in government before the attacks. Finally I will give some new findings for the research on impact of social movements.

My methodology involves qualitative analysis with Max QDA programme of: a) 45 interviews, carried out in Spain, to activists of the antiwar movements and militants of the Socialist Party and United Left and artists; b) news from the two major newspapers in Spain *El Pais* and *El Mundo* and c) documentary analysis of the main organizations of the antiwar movement (Culture Platform against the War, Madrid Social Forum, Aturem la Guerra, Stop the War, Committee of Solidarity with the Arab cause and Universities). My analysis of data also includes analysis of opinion polls.

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**Oscar Forero and Graham Smith** - *University of Lancaster and University of London*

### **The imagined cuisine of the Ukrainian diaspora in Bradford, England: A political instrument and a cultural artifact of integration**

Since their arrival in the immediate post-war years Ukrainian families in Britain have followed a number of ‘projects’ associated with successive generations. These generational ‘projects’ mix the cultural with the political as we will demonstrate in our recent research into changing foodways amongst the ‘Ukrainian Community’ in Bradford, England. Building on two earlier studies, conducted with the same community in the 1980s and 1990s, we argue that the distinctive projects of three generational fields of this community can be identified:

- (1) Ukrainian food as a way of defining an imagined national identity
- (2) Ukrainian food as a cultural artifact of integration; and
- (3) Ukrainian food as cultural tokenism.

What makes this development the more intriguing is the fact that the particularities of Ukrainian traditional foods were all largely recalled constructions by those who settled in Britain during the late 1940s.

The culinary traditions, that the primary settlers were to categorise as distinctively Ukrainian, could be found in the traditions of Russia, Poland and Germany. Most of these self-styled members of the ‘first generation’



had left Ukraine as children or young adults and had either served for several years in the German army or as slave labour in Germany before becoming Prisoners of War or Displaced Persons. Once in Britain they were to construct an 'Ukrainianess' that included a vaguely recalled an imagined Ukrainian cuisine as a way of advancing and maintaining the political project of an independent Ukraine.

A sense of being Ukrainian, including the consumption of what is perceived as Ukrainian food, have remained important to the children and grandchildren of the primary settlers. However, the use of the cultural has changed as the political projects have changed. By following the Ukrainian diasporic experience in Bradford it becomes evident that the transformation of foodways, in which 'the imagined' is proverbial, has enabled the children and grandchildren both to engage with their sense of what it means to be Ukrainian and to believe that they belong to British society. In doing so, they have not only preserved a 'cultural taste' and developed new political projects, but they have also have made evident that particular local projects of generational fields occur parallel to the larger geopolitical historical movements that shape to the Nation-States.

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## **Anselma Gallinat**

### **The apolitical East? Political dimensions of *Systemkritik* in eastern Germany**

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall Germany continues to grapple with Unification. In the 'unification by accession' the political and economic structures of the East were transformed according to the West German model. This however also introduced new sets of values and required a change of culture. According to the public discourse in Germany eastern Germany now lags behind with regard to political culture: eastern Germans are apolitical and lack an understanding of democracy. Invariably, these shortfalls are attributed to the socialist legacy in personal biographies and continued cultural practice and, at times, to the greater economic difficulties in the eastern federal states.

The anthropological literature has criticised the notion of 'transitology', the idea that the fall of socialism will be followed by a near-linear transition to

free market democracy, prevalent in political science and economics in the 1990s. Anthropologists argued that this notion is based in western European understandings of democracy and capitalism. Ethnographies showed that the transformation may lead to unprecedented and unexpected forms of political and economic life. The question is whether this extends to the question of what it means to be political or to voice political criticism. This paper hence seeks to examine critically the apparent lack of political thought and practice in eastern Germany.

This paper is based in a recently completed ethnographic research project which entailed participant observation and interviews (<http://the-socialist-past.ncl.ac.uk>). It will draw on this material to highlight the political dimension of apparently apolitical conversations and statements in everyday life. It will do so through a focus on the 'system'. The term system is used frequently in the German discourse, it denotes the entirety of external structures which infringe, limit, confine and guide individual actors. It is usually construed as in tension with the creative and reflective self. Research participants used the term 'system' most frequently in relation to the structures of the socialist state when describing their life-course. However, they also referred to present situations as shaped by the new political system. This kind of *Systemkritik*, critique of the system, which is based in individuals' experiences of East German socialism and West German democracy, is often misconstrued as nostalgia, at other times considered to be social critique. In contrast the paper will highlight the highly political dimensions of notions of system and system-critique. This paper will hence approach the question of what the political is, and how it can be differentiated from the social and cultural, through an ethnographic exploration of the eastern German material.

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**Guillermo J. Grenier** - *Florida International University*

## **The Etiology of the Cuban Exile Ideology: The Social Creation and Maintenance of the Miami-Dade Enclave**

### **Abstract**

Although scholars have noted the enclave's capacity to propel Cubans ahead of other Hispanics with respect to economic and political power, there have been no studies of the development of the distinctive political ideology of

South Florida's Cubans or about the enclave's effect on this ideology. This article explores the etiology of the Cuban Exile Ideology and how the enclave serves as an incubator and regenerator of the Cuban Exile Ideology. The pluralistic nature of political culture in Cuba, spanning the spectrum from totalitarian to anarchist but finding an uneasy fulcrum along the social democratic center, did not predispose the exile community into adopting a right wing political profile. Yet, the development and maintenance of an "Exile Ideology" characterized by an uncompromising attitude towards the Cuban government, even after 50 years of failure of the exile agenda of return, begs explanation. We ask two essential questions: How was the Exile Ideology established in South Florida and to what degree has it been maintained in the face of consistent Cuban emigration? The first question is explored by examining the class dynamics of the "Exilio Historico;" the first wave of émigrés from the 1959 Revolution. During the first stages of the establishment of the exile community in South Florida, the ideology becomes a contested terrain, as groups with similar class interests attempt to establish hegemony over the tactical and ideological terrain. Following on the work of Forment (1989) we survey the political tendencies of the founding wave of exiles (Batistianos, Conservatives and Liberals) and find that, while this first wave of the exiles is often treated as being ideologically homogenous, there was diversity in the types of capital that they possessed and, in turn, used to solidify their class interests. Ultimately, the alliance with the State (U.S.A.) in establishing an antagonistic foreign policy towards the island concretized the victory of the right and the solidification of the exile ideology as a socializing force in South Florida. As the demographic characteristics and class structure of the Cuban-American émigré community changes, the exile ideology continues to establish the parameters of the "exile" discourse, and is institutionalized in the operations of the social and organizational networks of the enclave. Finally, we explore how this "enclave effect" serves as an incubator and regenerator of the Cuban Exile Ideology. The sustainability of anti-Castro ideology, we argue, is greatly enhanced by the institutional matrix provided by the enclave in South Florida. To test for this, we examine the proportion of an immigrant's time outside of Cuba that has been spent in the enclave, hypothesizing that if more than one half of the time outside of Cuba has been in the South Florida enclave, the odds of supporting exile ideology will be greater. We find the predicted "enclave effect." For more than half of the measures of exile ideology, a statistically significant predictor is having lived in South Florida (Miami-Dade County and Broward County) for most of the years outside of Cuba.

**Barbara Grüning**, *University of Macerata*

## **Art of narrating and question of cultural acknowledgment in reunified Germany**

The paper proposes to explore from a sociological perspective the question of German integration after 1989 through the analysis of some artistic works.

Thesis of the author is that the construction of a political community is not the result only of institutional politics, but also of everyday praxis. In other words, by considering the political culture as a “symbolic structuring” (Olick 2007, 22), the question is to distinguish two separated levels of the process of the integration: on one hand the acceptance of institutions and norms of the Federal Republic and on the other hand an *ethic-political understanding* between the member of the community through *the exchange of historical experiences* (Habermas 2006).

After about twenty years of the German reunification a cultural and interpersonal communication between east and west Germans (e.g. Honneth 1994) is still problematic. The situation is complicated by the role of the mainstream media, as principal entrepreneurs of the commonsense and of the *common memory* (e.g. Jedlowski 2002). The oversimplifying representations of the GDR-past (e.g. Ahbe 2004) lead on one hand on a mistrust attitude towards east Germans, and on the other hand, the east Germans on feeling themselves as unacknowledged.

In the analysis I consider three cultural texts - a screenplay “Wir Sind auch nur ein Volk” (Becker 1994; 1995); a documentary “Die Kinder von Golzow” (Winfried and Winfried, 1961-2005) and a novel “Die Gunnar-Lennefsen-Expedition” (Schmidt 1998) – that have a marginal place in the public memory. However, they offer the possibility of a cultural and interpersonal meeting and allow individuals to understand desires, problems and emotions, that they have often difficulty to express publicly.

Particularly, by narrating the recent past from a everyday-life perspective, they deal with the problematic of mutual acknowledgment and of a *narrative* collective identity.

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**Marc Higgin**  
**Unfencing the Open.**



‘Fences can be a work of art’

Let’s forget the open beyond for the moment and take a closer at the fences just here, right now.

“A fence is a freestanding structure designed to restrict or prevent movement across a boundary”

Boundaries. Categories. Logos. Subject. Man the Rational Animal pitted, in an endless and fierce struggle, against movement.

2 versions of a fence

### Communication

Here we have the ‘self-governing reflective individual whose inner life can be conveyed at will to a public composed of similarly sovereign individuals...[These] rational atoms of human experience in voluntary congregation, usefully sharing thoughts and experiences’ (Massumi 2002, p xiii).

Man the animal that speaks. I

Man the animal that speaks. You

Man the animal that speaks. It

Man the animal that speaks. Animal

Bull shit. Cat wee. You smell It?

“Expression is not in a language-using mind, or in a speaking subject vis-à-vis its objects. Nor is it rooted in an individual body....*Expression is abroad in the world*” (Massumi 2002, p xxi).

Using Deleuze and Guattari thought, Massumi offers us the story of expression abroad in the world. It was never owned, by me, you or anyone else. Nor are we simply spoken through and subjected. Expression moves, transforming and being transformed as it does so.

How *do* we live with anything but silent creatures?

### Closed Umwelts

“The two perceptual worlds of the fly and the spider are absolutely *uncommunicating*, and yet so perfectly in tune (part of same musical score)...express the paradoxical coincidence of this reciprocal blindness.” (von Uexküll quoted in Agamben P42)

These enclosures of the fly and spider are for von Uexküll, the result of the fixed perceptual-behavioural systems. Show me a bowl of food, I'll salivate. Introduce a bell, however, and there you have your opening. I may be able to *control* this opening in a laboratory, but the world is a much messier, noisier place. Thankfully.

The movements of the body do not play themselves out in a vacuum, but are perceived and *responded to* by any number of other organisms, any number of audiences, any number of publics.

How *do* we live as anything but silent bodies?

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**Andrew Hill** - *The Open University*

### **Imagining Kabul: the politics of the imagination and the War on Terror**

The question of how Western publics imagine ‘distant places’ can be located as central to the terms in which these publics have perceived and comprehended the War on Terror. If imagining is above all a visual process, the importance of the role played by processes of imagining in how publics understand the War on Terror is underlined by the proliferation of visual imagery of the conflict, as well as the significance of imagery (of for example the September 11 attacks and abuses at Abu Ghraib) to the course the conflict has taken.

Taking Kabul as its focus this paper examines three different modes of depicting the Afghan capital, and the type of sources presented by each for imagining the city. The principal conduit through which many in the West are likely to have encountered the city is the institutional media, including television news, current affairs programming, and newspaper reports. The type of source these depictions present for imagining Kabul are contrasted with the two other modes of depicting the city, both of which accord with the concept (introduced in this paper) of ‘the minor gaze’ (adapted from Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of a ‘minor literature’). Firstly, this takes the

form of the work of a series of non-Afghan (and principally western) photographers and filmmakers who have documented Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. The second such mode is Afghan depictions of Kabul, principally in the form of weblogs and related material accessible to western publics via the web.

The paper takes up the differing sources these depictions of Kabul present for imagining the city to assess the way in which the imagination can figure and fail to figure as a source for political action - most directly in opposing the course the War on Terror has taken, but more broadly as well. In so doing the paper scrutinizes the possibilities and limitations of the imagination as a catalyst for political engagement.

Andrew Hill is a Research Fellow in Visual Culture in CRESC (Centre for Research in Socio-Cultural Change) at The Open University, UK. He is the author of *Re-imagining the War on Terror: seeing, waiting, travelling* (Palgrave, 2009), and a series of articles and chapters on the intersections between politics, culture and conflict.

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**Barry Hindess** - *Australian National University*

### **Imaging Society, State and the International**

**Abstract.** Throughout the history of sociology, its practitioners have seen humanity as divided into a number of discrete societies, most of which are tied to nation-states and cultures of their own or thought to be moving towards such a condition. According to this view, the international sphere consists of relations between nation states, and also between the national societies with which they are associated. Yet over the last 30 years or so, the development of economic and other links between societies has prompted a number of sociologists and other social scientists to revise this model, suggesting instead that the boundaries between national societies/states are breaking down and that the world is either moving towards or has already reached a global or cosmopolitan condition. While the conventional view is unsatisfactory, this revisionist alternative is no real improvement



**Housley, W. and Smith, R.** - *Cardiff School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University*

## **Mundane Reason and The Politics of Space**

In this paper we aim to utilise and apply ethnomethodological and interactionist principles (Goffman, 1974, Atkinson and Housley, 2003, Atkinson, Delamont and Housley 2008) to the analysis of member's situated accounts of regenerated urban space where leisure and consumption are paramount. With reference to previous empirical studies (Housley and Wahl-Jorgensen, 2008, Smith, 2009) we apply membership categorisation analysis (Sacks, 1992a,b, McHoul and Watson, 1984, Housley and Fitzgerald, 2002) and the concept of mundane reason (Pollner, 1987) to data gathered from situated street level interviews (Baker, 2001) carried out as part of a program of ethnographic research into the regenerated setting of Cardiff Bay. The paper demonstrates that these data yield sociological insight into social actors' interpretive and interactional reasoning in relation to the negotiation, navigation and comprehension of space and place. We identify specific registers of mundane urban reasoning that include accounts that disrupt the smooth narrative of a neo-liberal urban imaginary (Soja, 2000) through invocation of the industrial past, national identity and the mundane identification of the faultlines of regeneration (Smith, 2009). The paper empirically identifies the contested character of contemporary urban order within which urban actors are subject to various regimes of categorisation, people processing and the everyday demands of passing as a competent urban actor (Rapport, 2008, Housley, 2009, Smith, 2009). These interactional regimes demand and constitute distinctions between citizens and consumers, the public and the private, aswell as disruptive and accommodating accounts of the neo-liberalization of urban space (Peck and Tickell, 2002). In conclusion, we consider the ways in which these types of consumerist spaces and the transformation of urban interactional order in relation to the 'credit crunch' and recession represent breaches and social organisational trouble for urban technologies of social control, regulation and integration.

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**Rachel Hurdley** – *Cardiff University*

**The Power of Corridors: connecting doors, mobilising materials, plotting openness**

This paper is based on an ethnographic study of corridors in a university building. By attending to their huge physical presence in the everyday culture of an institution, the paper shows how corridors *matter*. Corridors' potency as metaphor and their proliferation as port-manteau terms in many contexts (such as transport, environment, poverty, education, urban and regional planning policy) has almost abstracted corridors from their increasingly vulnerable position in traditional buildings in the public sphere. Constructed as circulation space, corridors simultaneously connect and disconnect other spaces and the people in them, make both boundaries against and openings to the outside and outsiders. But corridors are not only boundaries and channels: they are walls, floors, ceilings, windows, sills and doors. Pinboards and paintings, trolleys and tables temper this relatively fixed arrangement with other surfaces, frames, contours and juxtapositions.

An inter-disciplinary building, designed around the concept of 'innovation', will soon form a new 'gateway' to the campus where this research was carried out. As such, the university is joining the latest movement in the public sphere towards open-plan, multi-functional, flexible structures which are constantly equated with the 'evolution' of 'openness', 'innovation' and 'transparency' by design experts and architects ([www.cabe.org.uk](http://www.cabe.org.uk); [www.academicworkspace.com](http://www.academicworkspace.com)).

However, this rhetoric is draws on a concept of the 'evolution' of space that has no 'before' to this 'after' story. Further, this equation of material and metaphor is an alchemical '=' sign proliferating in the public sphere that demands immediate academic scrutiny. One of my participants asked, 'without walls, where do you put the books?' My question is about the other side of the wall: when corridors, the extensive, open, accessible '=====' of the public sphere are displaced by 'openness', what will be disposed of, and what will remain? The paper argues first, that small arrangements mobilise and are mobilised in constantly re-configured 'openings' and 'closings' that cannot be fixed in the noun 'openness'. Second, corridors, by the very inflexibility that is anathema to the new doctrine, enable particular mobilities that opened-up, flexible spaces cannot. Third, with reference to the evolution of space, the new spaces of the public sphere bear traces that problematise the design equation.

The 'corridor'; the 'atrium' and the 'forum': these are the innards of organisational 'public' bodies, and thus call for careful ethnographic

rendering, rather than butchery by the augurs of design. By reimagining these as complex materials within current debates regarding mobilities, motility, materiality and spatial processes, I therefore propose transforming ‘openness’, ‘collaboration’ and ‘innovation’ into ‘openings’ and ‘closings’: metaphors in practice, rather than cliché. It might then be possible to delve into the ‘cut’ between the power of corridors, and the corridors of power.

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**Zyab Ibanez – EUI**

### **Part-time employment: beyond the trap?**

A large part of the literature on part-time employment stresses that it is the result of employers’ strategies and female employees who need to reconcile work and family life. However, the growth in the number of employees sharing employment and other paid or unpaid interests expands the range and significance of working-time issues.

The paper will claim that where regulation and implementation of working-time transitions are favourable to part-time employment, part-time is likely to expand to more diverse categories of workers than those for whom it was originally intended ( i.e. mothers with caring responsibilities). The research follows a case-oriented comparative approach that draws on documentary information and a total of 48 in-depth interviews with actors’ representatives at three levels: national, sector (education and local government) and organizational, in the UK, the Netherlands and Spain.

In the Dutch case, part-time regulation started off as a mechanism to enable the employment of women with caring responsibilities and, from there, it evolved towards a wider understanding of working-time flexibility, extending the right to work part-time to other categories of employees. After two decades of active support to part-time, there is still a big gender gap, and in many sectors and occupations employees face difficulties to change their working hours; however, the general trend seems to be that access to part-time is becoming easier at more sector and occupational levels, in a context where organizations, already facing short full-time working weeks and high percentages of part-time, have been learning to decouple business hours from the different duration of the employees’ shifts. The need to design clear-cut handing-over procedures that guarantee the steadiness of the service, have helped to accept a variety of working-time arrangements.

This capacity to dissociate organisations' operative time from employees' working hours is also present in British and Spanish 24-hour services, what has favoured exceptional good part-time jobs. Yet, the political efforts to promote part-time in Spain and the UK are confronted with serious obstacles, their segmented labour forces among them. The long-hours culture in both Spain and the UK, together with the high proportion of temporary contracts in the Spanish case, are the most visible signs of the structural difficulties these two countries face to achieve working-time flexibility.

In the three countries, the processes that lead to more transparent assessments of work performance seem to facilitate working-time flexibility beyond standard full-time employment contracts. Certainly, different commitments and compromises need to be achieved between conflicting demands and interests about how employees use their own time, but this thesis argues that part-time may help to soften the conflicts between the specialization and hierarchy requirements of the social division of labour and individuals' time-use autonomy.

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**Zoë Irving** – *University of Sheffield*

### **Island states in a small world: is resistance useless?**

The theoretical frameworks which operate within contemporary comparative political sociology rest upon a largely unremarked assumption that population size does not matter. Explanations of and predictions for the development of welfare relations in the US (population 304 million) and Sweden (population 9 million) for example, are undertaken because it is the essence of welfare states that is regarded as important, and this 'character' is established through concentration on the politics of class and gender, and occasionally ethnicity. 'Culture' is rarely drawn into these analyses despite its significance in accounting for the ways in which communities treat each other and despite the ways in which anthropological research problematises the methodological nationalism employed in comparative research. This raises questions for political sociology in a changing global order and suggests that questions of the 'local' have to be more thoroughly engaged with, to better inform predictions of behaviour in the global.

As national units, island states reveal much about the "glocal" that is missed in analyses of more internationally powerful nations. External policy

influences are more readily identifiable and internal idiosyncrasies more obvious, but study of island states also exposes aspects of the relationship between culture, economics, political strength and resistance which are less visible when considering policy change in large states. This paper presents some early findings of an analysis of the development of welfare arrangements in three small island states: Cyprus, Iceland and Jersey. It begins with an examination of the role of country size in comparative analysis and goes on to establish the ways in which the general analytical attraction of small states is also present in social policy study. The second section explores both the evolution of welfare provision and the nature of more recent welfare transition in these three contrasting states, and assesses the construction and operationalisation of the social relations of welfare. As a dimension of social analysis, social policy is at the intersection of politics and culture and the third section offers commentary on the extent to which a real and imagined clash of these two aspects can be illuminated through consideration of local social values and the extent to which they are adapted and protected in the face of global pressure. The final section assesses the form of resistance found in the three advanced small island states and its potential in the context of the ongoing global economic crisis.

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**Michael Janoschka** - *Spanish Council for Scientific Research*  
*Madrid*

### **Contentious dynamics at destinations for lifestyle migration: Political involvement as expression of identities and difference**

Within the context of individualized postmodern lifestyles, the leisure-oriented migration of both the American and the European baby boomer generation, e.g. to warmer climates, coastal regions and cheaper places, is a remarkable phenomenon, which recently rose especially towards destinations located outside the respective national and linguistic boundaries (e.g. Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean, Southern Europe, Thailand). In consequence, lifestyle migration becomes increasingly an expression of transnational practices, especially if aspects of political participation in local or regional settings are considered.

This paper provides a conceptual analysis of conflicts that may arise and evoke contentious dynamics and political participation of North American

and European retirement migrants in Central America and Southern Europe. We will discuss how political identities are constructed and applied as expressions of difference within those conflicts in order to contest locally bounded governance regimes. The strategic use of identities and differences will be presented through the analysis of comparative case studies of political involvement that is driven by mainly elderly foreign residents in Southern Spain and Costa Rica. I will focus my attention on the articulations that identities and difference provide for negotiations of political conflicts that shape different scales ranging from the private and local up to transnational arenas. The aim is to discuss the opportunities that politics of identity give as a source of radical political action, responding both to the complex accounts of space and contexts included in dynamic and often unstable constructions of contested identities. The theorization of how political identities are negotiated across multiple scales and with multiple others, become a key challenge for the discussion of the politics of lifestyle migration.

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**Magdalini Kolokitha and John Preston** – *University of London*

### **Inequalities at a glance**

#### **Abstract**

The affective and cognitive implications of social injustice have been of recent interest in the sociology of education. For example, how the ‘psychic landscapes of choice’ (Reay, 2005) shape and are shaped by the emotions, thoughts and practices of subjects. For Reay, this micro-social analysis is embedded within a theoretical framework of how class and other inequalities are perpetuated by actors and discourse. In a Bourdieuan analysis of social space, inequality is localized in fields and perpetuated through practices. We seek to interrupt and extend this analysis in two directions. Firstly, by asking what it means to ‘experience’ inequality in education not just as a localized phenomena, but also in terms of subjects understanding of the education system. Secondly, by considering how experiences of inequality form the basis of not just practices but political projects which have macro-social consequences.

The paper draws empirically and theoretically from a LLAKES research project on experiences and perceptions of inequalities. LLAKES is a centre where research is attempting to explore the possibility of social cohesion and

competitiveness being able to work together. Our project is investigating perceptions of inequality and their effect on social cohesion. Through our research we aim to explore economic and cultural experiences and perceptions of inequalities and their effect on representation (Fraser, 2007). Is representation perceived as local, national and/or global? Are these perceptions/experiences of inequality seen to justify individuals' attitudes on representation? The particular focus will be set on the way interviewees attempt to interrogate, justify, explain, criticize or accept experiences and/or perceptions of inequalities and particularly we aim to explore on the loci of their appreciation, micro or macro social.

We conclude the paper by discussing the difficulties of extending Bourdieuan sociological analysis in understanding the macro-social and by speculating on the implications for our analysis for current political movements within education in Europe.

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Fraser, N. (2007) *Abnormal Justice*

<http://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/issues/Fraser.pdf>

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**Jayati Lal** – *University of Michigan*

Counter-narratives of Domestic Citizenship

Gossip and the Making of Indian Factory Women's Subaltern Publics

This paper portrays the life histories of five women factory workers in Delhi who do not follow expected gender norms and whose life trajectories run counter to normative domesticity.<sup>1</sup> Each of these women—the hopeful bride, who secretly hopes for the pleasure of work after she marries; the resigned spinster, who does not anticipate marrying but will continue to work and live with her sister; the abandoned first wife, who lives with strangers and has become a self supporting woman; the abandoned and divorced woman, who will care for her parents in their old age; the deserting wife, who lives with another man who is himself married; and the rejecting fiancée, who ends up in a love marriage—re-write the story lines of gender. Read together as *performative* scripts, their lives are not illustrations of idiosyncratic individual exceptions, but are productive of new models of gender and hence

are *generative* at the social and collective level. Rather than being restricted to the exceptional or dramatic, various forms of talk bring these stories into circulation in women workers' lifeworlds, scripting the events and circumstances of 'other' women's lives into the quotidian heterodoxy of working class lives.

The lives of these women are not anomalies whose circumstantial causes are coincidental and accidental, and which therefore cannot be reproduced. Instead, these 'extraordinary' lives are conjunctural. They emerge in the late eighties when new opportunities and demands for women's factory work materialize. The experience of work subjects women to new regimes of governmentality in the factory and produces new modes of subjectivation to public patriarchies. But they also produce the *conditions of possibility* for challenging extant gender orders and articulating new forms of domesticity. In each story, women happen upon work due to family circumstances, but work does not just 'happen' to them; it actively shapes their unfolding narratives of rearticulated gender. As ideological counter-narratives that expand the repertoire of working women's potential lifelines, their lives provide concrete representations of future possibilities for factory women. They enlarge the *social imaginary of gender* by challenging conventional plotlines and by chronicling new structures of feeling about work to include pleasure and enablement in addition to those of necessity and handicap.

I explore the circulation of these stories and the ways in which transgressions go public through gendered forms of talk such as gossip and rumor. Although the diffusion of alternative gender orders also occurs through anonymous forms of address and pedagogical forms of story-telling in popular culture and the media, for semi- or illiterate factory workers with limited access to television and films, gossip is a more accessible and democratic form of discourse. As a *representational regime*, gossip entails stories about aspects of workers' experiential lifeworlds that they can readily identify with, and which is about someone who is directly or indirectly known to them. In this sense, gossip produces empathetic identifications with uncommon women. When women make their stories public—whether by moving from silence to speech, or by bringing their practical accomplishments into visibility through nonverbal means—they transform societal as well as self images of women workers to produce a new 'collective memory' of working class women, even for those who may not directly experience such events first hand. These stories become communal, *visible* and social through their enactment via speech.



In this paper, I address the *politics of gossip* in creating communities within factories, redrawing the contours of working class culture, and cementing a shared understanding about the boundaries of a new moral order. The publicity of counter-narratives of gender through gossip and rumor produce new epistemic communities by means of which future gender practices are transformed, and the conditions and contours of women's domestic citizenship are remade. Women factory workers' precarious lives make them acutely aware of the likelihood that they might just as easily encounter the circumstances of the women in these stories, which is the basis of forging an empathetic epistemic community—a *women's subaltern public*.

The work of gossip brings the extraordinary and scandalous into the realm of everyday dialog and hence too, into the realm of the possible. It tracks the ways in which factory women envision, experience and remake marriage and kinship, the sexual division of labor at home, and the availability and limitations of domestic patriarchal protection. The generative capacity of such talk is that it normalizes gender troubles by illuminating the routes taken and capacities that are drawn on to counter them, thereby transforming the rhetorical spaces of working class femininity. In other words, stories of 'Other' women showcase the contingencies of their alterity, producing a *politics of the possible* since they enable mimesis and repetition under different circumstances, perhaps also, sometime in the future, when not brought on by exigency. I argue that treating gossip as consequential rather than trivial enables the recognition of its political nature and the ways in which it aids the feminist political project of widening the horizon of gender scripts and practices.

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**Susanne Langer** – *Liverpool John Moores University*

### **Finding the right balance: well-being and self-management in chronic illness**

Moderation's currency is not limited to the political, but also has a long-standing tradition in the realm of health and healing. This should not come as a surprise because in Classical Greek thought, for instance in the work of Plato, political relations followed the same principles that organised the cosmos. In such an ideal world, nature, society and people were all constituted by harmonious combinations of diverse element, with each

smaller unit contributing to the equilibrium of the larger one. Under these circumstances, health and well-being are simultaneously cause and evidence of properly balanced relations: political, social and cosmological.

Alberto Corsín Jiménez (2009) has recently proposed the study of proportionality – the combination of social analysis and a theory of ethics – as a tool in the study of well-being. Arguing for a definition of well-being as located in persons, he hopes such a methodology will allow for the simultaneous study of the whole and its constituents. That is, it will enable an analysis of society without reifying it, and of relations without fetishising them. I want to take up Corsín Jiménez' invitation to study persons as the site of well-being by drawing on anthropological fieldwork in England with people with multiple sclerosis (MS). MS is a chronic, unpredictable and frequently progressive neurological condition for which bio-medical treatment is largely restricted to symptom control. In such a context, health professionals and patients place considerable importance on self-management as the means by which to generate a sense of well-being in the absence of health. Well-being is seen to be achievable by knowing ones limits and avoiding extremes. Hence, the pursuit of moderation emerges as a potential source of agency.

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**Joanna Latimer** – *Cardiff University*

### **New epistemologies, libratory ontologies? The gene and the(post)human**

The new genetics according to theorists of recombinant biology, such as Donna Haraway, offers the potential for a 'libratory ontology'. In particular the new genetics can be understood as affording ways to reimagine the connectivity of very different kinds of creature. This connectivity seems to undo the dividing practices of modernity, for example, mind-body split, and the animal-human distinctions that produce notions of human exceptionalism. These distinctions underpin the figure of the individual, as the defining feature of the human, one that underpins modern forms of social organization. I explore how this libratory potential depends upon what the new biologies are made to mean, particularly in terms of how, where and when they are enrolled. The genetic clinic is one site through which to observe how the ideas that the new biology puts into play are being circulated and translated. The paper explores ideas of what it is to be human and debates around the deconstruction of human exceptionalism and what Agamben describes as the anthropological machine. In particular it

questions the consequences of liberating us from ideas of human exceptionalism for social justice, specifically in terms of welfare and the protection of the weak and the vulnerable. It then shows that in a number of ways in its alignment with the gene, the genetic clinic reinvigorates itself as a protagonist of the human, not the (post)human, to revive the notion that persons are much more than simply determined by their biology. It is this capacity to hold different grounds in play that helps medicine in its alignment with the gene reinvigorate its place as what Foucault described as the queen of the human rather than the life sciences.

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**Kiat-Jin Lee** – *National University of Singapore*

### **The Phantasmagoria of Marx: A Hegelian appraisal of Marx's critique of Hegel**

Who among conventional sociologists read Hegel? Paraphrasing the opening of *The Communist Manifesto*, the apparition of Marx is indeed haunting Hegel, since the former mediates considerably our conception of the latter. Therefore, while by no means espousing an ahistorical return to Hegel considering the vastly different circumstances, the specter of Marx must first be addressed if he is ever to become pertinent for sociologists.

Rose's *Hegel Contra Sociology* challenged the conception that the *Philosophy of Right* and *Phenomenology of Spirit* are standalone manuscripts. In this manner, this paper extends her inquiries to the connection between Hegel and Marx. The speculative proposition, 'what is rational is actual and what is actual is rational', in the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right* encapsulates the enigma of Hegel. Whereas the *Philosophy of Right* concerns matters of the state, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* involves the totality of these experiences and relations, including those of religion. The principal thesis of this paper is that in order to comprehend the writings of Hegel, it is imperative that the reader deciphers them methodologically. If not, a coherent understanding is all but out of the question. The failure to do so is the primary impediment that Marx confronts in his evaluation of Hegel. As a result, the first objective of this article is to sketch out Marx's assessment of the method of Hegel. By this means, the clarification of Hegel's methodology will be my second aim.

With the aforesaid as the point of reference, the third goal is to expound the reservations of Marx with respect to Hegel's exposition of the experiences and relations of the natural consciousness. In so doing, I shall also outline a

Hegelian critique of Marx, which will be my fourth objective. Finally, my fifth aim is to appraise the upshots of my essay for the conception of Hegel, especially in light of a radical review of the Preface of the Philosophy of Right.

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**Margarita Leon** – *University of Kent*

**Social constructions of paid and unpaid caregiving: Domestic and care work at the intersection of welfare, gender and migration regimes.**

The paper looks at the increasing significance of paid carers in private homes within the overall organisation of social care. The main focus of the paper will be how care work has been socially and politically constructed in a moment where the supply for care work is increasingly being covered with migrant labour. The paper will look at the interconnections between paid care work carried out in private homes by non-family members and understandings of caring as both a private (households) and public (the welfare state) responsibility. While one could interpret the re-appearance of household employment as part of private strategies to cope with pressing individual needs, outside therefore the scope of public regulation, this study will analyse the ways in which the institutional configuration of welfare and labour market systems are in fact implicated in these processes.

The study will address at least three questions of key relevance for developments of social care in European countries: Firstly, at a more analytical level, the study will address the ‘positioning’ of paid care work inside private homes in what Ungerson (2004) called the ‘cross of routed wages’, a term which refers to all possible combinations of commodification of care processes. It will also shed some light into classifications of care regimes in Europe (Anttonen & Spila 1996; Bettio & Platenga 2004; Pfau-Effinger & Geissler 2005; Pfau-Effinger 2005) by inserting household work into the picture. Thirdly, the study will critically reflect on the intersections between gender, class, race and ethnicity by focusing on one particular development of *marketised* care work: that performed by migrant female workers in private households.

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Ruth Levitas – *University of Bristol*

## **The imaginary reconstitution of society or why sociologists and others should take utopia more seriously**

H. G. Wells, whose *A Modern Utopia* was published a hundred years ago this year, argued that ‘... the creation of utopias – and their exhaustive criticism – is the proper and distinctive method of sociology’ (Wells 1914: 204). Wells’s claim was made in 1909, in an essay called ‘The So-called Science of Sociology’, attacking the scientific pretensions of the emergent discipline. It hides in a volume published in 1914 called *An Englishman Looks at the World*, and which may be the only work by Wells never to have been reprinted. For Wells, utopianism is a kind of speculative sociology, an attempt to explore and predict what might be, and to expose it to judgement. He also argues that sociology cannot avoid the utopian. If moral judgements about what should be are not made explicit, they will lurk unseen – where they are less susceptible to criticism and judgement. As he puts it, ‘there is no such thing in sociology as dispassionately considering what is, without considering what is intended to be. ... Sociologists cannot help making utopias: though they avoid the word, though they deny the idea with passion, their very silences shape a utopia’ (Wells 1914: 203-5).

This is counter-intuitive. Sociology, surely, is a discipline of social *science*, and even those who doubt its scientific credentials, or question the meaning of scientificity itself would argue that it offers thick description and explanation of reality, of what IS. Utopia, on the other hand, is essentially about what is *not*, and what *ought to be*. The only relationship between the two that would seem to make sense, therefore, is a *sociology of utopia*, in which sociology is the master narrative explaining the various forms and expressions of utopianism in relation to their social context. Wells’s statement implies something else – that we must consider *sociology as utopia*, and *utopia as sociology*.

This paper argues that Wells was right, if not exactly in the way he intended. It will address the definition of utopia, and argue that if utopia is understood in a holistic sense, the parallels between sociology and utopia are striking. Sociology foregrounds what utopia backgrounds, and utopia foregrounds what sociology represses, especially its normativity and future orientation. *Utopia as a method* entails the Imaginary Reconstitution of Society – society imagined otherwise, rather than simply (as in sociological models) society imagined.

A provisional and reflexive utopianism conceived as method rather than goal is a necessary tool for thinking about possible alternative futures: and at the present historical conjuncture, climate crunch, resource crunch and credit crunch all make the imagining of alternative ways of life essential. Sociology has a particular role to play here, which it neglects at our peril.

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**Yaojun Li** - *Manchester University*

## **Social and political activism in England and Wales**

### **Abstract**

In both academic and policy-making communities, social and political engagement of the citizens is increasingly regarded as having great potential for tackling many of the socio-economic problems facing our society. Yet, to date, most of the scholarly work tends to lump all kinds of formal and informal participation under the indiscriminate heading of social capital, masking the important differences between politically and socially oriented engagement.

This paper aims to make a contribution to defining and measuring political as against social engagement in England and Wales. Drawing on the Home Office Citizenship Survey of 2003, we adopt a theoretically-informed and methodologically-rigorous approach to measuring political and social activism (through the use of item response theory modelling). While the boundary between the social and the political is sometimes blurred, we could, in most cases, draw a fairly clear demarcation between the two groups of activists. Political activists are differentiated by the nature of their organisational memberships, their activities within those organisations, and their more spontaneous and informal actions of a political kind. Social activists of a formal, civic kind can be identified in similar vein. While such social capitalists have received much compliment as deserved, their informal counterpart who plays an equally, if not more, important role in our daily lives are usually passed unnoticed. We owe a debt to those who provide crucial help of a voluntary, informal and unpaid kind to the weak, the elderly, the sick and the vulnerable in general. To redress the neglect in

existing work, this analysis will include both formal and informal social activists in comparison with political activists.

Having identified political and social activists, we proceed to show that they differ not only in socio-demographic attributes, but also in socio-political orientations. While formal social activists have a congenial relationship with their fellow citizens, have a good deal of trust in the political institutions, and believe in their ability to affect decision-making at local and national levels of the country, informal volunteers register an important shortfall in all these aspects, so do political activists. Yet what is most remarkable about the last group is their critical stance towards political institutions and keenness to make a change as seen in their participation in the local and national elections, a pattern rather unparalleled by social activists. Yet from a sociological perspective, one cannot but notice that prominent among all these groups, be they social or political, are those in more advantaged socio-economic positions, suggesting that reducing socio-economic inequality is the key to building an inclusive, dynamic and prosperous society.

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**Katerina Liskova**- *Masaryk University*

**Love as the Political:  
Imagining Connections between Past, Present and Future**

“Increasingly, the individuals who want to live together are, or more precisely are becoming, the legislators of their own way of life, the judges of their own transgressions, the priests who absolve their own sins and the therapists who loosen the bonds of their own past,” wrote Beck and Beck-Gernsheim fourteen years ago (1995:5). Have love, coupledness and gender been freed from patterns dictated by modernity? Do we fully negotiate the terms of our “being-togetherness?” How are the norms regulating gender and love constructed in the late modern social landscape? What has become of the normalizing power of the state?

I argue against the view that social actors are the sovereign agents of their lives, and that “norms and morality vary from individual to individual and from relationship to relationship” (ibid.). I criticize the silencing of the political nature of institutions which have supposedly instantiated increased equality, transparency and democracy (Giddens 1992). Through sociological analysis of legal texts, my paper focuses on changes within the symbolic

universe of gender. I analyze the historical shifts in what constitutes a family and/or other legal/legible forms of kinship, and under what circumstances. I focus on family laws as they have scripted gender and sexuality in Czech lands in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the “First Czechoslovak Republic” 1918-1938, Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren 1939-1945, Communist Czechoslovakia, and contemporary Czech family law (since 1989), together with other relevant legal texts.

This paper draws on my understanding of social domination as created and reproduced through language, i.e. performative speech acts (Liskova, forthcoming by Routledge). Elaborating on Austin (1962), Derrida (1988), Bourdieu (1991) and Butler (1997), I perceive the efficiency of performative speech as a function of it belonging to a series of the same acts which sustain a repeated social action. An illustrative example is a legal norm. Backed by the symbolic order, social domination takes the form of symbolic violence when subjects gauge themselves according to the dominant yardstick (Bourdieu 1991). Not only is the symbolic power of language typically not resisted, it is eagerly accepted for it bestows its subjects with social intelligibility. Speech acts participate in the authority of institutions, out of which law is one of the most powerful. Quoting Austin’s famous example of “I do” (Austin 1962:5) pronounced during a wedding ceremony, we can say that marriage and the gender order it brings about belong to the core discursive practices sustaining the system of masculine domination.

Rather than claiming that society is monolithic or that we live in a “love monoculture,” my paper explores how the symbolic order of law that informs the social norms of gender are re-produced; therefore connecting past forms, influencing present ones, and shaping the future of love.

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**Steve Matthewman** - *The University of Auckland*

### **A Politics of Silence: Sociology Goes AWOL**

Sociologists seem reluctant to court martial affairs, nor are they inclined to give peace a chance. This is routinely explained by going back to the discipline's conception. Saint-Simon and Comte conjured sociology after the close of the Napoleonic War which ushered in a century of relative European peace. C. Wright Mills (1956) argued that this cessation of hostilities created the classic liberal worldview: industrialism would replace militarism. War, while significant for European state formation, was a thing of the past. It had its place, and that was in "the early modern" era. Peace would be the new reality. Being normal, it need not be studied. Bizarrely, two World Wars and the Holocaust hardly corrected sociological vision. In *The Power Elite* Mills warned readers that the upper echelons of state, corporation and military were now of unprecedented import, with the military brokering our reality. While Mill's disciplinary influence is indisputable, the call for a sociology of war has largely been ignored (his *Causes of World War Three* went swiftly out of print). To this day writers repeatedly stress the military's invisibility in the social sciences (Ender and Gibson, 2005). Yet having just exited the most murderous century in all of human history and entered the new one with a War on Terror that we are told is global and perpetual, this task is surely pressing. Why must the powerful remain invisible? This paper presents challenges to sociology's pedagogy and practice, which is to say sociology-as-taught and sociology-as-researched. I argue for military engagement; the military is a subject worth educating the next scholarly generation about and it is worthy of our study. In making this argument I wish to distinguish myself from two existing literatures, those emanating from the sub-discipline of Military

Sociology, and those emerging post-9/11 that stress the ways in which society is now becoming militarised (Giroux 2008). At its worst the former is embedded sociology, scholarship in the service of the powerful, and at best it stops at the garrison gates, the military is its society. The latter is much more profitable but it appears to miss an essential point: we are always already militarised. When we consider modern state formation, administration and governance, citizenship, economic production and organisation, order and discipline we will see that to modernise is to militarise.

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**Tracey McIntosh** - *The University of Auckland*

### **Politics and the Periphery: Marginalisation, Difference and Death**

This paper is centrally concerned with issues of human wastage, those deaths created by social action not by natural causes. Our world is opaque, not impenetrable. To locate and align the politics of difference and death I examine two processes: marginalization and exteriorization. Marginalization, a socio-political process, is the peripheralization of individuals and groups from a dominant, central majority. This process is centred in power relations; as power shifts a group can find itself ignored, trivialized, silenced, rendered invisible and made other. Marginalization is also an experience. It is inclusive of oppression and a consequence of it. The marginal life is a life on the edge, but marginality needs to be seen as existing on a continuum. For too many their experience of marginality finds them living as periphery dwellers, existing in a liminal space where stigmatization and exclusion are part of lived reality. Within this continuum we can find the 'life-cycle' outcast, the individual who is on the fringes of the social due largely to factors such as age, class and gender. At the other end of the continuum is the extreme marginal who either individually or collectively is seen as polluting and potentially lethal, and is treated as such. This extreme marginal is exteriorized, and lives outside of all social bounds, thrust into a realm of sub-human experience. The exteriorized find themselves in positions of absolute powerlessness, yet are consistently characterized by those who exercise power as dangerous. Their powerlessness and perceived dangerousness combine in a lethal mix that threatens their continued existence. The exteriorized risk confinement, torture, starvation and extermination. In contrast, the marginal existence is one where limits and constraints are part of the day-to-day experience but

resistance and new social responses may still be possible. This is not to argue that the marginal do not live in situations that are perilous but that in many cases marginality does allow significant social engagement. In developing these concepts and exploring their differences I offer as concepts the notions of hunger, homelessness and hysteria as possible rudiments of the process of marginalization. These are used to name actual conditions and as metaphorical devices to examine the ways in which marginality is created, experienced and responded to.

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**Mara Miele** – *Cardiff University*

### **Dinosaur Chicken: the romantic ethic of animal science**

In animal science two contrasting approaches seem to coexist and feed the controversy over whether intensive animal production is inevitably detrimental or it is compatible with a good quality of life of animals. According to David Fraser (2008) these two approaches are grounded in two world-views one that he defines ‘Rational/Industrial’ and the other ‘Romantic/Agrarian’. The first approach, here called ‘*adaptation*’, values productivity and health ahead of emotion, sees ‘progress’ through science and technology as leading ultimately to good animal welfare as reflected in good physical health and high productivity. The second approach, called ‘*emotions*’, focuses on the emotional state of the animals, emphasises individual animal mental state and emotions over growth and productivity and naturalness ahead of technological solutions. This latter approach sees factory farming as incompatible with the welfare of animals because the systems are unnatural, inhibit freedom and lead to negative emotions such as frustration.

These contrasting world-views and approaches in animal science have also influenced the measures chosen by scientists to assess the welfare of animals on farms. Some scientists, roughly in line with a Romantic/Agrarian world-view, look to the affective states of animals (emotions) as indicators of welfare, and believe that allowing animals to live in a freer and more natural manner would improve their welfare. Other scientists, roughly in line with a Rational/Industrial world-view, look to the basic health and good functioning of animals as indicators of welfare. Interestingly these different criteria of welfare overlap substantially, especially in the identification of

poor welfare, but disagreements might emerge in the identification/qualification of positive welfare.

In this paper I want to explore how this controversy is articulated in a case study of organic and free range chickens<sup>3</sup>. While it is widely acknowledged that free range and organic systems of production offer a better chance for good welfare there is also evidence that these systems do not automatically deliver better conditions for animals, and there is a higher risk of predation, parasites and aggression just to mention the most common ones. They also require higher management skills and new technological innovations in the form of appropriate breeds of birds that could survive and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the more natural environments. The search for these *new* and more resilient animals is actively engaged in identifying the traces/characteristics of the stronger ‘ancestors’, the *dinosaurous* of the contemporary paler and dis-enhanced version of birds that are used in industrial farming and in reproducing some of them. In this paper I look at how this Romantic/Agrarian project of creating the new rustic breeds of chickens is translated in labs and farms practices and I explore the politics of knowledge and the process of crafting alternative ontologies of chickens-humans interactions and their ethical implications.

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<sup>3</sup> This paper is based on research conducted in the EU funded Integrated Project Welfare Quality between 2004 and 2009 ([www.welfarequality.net](http://www.welfarequality.net)). The data collected consist of ethnographic work and a long engagement with animal scientists working on developing the EU assessment and monitoring standard for farm animal welfare. The case study is based on a dedicated series of interviews and empirical observations of on farm assessment practices, lab practices and farming practices for organic and free range chickens in the UK and in Italy.

## Balkanising Taxonomy



## Abstract

This paper is tracing the questions raised by the project “Balkanising Taxonomy” developed last year as part of the archive research at Goldsmiths Centre in Textiles. The project aimed to interrogate notions of Balkan identity, and trouble the impulse to create a stable taxonomic account of the

Eastern European subject. Through the construction of protective preservation chambers (light-safe boxes sewn out of black felt), fetishized Balkan could only be encountered through a small peephole. Also, photographs of Balkan people were placed in glass jars, to ensure that they are not physically handled by the viewing public. The voyeuristic impulse hidden behind the project of preservation was exposed, where the boxes and jars claim to protect the objects from light and decay, but instead contribute to widening the gap between the (Western) self and (Balkan) other. The labels which accompanied the garments and photographs contained a mixture of factual and imagined information, once more calling into question the taxonomic urge, and highlighting the problematic process at work behind studying and representing the other.

Through the methods of conservation employed in this project, which intensify the relationship between the merging of scientific and absurd classification practices, the curator hoped to contribute visually to the already vast field of study which questions the space from which the Balkan subject is formed.

The journey through artefacts has been led through memory and this paper will focus on this discourse within Visual Sociology.

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**Niamh Moore** - *University of Manchester*

### **(Re)Imagining the feminist political**

This paper addresses the challenge of (re)imagining the feminist political in the context of widespread accounts of the end of feminism, and specifically the demise of feminist activism. Whilst the work of those such as Hemmings (2005) and Adkins (2004) has been useful in interrogating how certain feminist narratives produce the end of feminism, this work has been less explicit about how we might (re)imagine the feminist political.

In many accounts of the recent feminist past, the 1980s and 1990s appear as a fraught period of conflict and crisis for feminism. Often these conflicts are (narratively) transcended by leaving certain disavowed feminisms 'behind' in the past. For Hemmings, as for many others, so-called essentialist feminism is the disavowed feminism *par excellence*. Yet, through turning to one such disavowed feminism, that is eco/feminism, and specifically to research on ecofeminist activism on the west coast of Canada in 1993, the

paper examines the emergence and persistence of such ‘disavowed’ politics as one effort to reimagine the feminist political, at precisely the moment when the others were insisting on the end of feminism.

In this process, the paper takes up Adkins’s suggestion that attachments to particular arrangements of the social are central in enabling accounts of the passing of feminism; but also points to how attachments to particular accounts of nature and the natural are also central to these narratives. That is, certain accounts of second wave feminism hold the social (figured as gender) as the site of the possibility of change, and of politics; while nature and the body (figured as sex) is understood as a site of fixity, and determinism, as not a site of change.

Through an account of researching a peace camp which emerged in the 1990s to protest against logging, I contest reductive claims about the ‘nature’ of eco/feminism. Through unfixing attachments to particular arrangements of ‘women’ and ‘nature’, I understand this peace camp not as a vestige of the ‘out-dated’ activism of the 1970s and 1980s, but rather as a site through which we might understand the changing, and ongoing, ‘nature’ of feminism, and as a site through the feminist political was being (re)imagined.

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**Kate O’Reiley** – *University of Loughborough*

### **The Politics of Residential Tourism**

Residential Tourism is the building, marketing and selling of second homes to international migrants who are not expected to settle or to work but to use the homes for tourism, for visiting, or for other leisured and non-permanent forms of migration. As such it is a phenomenon perceived not from the perspective of the residents or tourists, but from that of the government agencies, property developers, promoters, and those selling individual properties; it is a top-down phenomenon, imposed on places and people by actors in a position to instigate, propagate, promote, develop, frame, and shape it. The locals in the residential tourist zone often feel powerless in the face of rampant development, environmental degradation, and the regular influx of ‘rich westerners’ or ‘rich northerners’ to their home towns and villages.

The term residential tourism is used by academics who are conducting critical analyses of its uses, practical applications, and outcomes. Many of these studies also explore the meanings and experiences of residential tourism for the ‘residential tourists’. But these same individuals perceive themselves as second-home owners, seasonal migrants, residents, or even as permanent migrants who have moved to settle, work and raise families in a new first home. Residential tourism as a concept and associated policies, practices and academic interpretations excludes them from, or denies their, permanence. A bottom-up approach thus needs to fragment the population with reference to all manner of mobilities occurring anywhere on a continuum from tourism to migration. Thus the first level of a politics of residential tourism demands in-depth analyses of the dreams, aspirations, expectations, and experiences of the migrants and locals in residential tourism settings.

But countries overtly developing residential tourism include Egypt, Corfu, Cyprus, Morocco, Mauritius, Panama, Portugal, and Turkey (with Spain as the paradigmatic case). Their goal is economic growth and development (often without regard to sustainability). Those migrating (in whatever form) almost always come from relatively more affluent northern and/or western parts of the world, their consumption of places a continuation of earlier colonial and/or tourist relationships. The second level of a politics of residential tourism then requires macro-level analysis of the historical and structural conditions framing residential tourism as an idea and a practice.

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**Allison Padilla-Goodman** – *City University of New York*

**The “Repopulation” of Post-Katrina New Orleans:  
Racial Politics and Place Identity Consolidation through Women’s  
Bodies**

As New Orleans struggles to rebuild its infrastructure, services, and cultural identity since Hurricane Katrina, polemical questions of the population size and composition frequently surface, particularly through controlling the rhetoric and experiences of “repopulation.” Popular media and public officials consistently comment as to *who* is repopulating New Orleans and *why*, and these comments are reflected in the differences in access to health and educational facilities. Questions of repopulating post-Katrina New Orleans are directed at women’s reproductive capabilities and access, as the



heavy responsibility for rebuilding the city's cultural identity is emphasized through women's reproductive roles. This forced responsibility becomes even heavier as the city struggles to regain its strong pre-storm sense of place and cultural uniqueness, as it fights against infringing global cultural influences and economic global integration.

This paper will examine the major local media outlets' and public officials' portrayal of "repopulation." Specifically, it looks at the rhetoric of repopulation, and how the media and politicians describe different groups' reproduction in post-Katrina New Orleans using content and discursive analyses. Reproductive policies and attitudes towards returning middle-class Whites, struggling African-Americans, and the emerging group of new Latino migrants greatly differ, and understanding these differences highlights the new racial politics and vision of the rebuilding city. Race has become intricately tied to the local cultural identity, as visions of the "new New Orleans" are pushed by the social and political elite. This push towards identity consolidation is reflected in the concrete daily experiences of different women's access to reproductive care. Post-Katrina New Orleans is decisively whiter than the city's pre-storm population, and the struggles of African-Americans to return and rebuild their lives and of new Latino migrants to establish themselves are reflected in the public rhetoric around their social reproduction.

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**Dimitris Papadopoulos** - *Cardiff University*

### **Alter-ontologies: politics and justice after the turn to ontology**

The capacity to remake the material substance of being is at the core of an ever-expanding ontological imaginary that sets itself in the heart of contemporary culture in Global North-Atlantic societies. This new master narrative of unlimited manipulation of matter and life itself is embedded in technoscientific attempts to monitor, control and fundamentally transform processes of matter and life. However, it also relates to a turn to ontology propelled in philosophy and theory by constructivism, the focus on immanence and the actor network approach. The paper explores political implications of this turn to ontology: What is constituent power in conditions where immanence, networks, ontological politics inform the transcendent order of constituted power? How can we pose the question of justice as a material, processual and practical issue before its control through ontology? How can we craft alter-ontologies?

**Martin Parker** - *University of Leicester*

### **Imagining Resistance: Robin Hood to *Ocean's 13***

One of the common, but usually unrecognised, facts about twentieth century cinema is that it contains a parade of economically liminal characters. I'm not sure how such matters might be quantified, but think about films containing pirates, smugglers, bank robbers, highwaymen, the mafia, outlaws, bandits, jewellery thieves and of course, Robin Hood and his merry men. Whilst it is certainly the case that cinema sells what cinema thinks that people will buy, there is an interesting question here. Why are representations of forms of economic resistance so common? The answer, I will propose here, is that this is a form of imagined resistance, in which the complexities and complicities of power can be broken, at least for a little while. These economic outlaws don't work for the man, they have lives which are mobile and authentic, and they are generally brighter and more ethical than the corrupt or inept forces of power which pursue them. In that sense, this is a paper which further romanticises an already romantic turn.

There are some structural matters at stake here too. Perhaps most interestingly for an organization theorist, these are films that are also resolutely anti-bureaucratic. They celebrate the individual, the bonds of friendship, the gang, the family – but never the formal organization. Business in the sense of exchange, is not a problem in itself, but large scale concentrations of power are almost always seen as the generators of evil, or moral complacency. In this sense, these films are theories of organization too, and versions of business ethics might be derived from them.

But there is something else going on here too, because twentieth century cinema is only the latest version of this imagined resistance. For example, the celebration of Robin Hood could be said to begin with Martin Parker's 'Ballad of Robin Hood' in the sixteenth century. In time ballads were sung for pirates, smugglers, thieves and highwaymen; books were written about their exploits, and the emerging press thrived on a diet of stories about the extraordinary exploits of notorious criminals. By the eighteenth century, the representations and realities were becoming intertwined. Pirates referred to themselves as 'Robbin Hoodes men', and thieves became famed for their exploits. Later, outlaws sold their stories to newspapers, and Mafiosi dressed like film gangsters. The point is that imagination is politically

significant here, and that representations of economics outlaws shaped the way that 'real' outlaws behaved, and vice versa.

Of course I will acknowledge the highly gendered, and rather 'Western' version of the outlaw that I am trading on here, but I wish to use these dubious characters to blur some boundaries. Between economy and culture, legitimate and illegitimate, and between reality and possibility.

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**Nirmal Puwar** - *Goldsmiths*

### **Public Intervention: Noise of the Past as Event**

This presentation will be made on the basis of the project Noise of the Past (AHRC) to think through what a public sociology that endeavours to intervene in the public realm can be when the subject matter is war, memory, and post-colonial subjects. How do sociologists as curators seeking public interruptions in the the national official annual mourning for the war dead at a time of increasing global wars. The collaborative efforts of the project - working with composers (Nitin Sawhney & Francis Silkstone), artists and film director (Kuldip Powar), as well as public authorities. The project that will be discussed in the context of the political sociological imaginative methods.

For further details see:

<http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/methods-lab/noise-past.php>

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**Hugo Gorringe and Irene Rafanell** – *University of Edinburgh and University of West of Scotland*

### **The Power to Resist: Domination, Habitus and Agency in the Caste System**

A significant problem with conventional analyses of power relations is that they ultimately conceive of individuals internalizing certain aspects of their contextual social environments (desires or norms) which determine their future behaviour. Taking issue with such approaches we rework Foucault's theory of power using insights from Barnes' performative theory of social institutions. This enables us to comprehend

social life as the product of the continuous interaction of heterogeneous but mutually susceptible individuals. These relationships are permeated by different technologies of power focused on the materiality of the body. From this perspective, bodies, rather than minds, are central to power dynamics. Drawing on empirical work on Dalit activists we argue that power should be conceived as an ongoing dynamic between power holders and power subjects. Both domination and resistance are, thus, seen not only as integral to the dynamics of power but as constitutive of individual and group identities and practices. It is only in this context that we can understand resistance movements amongst the most marginalized and vulnerable social groups.

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**John Michael Roberts** – *Brunel University and Colin Cremin*

### **The Politics of Left-liberalism: Hardt and Negri and the Disavowal of Critique**

In this paper we want to show that critical theory should involve thinking through a truth without succumbing to the relativistic point that truth has a diversity of meanings and interpretations. We do this by first examining some of the postmodern and post-Marxist ideas of Hardt and Negri. For us, Hardt and Negri are representative of those left-liberal thinkers who we believe disavow the Real of capitalism. However, we demonstrate that Hardt and Negri base their observations on a misinterpretation and wrong-footed critique of Marx's value theory that considerably weakens their own theoretical framework. Moreover, Hardt and Negri's notion of the 'singularity of the event' of struggle leads to intractable problems for critical social theory. Second, we set an alternative notion of the event through the work of Badiou and Deleuze. We show that it is possible to pay close attention to both the contingency of specific events of struggle whilst at the same time being able to speak about the 'truth' of such events. This equips us with the theoretical tools within a broadly defined Marxist position to contrast the qualitatively unique form of each singular event of struggle, which is something we feel is missing in the work of postmodern theorists such as Hardt and Negri. Finally, we use our standpoint to make some broader critical observations on Hardt and Negri's politics and the limitations of their position for contending with the current economic crisis. In particular we map out how their celebration of the contingency of a multitude of struggles implicitly reproduces and contributes towards a left-

liberal celebration of difference which also resonates with the ideological project of (neo)liberal capitalism.

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**Raffaella Santi** - *University of Urbino, Italy*

### **Periculum Perpetuum?**

#### **Fear and the Imagination of Politics in Hobbes's Thought**

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), the founder of modern political theory, is perhaps the philosopher who has attributed the most prominent role to *fear* within his system of thought, as well as in his consideration of human life. For him fear is fundamental at an individual, as well as at a social level, shaping human behaviour toward others - namely, social behaviour. From the first chapter of *De cive*, it clearly emerges that human beings are naturally unsociable, their actions being motivated above all by the instinct of self-preservation, and by self-interest. By nature, for their entire life they strive for honour and glory or, as will be said in *Leviathan*, for power, in the form by them preferred (wealth, authority, honour, knowledge, etc.). The human animal is far from being the Aristotelian *zōon politikón*... As Hobbes points out, “man is not born fit for society”, seeking, as he always is, his own advantage, not the common good (“profit” and not “friendship”). But if this is really human nature, why and how does it happen that men live in society, build social order and create the State? Hobbes's answer is “mutual fear”... Focusing on key passages found in Hobbes's work, this paper will try to explore the role of fear and imagination in Hobbes's political and social philosophy, and the meaning of Hobbes's theory for us today.

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**Ritchie Savage** - *The New School for Social Research*

### **Populist Elements in Contemporary American Political Discourse**

There has been a marked resurgence in the usage of the concept of populism both in the literature of the social sciences and in the media. Whereas the term was originally used to refer to the classical late nineteenth century cases of The People's Party in America and the Russian *Narodnichestvo*, and the mid twentieth century Latin American cases of Perón's rule in Argentina and Brazil's Vargas, populism has also received substantial

attention in recent Latin American scholarship with the rise of political figures such as Fujimori, Bucaram, and Chávez among others – as it has been employed to characterize particular political regimes in Africa and as an element of certain political currents in Europe. Yet even in the media coverage of the United States’ 2008 presidential election, the label, ‘populist,’ was applied to candidates from both the Democratic and Republican parties such as Edwards and Huckabee, and one could even argue that the American populist heritage was a salient theme in the vice presidential campaigns of Biden and Palin.

The main argument that this paper develops is that populism still functions as a prominent component of current American politics and that one can even locate starkly populist elements in the political discourse articulated by Barack Obama. Granted that it would be absurd to characterize Obama as a populist president, this paper follows Laclau’s assertion that ‘popular-democratic’ elements are present in all forms of political discourse. Hence this paper argues that Obama’s *position* – representing a previously marginalized sector of the power bloc, i.e. the Democratic Party, which is vying for hegemony – and his subsequent *articulation* – of an anti-status quo ideology in the form of an attack on the neoliberal policies of the Republican Party in an attempt to usurp its hegemony – represent the quintessential example of a ‘populist moment’ in the framework provided by Laclau (1977) in *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*. Furthermore, Obama’s rhetorical oscillation between ideologies rooted in class-based conceptions, such as relief for the middle class, and ideologies that transcend class – such as the broad interpellations of ‘the people’ present in such slogans as “Yes We Can” and “Change You Can Believe In” – also corresponds to Laclau’s characterization of popular-democratic discourse. In order to support this conception of populism and its implications for contemporary American political discourse, this paper will deconstruct the previously held functionalist assumptions and modernization theories that consign populism to a developmental stage in the capitalist mode of production or a historical outcome of underdeveloped democratic institutions in order to gesture towards a new science of rhetoric capable of analyzing the synecdochical, metaphorical, and metonymical components (Laclau 2005) in the discursive construction of ‘the American people.’

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**Ben Selwyn** – *University of Southampton*

## **Development within or against capitalism? A critical appraisal of Amartya Sen's development as freedom**

Amartya Sen's 'Development as Freedom' represents an original and realistic critique of mainstream conceptions of development. The latter (whatever their political hue) stress the importance of poor countries pursuing rapid economic growth to 'catch-up' with economically advanced countries. By giving primacy to economic growth, and assuming that benefits will accrue to developing country populations through various 'trickle-down' mechanisms such perspectives often disregard the conditions of the poor during attempted catch-up. Worse still, they often encourage political repression in order to stimulate high rates of economic surplus generation. Sen illustrates that such perspectives are often counter-productive (not leading to fast economic growth) and myopic (reducing capabilities amongst these populations). He argues that freedom is both the goal and means of development, and further, that through States enhancing poor people's capabilities (for example providing them with higher levels of education, and access to basic necessities) the poor can in turn participate more fully in the development process. However, Sen weds his conception of enhancing the poor's capabilities to the presence and expansion of capitalist markets. This paper argues that this constitutes a serious weakness, and that for his vision to be realised it is necessary to link the concept of enhancing capabilities to a vision of anti-capitalist development. It does so by comparing Marx's and Sen's conceptions of capabilities. The paper also provides case studies where grassroots movements have given rise to alternative, capability enhancing development practices.

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**Stephen Shukaitis**, *University of Essex / Autonomedia*

## **Imaginal Machines: Composition & Autonomy in/of Movement**

Drawing from autonomist politics, class composition analysis, and avant-garde arts, this presentation explores the emergence, functioning, and constant break down of the embodied forms of the radical imagination. To invoke the *imagination* as underlying and supporting radical politics, over the past forty years, has become a cliché. A rhetorical utilization of ideas that are already in circulation, invoking the mythic unfolding of this self-

institutionalizing process of circulation. But what exactly is radical imagination? And more specifically, what are the compositional capacities created by the emergence, transformation, mutation, and decomposition of collective imagination within social movements? Imagination is not something that is ahistorical, derived from nothing, but an ongoing relationship and material capacity constituted by social interactions between bodies. While liberatory impulses might point to a utopian (no)where which is separate from the present, it is necessary to point *from* somewhere, from a particular situated imagining.

The investigative task is to explore the construction of imaginal machines, comprising of the socially and historically embedded manifestations of the radical imagination. Imagination, not as something possessed by individuals, but rather as a composite of the capacities to affect and be affected by the world, to develop movements toward new forms of autonomous sociality and collective self-determination. From there it asks the question, what does it mean to invoke the power of the imagination when it seems that the imagination has already seized power (through media flows and the power of the spectacle)? Does any subversive potentiality remain, or are we left with simply more avenues for the rejuvenation of questionable fields of power and rearticulating regimes of accumulation? Perhaps it is only honest to think in terms of a temporally-bounded subversive power, one that like the mayfly has its day in the sun. It might be that imaginal machines, like all desiring machines, only work by breaking down. That is, their functioning is only possible, paradoxically, by their malfunctioning. By reopening the question of recuperation, the inevitable drive to integrate the power of social insurgency back into the working of capital and the state, we create possibilities for exploring a politics continually reconstituted against and through the dynamics of recuperation, to keep open an antagonism without closure that is continually composed and recomposed. To develop tools necessary in resisting the continual subdivision and suburbanization of the radical imagination.

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**Beverley Skeggs** - *Goldsmiths, University of London*

**Turning it on is a Class Act: Immediated Object Relations with the Television**



This paper will develop findings from our project '*Making Class through Mediated Ethical Scenarios*' (Ref: 148-25-0040) to investigate if and how subjectivity is organised through class relations. Previously we documented, through analysis of historical categorisation, government rhetoric, television, and global institutions (IMF, World Bank), how an exchange-value self was promoted across a variety of sites: that is, a self dedicated to continually generating value for itself by experimentation with and accrual of cultural capital and knowledge that enable it to move through social space, always with an eye on future possibilities. By continually investing in oneself to gain present and future value we detailed how different types of subjects were being formulated in classed terms: these 'subjects of value' were also defined through their constitutive limit – the abject useless self. Our project focused on 'reality television' as a site for the spectacular performance of different selves, hence the detailing of 'subjects of different values'.

We began our research with a model of 'textually mediated' subjectivity, but realised that our respondents did not 'read' television as a representation but engaged with it through immanent affective responses. We were identifying moments of engagement through a close reading of our transcripts when we were alerted to the significance of the actual object of the television in the making of different types of subjectivity. We realised it was not only texts that mediate subjectivity but also the objects. Instead of objects being known and the subject doing the knowing, both dynamically develop capacities in each other. We started to think of objects and subjects as mutually constitutive in the making of 'subjects of value', hence the making of class relations. The paper will present our 'object/subject' analysis.

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**Alexander Smith** – *University of Birmingham*

**Faith, Politics and Science: moderation and pragmatist thinking amongst American conservatives in Kansas City**

Recent policy debates over embryonic stem cell research have exposed deep, more fissures amongst American conservatives on the central Constitutional question of the separation of Church and State. In Kansas City, Missouri, these tensions were especially divisive during the final years of President Bush's administration. Amongst Republican Party elites in neighbouring Johnson County, Kansas, supporters of embryonic stem cell

research have rallied to a range of moderate-secularist organisations like the MAINstream Coalition and the Kansas Traditional Republican Majority in the face of an insurgent Christian Right. This paper draws on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Kansas City to ask: in a potentially divided public, what might a *reasoned project of moderation* look like, intellectually, politically and in practice? Such a project demands the identification of appropriate terms of reference, a particular challenge for Republican secularists given the pejorative power of a range of labels and names (e.g. centrist, liberal, moderate) and, I argue, their collective failure to agree on a shared political heritage and identity. Taking theoretical inspiration from John Dewey's consideration of politics as a process of *creating a public*, this paper also argues that the pragmatist critique of 'spectatorial reason' coupled with a conception of problem solving as a dialogue open to learning from others are central to any scholarly attempt to conceive a sociology of moderation.

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**Dennis Smith** – *University of Loughborough*

### **Humiliation and the Political Imagination**

This paper explores the part played by the experience and consciousness of humiliation within social and political relationships. Its immediate focus is the current world economic crisis but it looks beyond and behind that crisis to larger structural issues and how they are interwoven with shifts in patterns of perception and feeling.

Most people now live in cities. Taking a global perspective, for many their urban existence is not a place of hope, a 'city on the hill,' but, instead, a place of humiliation where they see their children die of preventable disease or live under the heel of corrupt regimes that look after no-one but themselves. For most of these urbanites there is nowhere else to go, except another city in a richer part of the world. Since most people in the world are very poor, not many of them can do this. If they get the money and contacts to try, the chances of ending up dead, imprisoned or in slavery are high. In some ways, they are like the early modern peasantry: trapped at a lower of existence than their masters, preoccupied with survival rather than advancement, and nurturing a deep sense of resentment. The proportion of the urban population who live in this way varies between nations and cities, being smaller in much of the West. However, the riots in France's

*bidonvilles* had the flavour of peasant revolts in their outraged attacks on property.

The world crisis of 2008 represents a massive failure by laissez-faire capitalist democracy to keep its promises. Globally, citizens are frightened and discontented. What can they be offered in response to their demands for satisfaction? On the one hand, citizens can be offered hope, hope of success, victory, or advancement, for example. The politics of hope looks to a future state when things will be better than they are now. Alternatively, citizens can be offered the chance to exact revenge upon a group that is held to be responsible for the wrongs that citizens feel have been done to them. This is the politics of humiliation, whose chief characteristic is that it gives legitimacy to the human desire to impose suffering, indignity and dishonour upon others.

From the politician's point of view, one attraction of the politics of humiliation through revenge is that it draws on a source of energy that citizens themselves supply willingly, their capacity for active hatred. Ironically, the government may have 'prepared' citizens for this active role by imposing prior humiliations upon them and creating diffuse feelings of resentment. This paper will assess the comparative strength of tendencies leading towards the politics of hope and the politics of humiliation. It will be a case study in the shaping of the emerging political imagination.

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**Kate Torkington**, *University of Lancaster*

### **Exploring personal accounts of individual motivations behind lifestyle migration: the case of British residents in the Algarve**

Lifestyle migration, understood as migration by relatively affluent individuals motivated by a desire to achieve a different lifestyle and a more fulfilling way of life (Benson and O'Reilly, in press), is clearly a rapidly growing phenomenon. The authors of a recent Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) report on emigration from Britain state that one of the most 'striking findings' of their research is the escalation of emigration from Britain to European destinations in recent decades, a trend which they attribute to 'the growth in importance of lifestyle as the predominant or even the only factor that determines emigrant behaviour' (Srisankarajah & Drew, 2006:40). The direction of this movement, which can be described as predominantly north-south, runs counter to what is perceived as the typical migration flow within post-war Europe. Whilst the inhabitants of southern

European countries have traditionally migrated northwards in search of employment opportunities, northern Europeans are now moving south in increasingly large numbers, in search of something more intangible: a better quality of life. However, both 'lifestyle' and 'quality of life' are vague concepts which need closer investigation. As social constructs, embedded in social practices, they are in large part realized through discursive practices and as such are closely tied to both individual and collective identities.

Using data from in-depth interviews with British migrants who moved to the Algarve (Portugal) at different stages in the life course, this paper explores the ways in which 'lifestyle' and 'quality of life' are discursively constructed through personal accounts of moving to Portugal, as well as how the typical discourses on lifestyle migration (as being consumption-led, tourism-related, leisure-based) are both reproduced and challenged in talk. I examine how motivations for migrating are represented both as integral parts of personal, individualized biographies, or 'reflexive narratives of the self' (Giddens, 1991), and from a more ideological perspective. Following van Dijk (1998), ideologies are understood here as being the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group. As Billig (1997) has argued, the ideologies located and represented in discourse are not necessarily straightforward and coherent, but are often 'dilemmatic'. Signs of ideological dilemmas do indeed emerge from this data, pointing to the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory social identities and, perhaps, personal politics of lifestyle migrants.

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**Isacco Turina** - *University of Bologna, Italy*

## **The Vatican and biopolitics**

Sociologists of religion have almost entirely overlooked the problem of religious discourse contents, leaving it to the care of theologians. On the contrary, I argue that there exist social and political conditions that make the emergence of a given topic in the discourse of a religious organization possible and even reasonable. As an instance of this argument, this paper deals with the themes of sexuality and human life in the public discourse of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the last decades, the magisterium of the popes and the Vatican curia has insisted on themes like human reproduction, birth control, and the management of life. My main aim is to give a sociological answer to the question: “Why are such themes so high on the agenda of the Church?”. Indeed, they seem to have ousted earlier Catholic concerns like economy, politics or social commitment, which have been losing much of their past relevance.

My hypothesis is that in the XX century capital issues for the Church – like institutional identity, recruitment and competition with nation-states – have increasingly been revolving around the transmission and management of human life: the struggles for symbolic and temporal power, as well as that for the survival of the Catholic institution, are fought today on this field whereas in the past they were fought in domains such as political participation, biblical exegesis, media control or dynastic succession.

My main theoretical tool is therefore the concept of biopolitics advanced by Michel Foucault. He elaborates his theory on the government of biological life by means of studying modern nation-states politics. However, this frame can also be applied to the Catholic Church, which can be considered as an entity between a religious organization and a state, with a diplomatic body and international representatives. In the paper, I will analyze stages, topics and strategies underpinning the history of the Catholic doctrine regarding the transmission and management of human life over the last forty years.

The presentation will follow two directions: historical and analytical. The former will track continuity, change and repositioning in the Church’s discourse since the last Vatican Council. The latter aims at determining

which functions and strategies – both political and organizational – have focused and relied, in the last decades, upon bioethical issues. Among these issues are: the recruitment of the clergy; strategies for increasing the number of Catholics within the general population; the specific identity of the Church as distinct from other Christian denominations; the mission entrusted to lay people and to the clergy; and competition with national governments on the issue of demographic policies.

Some of these concerns are common to other Christian denominations. Therefore, the conclusion opens to further inquiry into the complex relations between religion and biopolitics.

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**Emma Uprichard** - *University of York*

### **The impossibility of the sociological imagination: the stickiness of time of temporality**

This paper argues that C. Wright Mills set an impossible challenge: the ‘sociological imagination’ is inherently flawed because its conception of time is also inherently flawed. Even though Mills’ work is sensitive to time and temporality and to historical time in particular, he fails to account for the stickiness of time and temporality in general, particularly as it relates to the future. Drawing on the work of three key theorists, namely Mead’s ‘Philosophy of the Present’, Popper’s ‘World of Propensities’, and Prigogine’s work the temporalisation of matter as being and becoming, it is argued that time and temporality necessarily restrict the possibility of developing a serious sociological imagination. The argument is illustrated using empirical material derived from 79 small group interviews with young children in which they discuss the multiple possible futures of the cities in which they lived. The paper concludes that in addition to the historical narratives, the sociological imagination needs narratives of the future in order to construct meaningful descriptions of the dynamic social world

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**Gordana Uzelac** - *London Metropolitan University*

### **Nationalism: the politics of cultural authenticity**

Could nationalism, as an ideology, have achieved its dominant role since the 19<sup>th</sup> century without authenticity first becoming a predominant social value? Could nationalism as a social movement have really moved us without being seen as pursuing authentic goals? This paper will argue that nationalism is the dominant form of the politics of cultural authenticity.

Every nationalist ideology projects a picture of ‘nation’s true self’, whether labelled as civic or ethnic or anywhere between these two points. All of them describe their authentic self as something that pre-exists that nation and has to be ‘awakened’. As soon as a nation is defined in terms of any set of objective characteristics – whether language, a specific set of rights and duties, or even landscape – the prior existence of the authentic nation is assumed. All nationalist ideologies seek to determine a single meaning of the authentic. They all offer a definition of ‘who we are’, where their creators serve as authenticators of ‘who we were’.

Following Jeffery Alexander’s cultural pragmatics theory (2006) and Randall Collins’ (2004) theory of interaction ritual chains, this paper will outline the social dynamics of politics of authenticity. It will argue that the dynamics of national construction and re-construction is a direct consequence of the competition between conflicting definitions of the authentic nation promoted by competing nationalist agents and enacted for an evaluation of their audience. While all national ideologies mainly operate in the sphere of politics, the battle over the definition of the authentic nation is held in the cultural domain.

One of the main arenas of this competition is the establishment of national ceremonies. This paper will hold that national ceremonies can only be examined as specific types of situations and seen as performances that are created and re-created through a dynamic interaction between the ‘producers’ of the ceremony and its audience within given cultural and political context. If, as many theorists (e.g. George Mosse, Paul Connerton, Anthony D. Smith) claim that participation in national ceremonies ‘create’ national identities, why national ceremonies have to be annual? This paper will argue that audience’s identification with the performance is only temporal and will occur only if the performance is perceived as authentic. However, the audience cannot be seen as a homogenous group. Their perception of the authentic will not only depend on generalized cultural capital that the performance attempts to enact, but also on particularized cultural capital of the individuals in the audience. The politics of definition

of an authentic nation will be examined through a comparative analysis of the public debates held around the establishment of the Remembrance Day in 1919 and, almost a hundred years later, around the initiative for the British Citizenship Day.

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**Dr Nicole Vitellone** - *University of Liverpool*

### **Contesting Compassion: drugs, the media and politics**

This paper seeks to rethink the political in relation to the social affect of compassion. Whilst a feminist theory of emotion has imagined the political as concerning a politics of bad feeling (Ahmed) and feeling bad as itself political (Berlant), a politicised analysis of compassion takes a different turn in the sociology of suffering (Wilkinson). Here politics is understood as concerning an increased capacity to feel for the other via mediated suffering. If our imagination for the suffering of others is increasingly central to our politics this raises critical sociological questions about the consequence of sufferings incorporation into cultural production and the nature of our feeling.

To address the politics of compassion this paper examines the social experience of suffering for the spectator. Drawing on visual representations of drug use from North America and Britain the paper investigates the act of distant suffering and moral spectatorship (Boltanski, Cartwright). What is the effect of media images of injecting drug use on the spectator? Do we feel empathy or simply numb? Is the distant sufferer compelled to act or turn a blind eye? Do these actions change the present suffering of drug users? Do they produce collective sentiment which redresses issues poverty, social injustice and inequalities? Do they critically address hierarchy and difference? In answering these questions the paper draws attention to the role of public health and non-government organizations in constituting a cultural shift in the public feeling of sympathy. My argument is that the distant sufferer experiences not political compassion or compassion fatigue but compulsory compassion, a conservative feeling oriented to the sufferer's future.

In highlighting the conservative culture of compassion in a neo-liberal context I suggest that our increased capacity for feelings towards the other – via the spectacle of suffering – concerns what Berlant refers to as an intimate



‘anti-political politics’. This has implications for how we imagine not just the political but the public sphere, national citizenship and the welfare state.

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**Rob Walker and Didier Bigo** – *to follow shortly*

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**Bernhard Weicht** - *University of Nottingham*

**Dependency as a political force:  
Reconstructing Dependence and Independence in the Public Discourse**

The political, economic and ideological climate of the last 20 years has produced a strong emphasis on values and virtues based on individuality and independent living. In these times of individualisation (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim) people need to make a vast array of economic and social choices in order to design their very personal life circumstances. All these choices have important moral meanings since it is people’s own and foremost responsibility to live their lives in a ‘happy’ way. Relying on someone or something is constructed as the quintessential opposite to the imagined perfect way of independent living.

Feminist scholarship on the other hand has repeatedly pointed out that an ethic exclusively based on individual choices falls short of many essential aspects of life and an ethic of care has been promoted in order to build up a morality based on relating to the other. Eva Kittay has argued that for many people (especially for e.g. children, elderly, disabled people) dependency needs to be seen as a fundamental human life condition and it should therefore be acknowledged as an unavoidable and crucial aspect of life.

In this paper I will take up this position and argue that the social construction of dependence and independence builds the core of a possibility of emancipatory social and political intervention. I will argue that a re-definition of dependency as a basic human condition would enable a transformation of the political, economic and social climate’s focus on individual choice and self-reliance.

My theoretical argumentation is based on empirical work analysing the public discourse on care for elderly people. Using Critical Discourse

Analysis with newspapers, political party programmes and focus groups discussions, categories will be identified that lie at the heart of people's associations with care and 'being there for each other'. It will then be analysed to what extent these categories can build the cornerstones of a sketching of a morality based on dependency that does not end up as a subjective ethic for people dealing with issues of care. Rather, I will argue, this morality bears an important political potential to intervene at the public arena. This morality is fundamentally based on people's emotions, feelings and imaginations and thus brings these so often ignored emotive virtues to the forefront of sociological and political argumentation.

In summary I will argue that people's emotions and feelings on caring, or 'being there for each other', can become a pioneering, innovative and enormously important political force, reshaping the meaning of the political and inevitably challenging an individual-oriented moral and political thinking. Sociologists and other social scientists can play a crucial role in redefining the parameters of this morality that is produced in and through public discourses.

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<sup>i</sup> These life histories were collected by the author as part of a larger project on women workers in garment and television factories in Delhi. Along with extensive long term ethnographic research conducted between 1988 and 2001, they form the basis of a book length manuscript, entitled: *Making 'Factory Women': The Labor of Gender in Late Twentieth Century Indian Capitalism*.