“Don’t trust anyone over 30.” I suspect that many people over 50 (and maybe some a little younger) are like me in remembering how often we said that as we protested various social injustices and made our way as aspiring sociologists. In our efforts, we had the aid and encouragement of a radical publication that was way under 30 itself, and therefore much to be trusted. I refer of course to The Insurgent Sociologist, which helped many of us chart the course of our careers as radical and critical sociologists. But now, The Insurgent, as we affectionately called it, is well over 30, just like many of us, and it is has been renamed Critical Sociology to mark its success and adulthood. Looking back over its history, and thinking about how it helped us reshape sociology, we now know we can trust people and journals over 30.

The Insurgent Sociologist first appeared in 1969 as a newspaper put out by the now-defunct Sociology Liberation Movement/Union of Radical Sociology, and in 1971 it began publishing as a quarterly journal, headquartered at the University of Oregon with an editorial collective guided by the late Al Szymanski. The journal was clearly a product of the political and intellectual ferment of the time. The student movements of the 1960s and early 1970s supplied a vision of a different world and we thought sociology offered the tools for implementation. The Insurgent Sociologist was the outlet for the developing critical and radical scholarship, at the time largely unwelcome in traditional sociology departments and professional journals.

The journal played a central role in furthering the growth and developments of a radical sociology in the 1970s that oftentimes took Marxism as a point of departure, but also included debates about the usefulness of Marxism and on how it might need to be modified. The Insurgent Sociologist indeed viewed itself as “insurgent,” differentiating itself from a mainstream sociology that too often legitimated a system of inequality and domination. In its newspaper days, it printed the call for a counter-convention to the 1969 American Sociological Association convention, listing radical sessions and radical activities that challenged the mainstream sessions and activities. It also printed important statements on what the role of radical sociology ought to be, which ar-

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Passing the Torch

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Having had to focus more on formatting than on content, my voice has largely been silent from this newsletter. So now, I have to make a confession: When Lauren Langman, then chair of the Marxist Section, originally asked me to edit From the Left three years ago, I was hesitant to accept. I knew that editing a newsletter would only be considered service and only slow down my research. I only accepted after Lauren also found me a co-editor, William Solomon, who would share the burden. Now, my tenure clock is catching up with me, and higher authorities have wisely suggested that I cut down on the service and focus on my research. I do so with some regret for I have found this a creative distraction. I am passing the torch on to Karen Halnon who will be the next editor of this newsletter. Aside from her own academic publishing, Karen has written articles for this newsletter. Doing cutting edge research on topics such as shock rock and youth rebellion, she has written articles for this newsletter. Doing cutting edge research on topics such as shock rock and youth rebellion, she will give this newsletter renewed energy.

Since I began editing this newsletter, it has gone through its own internal evolution: from Word to Publisher, from print to electronic, from black and white to color. I am thankful to some of our more well know members for sending me articles not to mention the dozens of others without whose contributions this newsletter is not possible. This newsletter is one of the vehicles through which members of our section can share their research and political action with others.

After my first year editing this newsletter, I was asked by the nominating committee to run for Secretary-Treasurer of the Marxist Section. Although I was pleasantly surprised to find out that I was elected, I was also surprised to find out that section membership had fallen to an all time low of 268 members. After putting out an emergency call over the Progressive Sociologist Network, we managed to get our membership over 300 members (the number of members required by ASA to remain as a section in good standing). The next task was to further increase membership. By offering free Marxist Section t-shirts to new members, during the 2003 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, we managed to get out membership to 410 members. This year we did the same trick. After intense aesthetic debates, we came up without a new design. Our membership number as of September 30, 2004 (the cutoff date) stood at 412 members. And, although I like the t-shirts (another creative distraction), I don’t think they build a solid membership base.

Remembrance of the Past and Vision for the Future

After three years active involvement in the section, I have discovered that the section has its own unique history. It all began with the question: Who was Al Symanski? (for which one of our awards has been named). While being taken for granted by some of our older members, the Sociology Liberation Movement, The Insurgent Sociologist, and Al Symanski are unknown to our newer members. And that is the focus of this issue.

While holding on to this remembrance of the past, we also need to embark upon a new vision for the future. First, we need to continue to strengthen ourselves internally. One of our immediate task should be to increase our membership to over 600 members (the next hurdle of ASA). Many sociologists who are influenced by Marxism are not members of this section and we should get them to join. But further, we need to think about what is the role of a Marxist section within the larger American Sociological Association? I will be proposing to the ASA a mock “Assembly of Sections.” In its current structure the sections are entirely divorced from the governance structure of the ASA as a whole. On a purely experimental basis, I am proposing that sections send delegates to an assembly, that section’s voting power be based on their membership numbers, and that this assembly should debate on issues that are relevant not only to ASA as an organization but to the larger society. I envision the Marxist Section establishing a coalition with other progressive sections while engaging in a debate with more conservative ones. If this Assembly of Sections is successful, I would like to see steps taken to integrate it into the permanent governance structure of the ASA.

This issue establishes links between generations of sociologists. With this said, once again it is time to pass the torch.
The Radical Sociology Movement, 1967-1975

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At the 1967 ASA meetings in San Francisco, some sociologists proposed a formal resolution condemning the Vietnam War. The resolution failed, but it put into contact movement-oriented sociologists and so started the radical sociology movement (RSM). (Sociology was far from alone: in virtually all the academic disciplines, radicals challenged the established academic paradigms as supportive of the repressive status quo.) Aligning themselves with the Civil Rights, antiwar, feminist, and other movements, radical sociologists sought to develop a “sociology for the people.” Their goal was to expose the complicity of mainstream sociology in maintaining ruling class power in America and to create an alternative sociology supportive of radical social change. Most fundamentally, they sought a reflexive understanding of their participation as sociologists in social transformation.

At the following year’s ASA meetings, the radical contingent was larger and more vocal. ASA president Philip Hauser, reportedly alarmed by rumors that radical sociologists planned to disrupt the meetings, allowed an RSM representative to respond to a plenary address by the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The result was Martin Nicolaus’s legendary “Fat Cat Sociology” speech, in which he declared that “the eyes of sociologists...have been turned downward...to study the activities of the lower classes” while “the professional palm of the sociologists is stretched toward” the dominant classes who provide research funds (Nicolaus 1991: 252-253).

The RSM’s visibility peaked at the 1969 ASA meetings in San Francisco, where its main meeting drew 400 people. The first issue of the Insurgent Sociologist, which continues today as Critical Sociology, was published as a pre-conference newsletter. Radical sociologists held sessions at the ASA meetings and organized an alternative convention at nearby Glide Memorial Church. In one of the their most dramatic actions, they disrupted the ASA presidential address to hold a memorial for Ho Chi Minh, who had just died. By the early 1970s, several readers on radical sociology appeared (Deutsch and Howard 1970; Colfax and Roach 1971). Radical sociologists shifted their energy from the ASA to east- and west-coast regional RSM organizations, which held well-attended annual conferences through the mid-seventies. In 1974, they participated in a successful write-in campaign to elect Alfred McClung Lee president of ASA. However, the Movement’s demise signaled the decline of the RSM. The causes were similar: internal dissension; repression which raised the costs of participation; and a changing economy. In 1975, with RSM participation waning, radical sociologists decided to establish a permanent presence in the ASA by forming the Marxist Section.

In their quest to produce knowledge for social transformation, radical sociologists grappled with a number of dilemmas, some of which remain relevant today. Early on, fundamental questions arose about what it meant to be a radical sociologist—or whether being both radical and a sociologist was even possible. One issue concerned where radicals would direct their efforts—the university or the Movement. At the 1968 founding meeting of the New University Conference (NUC), a national organization of radical faculty, two speakers laid out the strategic choices available (Ericson 1975). Staughton Lynd, an historian who had left a faculty position at Yale, strongly doubted it was possible to work within the academic system without being co-opted by it. At the very least, the demands of academic life left little time for Movement work, he said. Instead, scholars should become Movement intellectuals, outside the university. Lynd had organized the Freedom Schools in the south during the early Civil Rights movement, a model for teaching and learning outside the university. In contrast, Richard Flacks, a sociologist who had been an early SDS leader, argued for the potential of the university as a force for radical change. Given the level of political activity on campus, he argued, radical academics had a unique contribution to make there.

In fact, few radical sociologists left academia for full-time Movement work. But the argument for doing held a lot of credibility and was much discussed. Some argued that their class position conspired against academics becoming truly radical. At the 1970 ASA meetings, Marlene Dixon and David Colfax—both of whom were later fired from faculty jobs and eventually left academia altogether—announced, along with several others, their withdrawal from the RSM and the ASA, claiming that sociology was irredeemably reactionary and radical sociology had become

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"just another career hustle" (Dixon, et al. 1972).

In reality, most radical sociologists felt that there were "all sorts of things in between the extreme of being an ivory tower academic and doing nothing but working in a housing project or in a soup kitchen," as Marty Oppenheimer put it. One option was to teach at non-elite schools, where there were more working-class students. During the Civil Rights movement, Oppenheimer taught at a Black college in the South; another sociologist taught at community colleges "on principle." For many radical sociologists, how to teach as radicals was just as important. In their efforts to break down the teacher-student hierarchy and bridge the gap between academia and the outside world, many radicals introduced practices that today are commonplace, like sitting in a circle— the teacher radical intellectuals—those who "lay claim to radical principle." For many radical sociologists, how to teach as identities, but are either inactive or only minimally engaged by Movement activists, not scholars. They were highly critical of "radical intellectuals"—those who "lay claim to radical identities, but are either inactive or only minimally engaged in political action" (Ehrlich 1971). Furthermore, some radicals claimed, theory and practice would only become truly united when all people were capable of "doing theory." When everyone could thinking sociologically, professional sociologists would become unnecessary.

Explicit defense of "radical intellectuals" was less prevalent. The Movement put a premium on practice, on the willingness to engage in actions that put one at personal risk. Still, Jesse Lemisch, a historian, argued for the importance of intellectual work that may have no immediate usefulness for radical movements, because "finding out how things actually work and have worked is an extremely radical idea" (1974:486). Al Szymanski agreed: "Radical sociology should not mean contributing money to radical causes, nor should it mean dropping out to organize slum dwellers, draft resisters, or guerrillas. The goal of radical sociologists should be above all the formulation and propagation of a sociology relevant to the practical problems facing man" (1970:10). Another wrote that radical sociologists should not simply conduct "market research for a socialist party": "more fundamental and more arduous is the task of making a theory" that would enable a full and adequate comprehension of society and its workings (Flacks 1972).

Nevertheless, while many radical sociologists advocated using research to solve practical problems, few actually did so. Henry Etzkowitz and Gerald Schaflander worked with college students and city residents to organize the Community Cooperative Center in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, which sold goods and funneled the profits back into community services. In an effort to both solve practical problems and build theory, they wrote a book and a dissertation about the effort. Another sociologist I spoke with was involved in a project on prisons, police, and crime issues in which he served as "part of a brains trust component" that conducted research on the issues. Yet another worked with the labor union about which he wrote his dissertation. Howard Ehrlich left academia and formed a collective of sociologists, Research Group One, that conducted an evaluation of a conference on radical teaching, a study of the recruitment and retention of members of a radical left organization, and a community survey of the practices of local grocery stores and banks.

Other radical sociologists conducted research designed to help the Movement, but in less immediate ways. Several did studies that corrected negative stereotypes about radical groups or spread Movement ideas. Richard Flacks conducted a study of student activists that countered both the conservative notion that they were social deviants rebelling against their parents, and the left-wing view that they were acting out of material deprivation. John Howard conducted research on Black Muslims, who he felt had been unfairly characterized as a threat to the country, and presented his findings on radio programs. One respondent wrote several books, one on women and popular feminism in Peru and another on sex roles, that were intended to spread Movement ideas among the public. Howard Ehrlich, Fred Pincus, and Chris Bose began a radio program in Baltimore that addressed social and political issues. Finally, some sociologists conducted research on powerful groups, as a way of spying for the Movement, such as Domhoff's power structure research and Howard's research on the John Birch Society.

For a short time, radical sociology gained popularity. More than one third of the respondents I interviewed reported being hired at least once specifically because of their radical perspectives. Typically, these hirings were the result of pressure from students or attempts by administrators to quell student unrest. The sociology departments at Washington University and at Livingston College of Rutgers University hired a number of radicals, but this was unusual; in most cases, departments simply wanted a token—a "house radical"—to show that they were up on current trends.

More often, being a radical sociologist hurt one's career. Around 1970, a "purge" of radical academics began. The Movement was in decline, and with it fear of student upheaval, and the academic labor market was tightening. Many radicals were denied renewal of their teaching contracts, encountered opposition to tenure or promotion, or were sanctioned in more subtle ways. All but three of the seventeen sociologists I interviewed claimed they were negatively sanctioned during their professional careers because of their radical ideas and actions. From about 1970 to 1973, the literature in radical sociology is replete with similar examples; the RSM estimated that over 200 radical faculty had been either fired or blacklisted (Dixon 1972). The FBI files of sev- (Continued on page 8)
I first met Al Szymanski at the 1969 American Sociological Association meetings in San Francisco. At a time when blacks were rioting in the streets and students were bombing draft boards, sociologists in business suits read papers full of theoretical frippery and statistical fastidiousness. Al was an oasis of genuineness in this desert of scholasticism. He dressed casually in faded jeans and a work shirt, with a disheveled mop of dishwater blond hair topping his large round head. He was only a few months older than me, having been born in 1941. At 6’2” and 190 pounds he was the largest of a small group of radicals who stood quietly in the back of a meeting room holding up a sign saying “bullshit” whenever the speaker made a particularly galling remark. The shy grin on his cherubic face revealed his embarrassment with this tactic, which he had agreed to as an experiment in ethnomethodology.

Al was the son of a Polish-American Rhode Island lobster fisherman who loved to work with his hands and never really understood his son’s intellectual and political inclinations. It was his strong-minded, deeply religious, Italian-American mother who nurtured his precociousness, taking him to get his first library card as soon as he became eligible on his sixth birthday. When he first entered school, she told him that “other children could be cruel to another child who was different because of color or how he dressed and if he saw anyone alone or rejected to become a friend to them.”

Al read Freud and Marx at the University of Rhode Island and tried to shock his mother first with the revelation that he had loved her unconsciously as a child, then with his discovery of Marxism. She professed to be flattered by the first revelation and did her best to understand the second, trying to reassure herself that he was still true to the values she had taught him.

Al became involved in a group called Students for Democratic Affairs in 1963, writing a letter to the Providence Journal advocating that students be allowed to visit Cuba. On April 14, 1963 he organized an appearance by Hyman Lumer of the Communist Party on the Rhode Island campus. The Worker quoted him as stating that “if, after eighteen years of being schooled in the American way, two hours of listening to Dr. Lumer could change a student’s political views, something would indeed be wrong with our system.” Al went on to a doctorate at Columbia University, where he organized a radical sociology journal. He produced a massive, two volume dissertation on Chile. He also found time to travel to Orangeburg, South Carolina, where he was arrested in a demonstration protesting a “slow down” by voting registrars. He was also arrested in a demonstration at Fairweather Hall, Columbia University, in 1968, but the case was apparently dropped and the FBI never got his fingerprints. They suspected he was at times affiliated with Youth Against War and Fascism, the Workers World Party, the Weathermen, the Worker Student Alliance, the Progressive Labor Party, the Revolutionary Youth Movement, the Peoples Coalition for Peace and Justice, the Venceremos Brigade and the Revolutionary Union, but his F.B.I. file included few details.

By the time I met Al he was finishing up at Columbia and looking for a job. Oregon was hiring, and we brought Al out for an interview. Al’s charisma and intellectual brilliance were acknowledged by even the most cautious of Oregon’s senior professors, who accepted Al’s reassurance that he would not advocate armed revolution until social conditions had reached the point that it was unavoidable.

Al had been involved in the Sociology Liberation Movement for several years. He brought its newsletter, The Insur-
gent Sociologist, with him to Oregon and turned it into a journal of socialist scholarship. We formed a collective with interested graduate students, solicited articles, collated and addressed the copies, and mailed them out free to anyone who'd signed a list at an annual meeting. The journal continues today under the title Critical Sociology.

Al got tenure and remained at Oregon, while I moved to Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey. The annual ASA meetings were a pleasure largely because I would get to spend time with Al. He would stay the full five days at the meetings, but would only attend one or two sessions, spending the rest of the time sitting at a table selling copies of The Insurgent Sociologist. It was a great way to meet interesting people and find out what was going on around the country. We also helped to organize the radical caucus at each year's ASA meetings, and prepared resolutions on all the burning issues for the business meetings.

Al was disappointed in political trends, but he seemed personally contented when I last saw him in 1984. He conceded that he had no idea how to bring about a revolution in America, but he was good natured about it and insisted that we go out drinking afterwards. It was a complete shock when I got a call from my ex-wife the next March with the news, "Al Szymanski has committed suicide." She'd heard from his ex-wife, who gave her no clue as to why he did it. It was also a shock to his students at Oregon. As Rodney Loh recalls:

The term wasn't even a few weeks old when one evening I got a phone call from a close friend who [was] an admitting clerk at Sacred Heart Hospital and was on duty when they brought him in. She called to tell me about a suicide victim that had been brought in whose name was Albert Szymanski and she asked me if I thought it was Al. She told me he had shot himself and I could hear the disbelief in her voice and words. I knew it had to be him. With a name like Albert Szymanski in a town the size of Eugene, Oregon, it had to be. Anyhow, I told her I was in one of his classes and I would find out for sure the next lesson.

I went to school and the news had still not made it into the student paper. It was such an odd feeling going to class and knowing the prof wasn't going to be there because he had killed himself. A few minutes later Val Burris looking very somber and visibly upset walked into the classroom with another instructor. I then said to myself it really is true. Everybody looked up in anticipation, and then Val told us.

Al was a prolific writer and his books continue to be cited and to sell used copies on amazon.com. He defended the socialist nature of the Soviet Union and its allies, and did comparative work on the struggles in the Soviet block nations in the 1970s and early 1980s. He was also intensely interested in class and race relations in the United States. His work was both intensively empirical and rooted in Marxist theoretical issues such as the nature of imperialism. Many people have asked me how I thought he would have reacted to the end of the Soviet system in 1989. My hunch is that he would have remained loyal to the Soviet vision and would have joined one of the Marxist-Leninist parties still trying to bring about socialist revolution in the United States.

Al died before the Internet era and most of his works are only available through libraries and used bookstores. His essay on "The Foundations of Radical Sociology" is available at http://crab.rutgers.edu/~goertzel/szybook.htm and is suitable for classroom use.
guessed about whether it should be outside of academia aiding various social movements, orienting research to aid social movements, exposing biases in research that served to reproduce the status quo, changing the ASA, and/or protecting radicals in teaching positions.

The Insurgent was one of the few publications that covered the politically motivated firings of radical sociologists. It also printed important initiatives like the 1969 statement and resolutions to the general business meeting of the ASA by the Women’s Caucus (soon to be Sociologists for Women in Society). In its newspaper form, The Insurgent also published responses to Reinhard Bendix’s 1970 ASA presidential address after the association refused to publish these responses in any ASA-sponsored journal. In its early journal phase, The Insurgent published discussions on what organizational form, if any, radical sociologists should take within the professional association. Many of those early dialogues found their way into the by-laws of the Marxist section of the ASA. The Insurgent also played a major role in compiling and publicizing the alternate slate of candidates for elective ASA offices in 1974, with the hope of opening up the association to a wider spectrum of sociological perspectives. Then, rightfully ignoring its usual suspicion of those well over 30, the journal campaigned wholeheartedly for the election of one of the few radical sociologists who had stayed the course since the 1930s, Alfred McClung Lee, who thereby became the first insurgent president of ASA in 1976.

By the mid-1970s, then, the ASA began to open up the professional gates, as also demonstrated by the acceptance of the Marxist Sociology Section as an official part of the ASA. With professional battles largely won, The Insurgent was soon transformed into a journal for insightful and path breaking articles that sought to understand the complexities of continued social inequality, the ways that power and resources were distributed, and how we could begin to build a better society. These articles discussed and debated the significance of capitalism as a system of exploitation, the changing nature of the class system across time and space, the role of power and ideology, and steps to overcome systems of injustice. Articles tended to focus primarily on the United States, and issues of race, gender, and culture tended to take a back seat to social class concerns, at least in the early years.

The journal was more, though, than merely an alternative academic voice. It served also as a socializing agent for an entire generation of young sociologists. When I decided to go to graduate school, for example, I remember going through The Insurgent, looking at the institutional affiliations of its authors to help me decide which sociology programs to apply to. It must be a good program, I thought, if faculty are publishing in this radical journal, one that I began subscribing to in 1973. So, naturally, the highlight of my first participation in an annual ASA meeting (1976) was going to The Insurgent table and meeting Al Szymanski. Al and the others who had table duty when I happened by were not only actively selling issues of the journal, including copies of back issues at bargain prices, but they would talk to anyone and everyone about anything at all to convince them to read the journal and use it in the classroom. For several years thereafter, The Insurgent table was not only the place where the most intellectually exciting discussions were happening as far as I was concerned, but also the most politically relevant. It was there that we could find out about the activities and sessions of the Marxist Section and other radical groups, and feel part of a progressive sociological community. The journal provided a place, both figuratively and concretely, for many of us who felt marginalized by the sociological mainstream, as represented by those who were in leadership positions of the ASA and most of its sections.

… mainstream sociology turned out to be far more responsive to a critical approach than most of us ever would have imagined. It was able to incorporate much of radical sociology into a revised model that transformed the mainstream from a monolithic whole based on the one right method into the heterogeneous and vibrant discipline it is today. By the mid-1980s, radical sociology was no longer “insurgent” because issues of class, race, gender, and even Marxist theory had found their place at annual meetings and in academically respected journals. The discipline and pro-
fession were becoming more open to alternative perspectives, so much so that when gay, lesbian, and transgendered sociologists demanded a place at the table, hardly an eyebrow was raised. So, in 1987, in a very different political context, The Insurgent left behind its youthful past and changed its name to Critical Sociology. Then in 1999, Critical Sociology took another big step by leaving the collective management at the University of Oregon that had been its home for so long to begin a new life with a commercial publisher. Like radical sociology itself, Critical Sociology has come a long way from its modest beginnings.

Not only has radical sociology impacted the discipline, but radical sociologists became leaders in the profession. This has long been evident in state and regional associations, where many important discussions of teaching and methodology take place, and where graduate students are socialized into the discipline. Now it is reflected in the increasing representation of insurgent and feminist sociologists on the Council of the ASA, and in the growing list of prominent critical sociologists who have held an elected office and followed Alfred McClung Lee into the presidency of the association.


References


The Radical Sociology Movement (Continued from page 4)

eral sociologists reveal that some colleagues and university administrators had even collaborated with FBI investigations of them (Flacks 1991; Stark 1991).

It is still difficult to produce sociology that promotes radical social change. Public intellectuals do exist: "today the left intellectual is a feminist, an ecologist, a critic of science and technology, a person of color" (Aronowitz 1990). They enjoy a public audience both because they address important public issues and their scholarship starts from the lives of activists and ordinary people. But the demands of the profession conspire against such work. The major obstacle to producing scholarship for social transformation today is not a lack of academic freedom, though the historical record shows it has been regularly violated, but the definition of what "counts" as knowledge in the academy. Scholars who avoid specialization, include considerations of values in their work, or write for a non-academic audience risk being denied research grants and having their work rejected by mainstream journals, making it difficult for them to meet the qualifications typically necessary for tenure, promotion, and salary increases.

Nearly all the sociologists I interviewed made the decision to accept the costs rather than abandon either their political commitments or academia. They have chosen to write for non-mainstream journals, to develop their teaching skills instead of publish articles, or to work at less prestigious schools with working-class students, willingly foregoing the prestige and material rewards of some of their colleagues. Their willingness to ask hard questions about the political consequences of one’s work inspired me as a young scholar writing my dissertation. Indeed, it was their example that kept me in academia.

References


Global Marxism: Citizens Beyond the State: Lessons from the Struggle against Intel in Costa Rica

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Editor John Foran’s introduction: I am grateful to Margaret George-Cramer for writing this thoughtful and wide-ranging piece on a multi-sided resistance to Intel’s global designs. I would welcome others to contribute to the column by contacting me in advance about their ideas (foran@soc.ucsb.edu). This project is an attempt to take the world, especially the Third World, as the subject of Marxism. “Subject” both in the sense of what Marxism as an approach could be about, and in the sense of centering the agency of people in the Third World.

As we in the United States and people across the globe watch the round of presidential and vice-presidential debates preceding the national U.S. election, many of us hold out for the promise of change from “war business as usual” under the Bush administration’s imperial politics to the possibilities for alternatives and change under a different leadership. Prompted by the climate of election politics, I have been thinking through what it means to be a citizen in these days of global economy and the relevance or irrelevance of national identity. Certainly within the context of national elections the right to national citizenship and the right to vote remain of significance. However, another important project of our times is the project of developing a sense of “global citizenship,” a sense of identity which reaches beyond nationalist borders and that has implications for transnational forms of resistance to hegemonic projects of global capitalism, a project of identity encouraged by environmental and social justice movements in resistance to the hegemony of capitalist globalization (Klein 2002, Roy 2001, Shiva 2000). In this essay, I will reflect on the concepts of national and global citizenships as parallel projects, and suggest that a dialectical development of identity, both as “citizens” and as “humans” in both national and transnational identities are a part of the tensions in our “becoming global,” and a part of the project of “resisting from below.”

I agree with my colleague John Foran (2004) that we need to find more flexible tools of analysis which include political, cultural, gendered and racialized dimensions in their approaches, and which are not limited to the economic, and I suggest the usage of a model of “entwinement” of race, class, gender, and sexualities as prisms for analysis of social relations in any specific context. In this essay I am concerned with how our identities as “humans” and as “citizens” are framed both within and without national boundaries, and how “cultures of resistance” to the hegemony of global capitalism still emerge in concrete historical and geographical contexts within specific social formations, even as they develop transnationally, often via cyber-space. So when I think about a “transnational class consciousness” the concept of a “transnational class” of elites dominates over a “transnational worker class consciousness” as structural differences between the North and the South, the West and the East, and among the working classes are pre-structured by regional inequities and differentials. All of this at a time when so many workers, especially domestic workers from the South and the East are transnational or migrant workers, working and living away from their “home place” and often away from their families for long periods of time. Many migrant workers utilize kin and community networks, even as states organize themselves as transnational employment agencies, as in the cases of the Filipino and Sri Lankan states. Yet there is little transnational worker consciousness between communities, or coalition-building that cuts across ethnic and community identity lines. We need transnational worker unions, a transnational minimum wage, and the practical implementation of international laws concerned with workers’ rights and human rights to forge these alliances and to further develop a sense of “global citizenship.”

Various dialectical approaches, not all of which are Marxist, recognize the human potential in “globalization from below” (Brecher, Childs, and Cutler 1993), and the importance of cultural-ideological systems in shifting political ground away from capitalist hegemony (Skalir 2002). Leslie Skalir offers a critique of the culture-ideology of consumerism which, he argues, maintains the hegemony of the capitalist system, and suggests that a counter-hegemonic strategy for socialist globalization should be around human rights. Darren O’Bryne (2003) argues that “the realization of the end of the world as a material possibility surely has a globalizing effect –

(Continued on page 10)
that one’s death might not be an individual event but might form a part of the death of the world” is key in the consciousness-building towards an identity of “global citizenship” -- a thought that certainly contributes to the drive for a global peoples’ environmental movement. However, as we have learned in light of recent reports (Drogin and Miller 2004), the myth of “weapons of mass destruction” is often as dangerous as the actual presence of nuclear potential. If we are to begin to think of ourselves as “citizens beyond the state” as well as “citizens of the state,” how then shall we do this?

In an attempt to suggest some strategies of analysis for transnational dynamics and the possibilities of working toward a concept of identity as “global citizens,” I will turn to my field work in Costa Rica during the summer of 2003 for the rest of this essay. I returned to Costa Rica in 2003 to research Intel as a symbol of globalization. The presence of Intel since 1999 had dramatically transformed the Costa Rican economy from one dominated by tourism and agriculture, to an economy in which hi-tech and info-processing had quickly become the main export industries. I was interested in the effects of the presence of Intel on the Costa Rican economy and society, and in particular, I was interested in the state actors who had negotiated the contract with Intel in 1997, or who were resisting the new transformations. Indeed, José Maria Figueres, the past president of Costa Rica, had a personal vision of transforming Costa Rica into a hi-tech nation which he predicted would become a leader in the Central American region and provide powerful new links to California and to the global economy. José Maria Figueres himself negotiated the Intel contract by making a personal trip to California in 1997. I set out to assess the hegemony of a transnational class in the transformation of the Costa Rican economy and society. Collaborating with Bill Robinson in this research I traced contesting discourses on “development” policies between the state of Costa Rica and the corporation of Intel. I proposed to explore flows of labor, culture, and information back and forth from the U.S. to Costa Rica; to explore the spin-off effects of hi-tech developments, which included the accelerated development of software production in Costa Rica, and to assess the effects of a “resistance from below” to these developments.

During the summer of 2003 I took a diverse set of interviews with both state and corporate actors and from activists in unions and the “new social movements” in Costa Rica. What I discovered was a variety of “political cultures of resistance” (Reed and Foran, 2002) to Intel both as a symbol of globalization, and to the economic hegemony of global capitalism in general, resistance emerging from a number of different and sometimes surprising sectors. Many of the actors in these “political cultures of resistance” understood themselves as actors in a participatory democracy and as actors beyond the state, some self-identifying as “global citizens.” Where transnational identity emerged, it first took the form of regional identity, such as the hope of a Central American Alliance as a bloc of resistance to the negotiations against the United States in the TLC (Free Trade of the Americas – Central America negotiations). Further, seemingly as an echo from the past, and like a phoenix rising again, the “idea of Cuba” was often evoked among intellectuals and union leaders in Costa Rica as a symbol of a possibility of a radical democratic state, both privately and in public forums, such as the forum for “organizaciones sociales sobre el tratado de libre comercio de Centroamerica – Estados Unidos” held at the National Universidad in Heredia, Costa Rica in August 2003. For instance, Jorge Arguedes, a union leader of ANTEC, the public telecommunications service, argued forcefully to hold out for public telecommunications, including a public internet service for Costa Rica. The union held on to this demand throughout the negotiations of the TLC in December 2003 and January 2004, and this is still a sticking point in the partial agreement now reached between the U.S. and the Central American bloc. When I interviewed Jorge Arguedes in August, 2003, he emphasized how Intel was working in competition with the public telecommunications services, especially in their future plans to open up the market to privatization, while exporting its profits abroad and not investing in the Costa Rican economy. Arguedes argued strongly for the retention of a public energy service, particularly in telecommunications, and especially in regard to internet services.

Meanwhile, various environmental groups in Costa Rica had also objected to and struggled against the presence of Intel in Costa Rica. William Alvarado Bogantes, the ex-major of Belen, the San José suburb where the Intel plant is located, had led the community-level resistance to the Intel project. Foremost among environmentalist and community concerns had been the enormous usage of water resources that diverted water from the capital of Costa Rica, and the pollution of underground water tables. Other important concerns had been the construction of high velocity electrical towers close to residential properties and the appropriate disposal of toxic waste. Interviewing Bogantes in August, 2003, I learned that although he had mobilized a community environmental group, Abet Solano, which together with other environmental groups had filed law suits against Intel based on environmental concerns, these lawsuits had been unsuccessful in blocking the construction and operations of the plant. Legal action by the environmentalists had, however, been able to block Intel’s original plan to build a microchip processing plant in Costa Rica. The concerns of pollution to the environment and the diversion of water resources remains a concern to the people of Belen, and to the municipality of San José. Ruth Solano, an environmental lawyer on the Intel cases who works for Justice For Nature, reported in August 2003 that concerns about the possible contamination of the capital’s main water source, as well as the water shortage, remain active among residents and environmentalists alike. The lack of the government’s concern over these issues, and the lack of state monitoring of safety levels at the Intel plant was a common source of protest.
An Introduction to some Critiques of Capitalism

Part 1

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Introduction

This is the first article in a series intended to introduce students to some more and less common critiques of capitalism. It is written accessibly, and hopefully engagingly in order to stimulate beginning students’ interest in radical economic critique. This first article is not explicitly Marxist in its critiques, nor does it mention most of the critiques in existence on this vast subject. There are surely many other more agile critiques to be made, and better books to reference. I thus hope this series will stimulate others more able than me to write their own lists of critiques. For those who find my list useful enough, feel free to copy this and share it with your students. I ultimately endeavor to turn this series of articles into a one to two-page list, making each critique as brief as possible so the list may make its way on to office and dorm doors, email lists, fridges and poster boards. Such diffusion would make this a proud venture in public sociology.

Do Capitalists Really Love Competition?: The Myth and Reality of Supply and Demand, Part 1

It seems such an appealing principle in its simplicity: the core idea that theoretically structures the market under capitalism is that the price of goods should be determined by supply and demand. If it is expensive to make a car, or find a pearl, and demand for these is high, the price will be accordingly high. If it is cheap to make a Twinkie or a radio, and the demand is modest, the price will be accordingly cheap to modest. Sounds eminently logical.

The trouble is that in practice, the pursuit of profit leads businesses to try to control supply and raise demand. This fundamental tendency has manifested itself in countless ways, large and small, in the history of capitalism. One of the most prominent ways has been business trusts, i.e., alliances among businesses intended to control supply. In the United States, passage of the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890, and the formation of the Federal Trade Commission in 1914, among other regulatory efforts, were intended to contain this tendency of business to seek to control supply. But business attempts to control supply still abound. Witness Microsoft’s controversial efforts to control its market, Starbucks’ attempts to lease property from under its competitors’ feet, food vendors’ “exclusive contracts” with schools and other institutions, and the innumerable mergers and acquisitions. Government attempts to restrain such practices typically meet with stiff resistance from business. Even if successful, regulatory efforts are often corrupted because when relatively few businesses with great stakes in the outcomes of government action conflict with many consumers and taxpayers with relatively small stakes, business typically wins.

Hence, contrary to market ideology, business does not love competition. They hate it because it drives down profits, and thus constantly seek to kill it or take it over. Adam Smith, one of the most famous proponents of capitalist market economics, himself recognized this tendency, at the public’s expense, in his classic The Wealth of Nations (1981: 267):

The interest of the dealers…in any particular branch of trade or manufactures, is always in some respects different from, and even opposite to, that of the publick. To widen the market and to narrow the competition, is always the interest of the dealers….The proposal of any new law or regulation of commerce which comes from this order, ought always to be listened to with… the most suspicious attention. It comes from an order of men, whose interest is never exactly the same with that of the publick, who have generally an interest to deceive and even oppress the publick, and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it.

Do Capitalists Really Obey Consumers?: The Myth and Reality of Supply and Demand, Part 2

You’ve probably heard the argument before, and it seems quite compelling: the consumer is king, and business is his self-interested servant, attentive to the king’s every need and desire. If consumers do not like something, business quickly adjusts to offer other choices. Business proves such an attentive servant because it is interested in profit, and if it doesn’t succeed in selling its product to consumers, it doesn’t earn a profit. If consumers do not like the product or its social consequences, it is only their fault since business just provides consumers with what they want. Sounds eminently logical.

The trouble is that in reality, any capitalist business that seeks to increase its profits has an interest not only in controlling supply, but expanding and manipulating demand. Far from an obedient servant, the most successful businesses are...
Whereas business efforts to control supply often take place behind closed doors, some of its most strenuous efforts at manipulating demand are public and pervasive in everyday life to the point of annoyance. Advertising is the most prominent way that business seeks to manipulate and expand demand, and its presence is now felt nearly everywhere, from television, radio, magazines, newspapers, mail, and the internet to billboards, supermarkets, malls, theme parks, elevators, bathrooms, clothes and skin (as when consumers for a price tattoo themselves with a commercial logo).

However, as countless sociologists, historians, economists and journalists have documented (e.g., Ewen 2001, 1988, Ewen & Ewen 1982, Leach 1993, Packard 1957, Schor 1998, 2000), the object of advertising is not simply to convince consumers of a commodity’s worth, but also to shape the consumer’s very identity. Advertising, among other things, links products to certain lifestyles and selves so that one’s development and self-esteem is fastened to the acquisition and correct consumption of a changing set of goods.

Beyond advertising, businesses also engineer places to manipulate and grow demand. In his book *Enchanting a Disenchanted World*, sociologist George Ritzer shows how a growing number of places in everyday life – like restaurants, malls, cruise ships, casinos, chain stores, theme parks, and even schools, museums, churches and hospitals – are being built or transformed into “cathedrals of consumption” designed to fuel demand for favored goods and services. Furthermore, an ever growing body of marketing research has turned the manipulation of demand through place engineering into an astoundingly meticulous science. For instance, as economist Juliet Schor indicates, research on consumer behavior in stores has found, among other things,

the ‘law of the invariant right’: shoppers overwhelmingly turn right, rather than left, upon entering a store….products placed in the so-called decompression zone at the entrance to a store are 30 percent less likely to be purchased than those placed beyond it….the number of feet into a store the customer walks is correlated with the number of items pur- chased….if while shopping a woman is accidentally brushed from behind, her propensity to purchase falls precipitously (Schor 2000: 20).

Advertising and place engineering are so pervasive that they are taken-for-granted. Yet they contradict one of the tenets of modern capitalism shared by economists and consumers alike: that the consumer is free and rational rather than manipulated and impressionable. The fact that capitalist businesses invest so much in advertising and place engineering quietly testifies to the falseness of that most cherished capitalist tenet.

1. On this tendency for small groups with high stakes to win against larger groups with lower stakes in the outcomes of decisions, see Mancur Olson’s classic *The Logic of Collective Action* (1971).

**Bibliography**


among environmentalists, students, and residents in the San José area. Beyond this, the “free” trade treaty of the Americas threatens to over-ride state laws on environmental protection in the future.

In the “Intelization” of the Costa Rican economy and the drive of the Costa Rican government to secure a place in the global economy as a “hi-tech” nation, resistance from intellectuals, union leaders, migrant workers, and women’s rights activists all take the form of protesting the loss of labor rights that will inevitably come with further processes of globalization and the “free” trade treaties. In Costa Rica, Intel is understood as a symbol of these hi-tech, transnational changes which will over-ride national laws in regard to wages, length of the work day, security of contracts, and intellectual property rights. The anticipation of the “free” trade treaty is currently impacting changes in Costa Rican immigration policy, and encouraging the policing and deportation of migrant workers. Transnational contracts and the “free” trade of the Americas in their drive for profit, will challenge workers’ rights under state laws, and undermine the intellectual property rights of Costa Rican software producers and engineers. The “idea of Cuba” remains a symbol of resistance in honoring worker’s rights, the right to meaningful, creative work, and the human rights of health and the preservation of the environment. In order to be effective, labor unions must become transnational, international laws for the protection of worker’s rights and for human rights must be implemented, and worker-consciousness must continue to develop both at the level of citizens of the state, for and against; and as citizens beyond the state.

As Judith Butler has recently asked in the light of recent global violence: “Who counts as human? Whose lives count as lives? And, finally, What makes for a grievable life?” The answers to these questions and the project of identity is both a human project and a global project. “What allows us to recognize one another? What allows us to encounter one another? What are the conditions and possibilities for an international feminist coalition?” (Butler 2004: 20, 49).

Place is both important and unimportant. Will we live in a global “mélange” (Pieterse 2004), or will we live in a global melee?

References:


The 2004 Meetings: An Overview

The Marxist Section was particularly active at this year’s annual meeting in San Francisco. We were involved in the following events or sessions:

August 13 –Working with Brill, the publishers of *Critical Sociology*, we sponsored a half-day symposium on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the journal. The symposium’s three sessions took up Public Sociology, Globalization and Resistance, and Power and Politics. The symposium audience averaged around 50.

August 14
1. Council and Business Meeting (more on these below).
2. Marxist Section Roundtables (16 papers)
3. Paper Session on Marxism and the Environment (Co-sponsored by Section on Environment and Technology)
4. Paper Session on Marxism and Culture
5. Paper Session on Marxism and Globalization (Co-sponsored with Section on Political Economy of the World-System)
6. Joint Reception with the Section on Labor and Labor Movements and the Section on Race, Gender, and Class; each of these Sections presented their awards (for ours, see below)

All of our paper sessions were well attended, as was the joint reception.

Our 2004 Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award: T. R. Young, Red Feather Institute (deceased) and Martha Gimenez, University of Colorado


Albert Szymanski Student Paper Award: Rita Padawangi, Loyola University Chicago, "The Transnational Capitalist Class in Indonesia"

Council and Business Meetings

We held our Council meeting at 7:30 a.m. on August 14, in order to be able to meet ahead of our Business meeting that same morning. Four Council members (Klein, Wright, Goldstein, Halnon) and the Chair attended, with two Council members (Foran, Jipson) unable to do so. Council discussed plans for Section committees for 2004-05 and for Section-sponsored sessions for the 2005 meeting. Council also discussed plans to add the names of two recently deceased Marxist scholars, Paul Sweezy and T. R. Young, to our awards.

We held our Business meeting at 9:30 a.m., where recommendations of the Council were discussed and voted upon.

1. After considerable debate, we voted to sponsor sessions on the following topics, in rank order, with the third session contingent on our membership reaching 400, which it subsequently did:
   - Imperialism and War: Past, Present, and Future
   - Political Economy, Race, and Gender in a Post-September 11 World
   - Marxist Perspectives on Electoral Politics
   - We also voted to sponsor roundtables.

2. We discussed and nominated chairs for the following committees:
   - Nominations Committee-Warren Goldstein, University of Central Florida
   - Book Award Committee-Lloyd Klein, Bemidji State University
   - Student Paper Award Committee- Alan Spector, Purdue University-Calumet
   - Lifetime Achievement Award Committee- Steve Rosenthal, Hampton University

3. Naming our three annual awards. We had actually debated these issues since the spring in an email exchange among some 20 present and former Section officers, and had also debated it at Council. After more discussion at our Business meeting, we voted to name our awards as follows:
   - Albert Szymanski-T. R. Young Student Paper Award
   - Paul Sweezy Book Award
   - Lifetime Achievement Award

Other Activities During the Past Year

We published three issues of our newsletter, From the Left, each averaging about 16 pages. Copies are attached. Our present newsletter editor, Warren Goldstein, will be stepping down in fall 2003, to be replaced by Karen Halnon.

In our elections this spring, Jeff Halley, University of Texas-San Antonio, was voted Chair-Elect, and two people were voted onto the Council, Karen Halnon, Penn State University Abington, and Jennifer Lehmann, University of Nebraska.

--Submitted by Kevin B. Anderson, Purdue University, Past Chair
Globalization and Change explores the origins, development, and transformation of global capitalism from a critical and historical perspective. Berch Berberoglu brings together eight essays authored by prominent social scientists from across the nation that examine the dynamics of globalization through an analysis of class relations and class struggles that define the contemporary global political economy. By undertaking a careful examination of the contradictions inherent in capitalist globalization, this book provides a thorough understanding of the issues behind the global capitalist economy and the struggle against globalization, while at the same time offering a viable solution to the growing exploitation of labor throughout the world. This study on global capitalism, informed by class analysis, is essential to anyone interested in exploring the political implications of globalization and the unfolding class struggles.

Contents
Introduction by Berch Berberoglu
PART I: DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM AND CAPITALIST CLASS STRUCTURE
1. The Rise of Global Capitalism: The Concentration and Centralization of Capital on a World Scale by Howard Sherman
2. Class Structure and Class Conflict in Advanced Capitalist Society by Alvin Y. So
3. Class Polarization and Class Struggle Under Advanced Capitalism by Alan Spector
PART II: CONTRADICTIONS AND CRISES OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM
5. Globalization of Capital and the Imperial State: Global Capitalism in Crisis by Berch Berberoglu
PART III: TRANSFORMATION OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM: OPPOSITION, RESISTANCE, AND CHANGE
6. Global Capital and Labor Internationalism: Workers=Response to Global Capitalism by Andrew Howard
7. The Struggle against Capitalist Globalization: The Worldwide Protests against the WTO by Marty Orr
8. Global Capitalism, Class Struggle, and Social Transformation by Walda Katz Fishman, Jerome Scott, and Ife Modupe

“This sterling collection of essays by premier political economists exposes the real nature of globalization and capitalism. Well analyzed, well edited, and much needed, this book will benefit laypersons and academics alike.”
-- Michael Parenti, author of The Assassination of Julius Caesar and Superpatriotism

“This book, highlighting the capitalist nature of globalization and the exploitative nature of the reorganization of production and labor on a world scale, provides an excellent analysis of the globalization process and is a welcome contri

bution to the current literature.”
-- Martha Gimenez, Professor of Sociology, University of Colorado, Boulder

“The daily shockwaves of war, poverty, environmental devastation, protest and revolt leave many of us at a loss to understand, let alone take action, against capitalist globalization. This collection of superb essays provides a succinct framework to expose the contradictions of this process, the human cost of global capitalist expansion, and the mobilization of millions of people to confront the global empire.”
-- Judy Aulette, Professor of Sociology, University of North Carolina, Charlotte and University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Berch Berberoglu is Professor of Sociology and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Sociology at the University of Nevada, Reno, where he has been teaching and conducting research for the past 27 years. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon in 1977. He studied under Albert J. Szymanski from 1974 to 1977 when Al served as a member of his doctoral comprehensive exam committee and chair of his dissertation committee.