Oil and National Security

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Many of the reasons to abandon oil as the basis of our national and transnational economy are well known. Some of these are rooted primarily in ecological concerns. The burning of oil generates greenhouse gases that threaten the global climate balance. The extraction of oil destroys fragile ecological habitat for humans and other species. The transport of oil produces devastating oil spills. Other reasons to move out of oil dependency are rooted in economic concerns. Oil is a finite, non-renewable resource, the exhaustion of which will inevitably lead to economic collapse if viable alternatives are not immediately available. As finite oil supplies dwindle, prices will soar, pricing goods and services beyond the reach of most Americans, let alone less affluent global citizens. Another set of reasons to find alternatives to oil consumption are based on fairly basic national security concerns. Reliance on imported energy stocks to fuel the American economy can potentially place enormous power in the hands of other nations. Those nations may seek to gain a better deal on oil exports, providing countries with whom the U.S. has poor relations the power to determine the price of domestic goods and services. They may also choose not to sell oil to the U.S. altogether, thus creating the potential for foreign governments to completely undermine U.S. society.

Any one of those reasons should, in and of itself, be sufficient to convince our policy makers that the time to implement an aggressive, alternative, renewable and domestic energy plan is long past due. And if were not for the enormous undemocratic power vested in transnational oil corporations, such a plan would have been developed and set in motion by the end of the 1970s. Yet here we are, moving further and further into the 21st century, and no such policy initiative has yet to be drafted, let alone implemented. But the attacks on the U.S. of September 11, 2001 organized, and implemented by Saudi Arabian terrorists, have lead some to see another reason that the U.S. needs to act quickly and
Neither George Bush Nor Saddam Hussein: For a Humanist World

All too often one hears the anti-war movement characterized as “sympathetic to Saddam” as if protesters against this war were morally relativistic and absolutely blind to the nature of the Hussein regime. All along, we Marxists Humanists have condemned the Hussein regime for its crimes against humanity, yet do not believe that the current war is at all justified for many reasons. Specifically, we single out the Iraqi regime’s genocidal use of poison gas against Iraq’s Kurdish minority. This took place in 1988, at a time when Iraq was a quasi-ally of the U.S. Recently, as the regime crumbled, the Iraqi people have come out into the streets, attacking symbols of the dictatorship and revealing as never before the full story of its foul prisons and torture chambers. We support the aspirations of the Iraqi people to be free of all forms of oppression, whether from the Saddam Hussein regime, from other internal conservative forces such as religious fundamentalism, or from the attempt by the U.S. and Britain to incorporate Iraq into their version of globalized capitalism.

World opinion is against this U.S.-led invasion because the world sees that the current administration is driven by a desire (a desire these people have had for a long time) for unchecked American power around the globe. The world sees that the Bush Administration has taken to defining so-called threats to America under the guise of fighting terrorism and launching pre-emptive strikes, bringing terror in the form of “collateral damage” to innocent Iraqi civilians.

The Bush Administration has provided no viable evidence of a link between the Hussein regime and Al-Qaeda. In fact, they fabricated evidence and lied directly to the U.N. and the world. Colin Powell’s presentation to the U.N. outlining the “threat” posed by Iraq contained British intelligence that had been plagiarized, forged documents seeking to establish that Iraq had tried to buy uranium from Niger, and much other information that had been denounced by chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix as untrue. Such supposed links between Hussein and Osama bin Laden contradict the reality of the relationship between Hussein and Islamic fundamentalism. Bin Laden has called Hussein an infidel and western agents and Hussein knew that if he were to give weapons to terrorists those weapons would be used against him.

Lastly, we oppose this war because the intentions of the Bush Administration in waging this war are not to serve humanity and democracy. The claim that the Iraqi people will experience democracy and liberty is dubious and it seems very contradictory to impose democracy from outside. Democracy is not forced, it is chosen. We think it is highly doubtful due, in part, to the American track record in supporting dictator after dictator that this war is about democracy and liberation of the Iraqi people. There are certain people in Washington who want the might of American capitalism to spread around the globe for geo-political and economic reasons. The current administration seeks U.S. global dominance and has used September 11th as an excuse to attack countries at will.

We can only hope that the anti-war movement can continue and prevent the U.S. from continuing this policy of imperialism and destruction. Syria, Iran, and North Korea have been threatened and no one knows where the eagle will strike next.

Shane Wahl, Shannon Pinegar, Ron Rowe, Heather Oaks, Matthew Dodge, Eric Dickman, and Kevin B. Anderson, for the Marxist-Humanist Network, Purdue University, April 12, 2003
Global Marxism
“Feminism and Global Marxism: Making a Commitment”

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This column makes the world, especially the Third World, 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 (and not in the sense of “being subject to”). I invite your feedback, either on the pieces that appear here, or your ideas for an essay of your own that might fit this rubric.

One of Marxism’s perennial challenges has been to acknowledge its blind spots – theoretically and politically. In recent years, these have come to include such fundamental social realities as gender, race, culture, and the environment, to name a few. The relationship of Marxism to feminism, and of class struggle to women’s movements, has been a particularly vexed arena of contention and frustration on all sides. Let us recall briefly a few of the twentieth century’s revolutionary moments under this aspect.

In Russia, in 1917, the feminist Alexandra Kollontai was one of the Bolshevik leaders, calling for “free love,” in the sense that one should be able to love whom one chose, that marriage should be both harder to contract and divorce easier to obtain and that men should take on their share of the emotional work of the family -- ideas that were not adopted and for which she suffered great personal and political loss in her long life.

In revolutionary Cuba in the 1970s, legislation was in fact passed that men do fifty percent of the housework -- perhaps showing the influence of Kollontai? This too was something which proved unenforceable given prevailing cultural attitudes about gender roles -- but it points to the willingness of the Cuban revolutionaries to confront their own contradictions, and the film “Strawberry and Chocolate” affords a poignant glimpse of how this worked out in the realm of sexuality, another vexed issue in Cuba.

In Iran, women stood in the front ranks of the demonstrations that faced down the shah’s army in 1978 and 1979, only to be hemmed in afterwards by the Islamic regime’s rigid views of gender roles. It is noteworthy that women have continued to struggle creatively in many ways for their rights in Iran, with some success of late.

in the revolutions of the 1980s in Central America, women participated in growing numbers -- most scholars put this at a third of the guerrilla forces -- and took on ever greater responsibilities, yet still suffered so much sexism at the hands of their male comrades that after the revolutions they started their own feminist movements for autonomy, in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

What these experiences seem to share is vigorous activism by women, a degree of success for both women and people generally, and a rollback of gains, a falling short of promise, that stands as a revealing measure of the limited outcomes of all revolutions to date. The classic work on the disappointment of this dream is Margaret Randall’s Gathering Rage: The Failure of Twentieth Century Revolutions to Develop a Feminist Agenda (Monthly Review Press, 1993), which should be required reading for revolutionary scholars and activists.

What might a global Marxism contribute specifically to this problematic? With colleagues Peter Chua, Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Priya Kurian, and others, I have been part of an attempt to bring together cultural analysis, a feminist focus on women, and a critical perspective on development studies. We call this “Women, Culture, and Development.”

What might a global Marxism contribute specifically to this problematic? With colleagues Peter Chua, Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Priya Kurian, and others, I have been part of an attempt to bring together cultural analysis, a feminist focus on women, and a critical perspective on development studies. We call this “Women, Culture, and Development.”

The term WCD is meant as an extension of the series of earlier approaches in the women and development literature – Women in Development (WID), Woman and Development (WAD) and then Gender and Development (GAD) – to fashion a broader analysis of the ways in which capitalism, patriarchy, and racism shape and are shaped by women’s subordination and oppression. For although development studies has centered the Third World, its analyses tend to be driven by economistic policy considerations, which generally locate women and culture as peripheral to a central project of increasing the gross domestic product of Third World nation-states. Yet there can be no critical development studies without a sophisticated Marxian core, in my view (it would take another column to even begin to sort out the relationship among, say, modes of production analysis, world-system theory, dependency analysis, and the new craze for globalization studies). Finally, to approach culture as lived experience rather than as a static set of relationships permits an opening of new avenues for development because it centers the relationship between production and reproduction and ensures that women’s agency is visible. Those streams within Marxism that have shown a desire to consider culture alongside political economy without losing sight of either fit well with a WCD approach. The contributors to the volume Feminist Futures: Re-imagining Women, Culture and Development (London: Zed, 2003) – the book is announced elsewhere in this issue – have started the

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Oil and National Security (Continued from page 1)

aggressively to end its dependency on oil. That reason is that our relentless quest for access to oil reserves generates violent hatred of the United States all over the world.

As the transnational oil corporations and the U.S. government become increasingly inseparable, both abroad and domestically, the actions of each reflect on the other. When the two act in concert, as we saw on CNN's daily Iraq-a-thon, the backlash is inevitably even greater. In order to secure access to ever diminishing oil reserves, Oil corporations based in the U.S. and other Northern industrial nations must gain economic and political access to new oil reserves worldwide. These oil reserves are often located in areas inhabited by people for millennia. The entrance of transnational oil companies as unwanted intruders into peoples nations, states, provinces and counties is often problematic. Oil development inevitably displaces people from their traditional homelands, contaminates their land, water and air, brings an influx of migrants into their regions, and undermines local economic bases. Oil contamination produces illness and death. And often people resist.

That is the situation that U.S. based oil corporations produce every day throughout the world to quench their thirst for profit and our thirst for oil. But in the impoverished global South, from which most of the oil we consume is taken, people often fight to defend their land, their homes, their children, and their future. And when they resist, oil corporations and the governments that support them fight back. They take the oil by any means necessary. And because of that, oil extraction often depends upon the violent repression of local populations.

In Ecuador, Texaco discovered and initiated oil development in Amazonia in the early 1970s. Ecuadorian Amazonia is the most biodiverse terrestrial region on Earth. It has also been the home of the Shuar, the Cofan, the Huarani and other peoples whose lives and livelihoods depend on a clean and viable forest ecosystem. Oil development has devastated their land, contaminated their water, undermined their sustainable economies, and flooded their region with an influx of outsiders who have overtaken their communities. Their children have become sick, their communities have come undone, and they have resisted. They have petitioned their government, they have sued Texaco in U.S. courts, they have protested, they have burned oil rigs, and they have killed oil workers who refuse to leave their land. And they have been repressed with substantial military force. In the end the oil under their homes was taken at gun point, and those guns were paid for by oil revenues, by Texaco, and by the U.S. government. And they know that.

In Colombia, the U.S. has been engaged in a war for years, although not one that CNN appears to be particularly interested in. First it was called a war against communists. Later, when the USSR was gone, it was called a war on drugs. Since September 11, 2001 it has been called a war on...
On the Modern Division of Labor,
Part 2: Connecting Individualism, Skocpol and Sociology
Paul Lachelier

Sociology and American Individualism
Have you ever noticed a pattern in how Borders, Barnes & Noble and other chain bookstores present sociology and psychology to American readers? I have noticed two telling patterns. First, their psychology section is often considerably larger than their sociology section. Second, both sections typically have plenty of questionably relevant tomes, such as pop self-help books in psychology, and crime thrillers in sociology.

What these two patterns suggest to me is that anomic individualism is alive and well in America. Psychology enjoys more shelf-space because it sells more than sociology, and it sells more in part because it tends to cohere with and reproduce what Robert Bellah and his colleagues (1985) call the “expressive” and “utilitarian” forms of individualism. Americans steeped in one or both of these forms of individualism tend not toward a sociological imagination, as C. Wright Mills (1959) defines and Anthony Giddens (1987) extends the term. That is, they fail to see how human experience varies and changes with time, across cultures, and how it is hence possible for present arrangements to be different. Instead, the “individualist imagination” typically inclines Americans to: experience life more strictly in the present and personally; to assume others share at least the fundamentals of their culture; to not only fail to imagine alternatives but to be skeptical of them; and, of course, to blame individuals for failures and praise them for successes.

Accordingly, when Americans survey the psychology or sociology sections at Borders Bookstore, they tend to be drawn to self-help books and studies of criminal minds rather than sociological tomes on the historical, cultural, or institutional bases of crime and personal troubles. In turn, when they leave Borders they are more inclined, absent support from public institutions, to head home to read their books than to discuss their reading together with fellow Americans. Individualism, as Tocqueville (1969) noted, inclines Americans to withdraw from public life to the comforts of their small private circles of family and friends.

To be sure, not all forms of individualism are bad (e.g., see Lichterman 1996), but the ones that prevail – the expressive, utilitarian and privatizing individualisms which I will together call anomic individualism – in bookstores and across America’s cultural landscape are.

As Joseph Gusfield (1990) has argued, American sociology’s perhaps most significant and inescapably political task is to challenge the hegemony of Americans individualism. However, sociology and its intellectual allies in other fields hardly make a dent in that pernicious hegemony. Not only does anomic individualism prevail as an American habit of mind, but Americans, according to the substantial research done by Robert Putnam (2000) and others, seem to be going further than Tocqueville feared, withdrawing not just from politics, but even from nearby friends and neighbors.

Theda Skocpol and the Political Limits of Sociology
In her most recent book, Diminished Democracy (2003), one of the fruits of her ongoing research on civic change and decline in American democracy, Harvard sociologist Theda Skocpol chronicles how American civic associations have been substantially transformed from member-driven to professional-driven organizations. Rather than ordinary citizens’ familiar practice, it seems civic engagement has to a great extent become yet another specialized occupation in the ever expanding modern division of labor.

But Skocpol’s research would not be relevant here if it were not for the following ironic statement I found in the Harvard Sociology Department’s bio on her:

Active in civic as well as academic life, Skocpol was included in policy discussions with former President Bill Clinton. She writes for publications appealing to the educated public, appears on television and radio, and is frequently quoted by journalists.

Pretty impressive if it were not for the profound irony that Skocpol mirrors and reproduces the professionalization of democracy she documents and decries. Skocpol speaks to the “educated [and interested] public,” and talks to journalists and political power players, leaving alone that growing majority of Americans largely or wholly disengaged from their democracy. In the process, she doubtless further stimulates the interest of the already interested, but she does little to nothing to reconnect the majority of citizens whose disengagement she decries.

I raise Skocpol here because she is a particularly apt metaphor for the current political limits of sociology. Sociologists more generally perpetuate anomic individualism, civic disengagement, and the professionalization of knowledge to the extent that our research and teaching reinforce our professional distinction and fail to empower ordinary citizens to take part in knowledge power. Clearly, many sociologists write and/or read books and articles about power and knowledge, but that is not the same as actually reshaping the production and discussion of knowledge. Sociology will continue to matter little politically if we accept this status quo, if we do not seek to reach beyond the shrinking circles of interested publics, and if we do not grow beyond our narrow academic roles as writers and teachers to also become shapers of the societies we study.

What can we then do as sociologists to become not just students but shapers of institutions? How can we directly

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challenge the intellectual division of labor, and in the process combat anomic individualism, engage citizens, and promote a sociological imagination?

Think Radically, Act Pragmatically: Toward a Politics for Sociologists

As environmentalists “think globally and act locally,” sociologists can “think radically, and act pragmatically.” Many sociologists already think radically, with “radical” understood not as “extreme” but in the Marxist sense as “getting at the root of problems,” derived from the Latin word “radix” or root.

To move from radical thought to pragmatic political action though demands that sociologists, and for that matter academics more generally, find specific, achievable ways to reshape our own institutionalized routines of power. Our everyday work routines of writing and teaching as academics tend to distance us from wider publics and reinforce the concentration of knowledge in the hands of a few largely because the production and discussion of knowledge are institutionalized to circulate within small circles of specialists and their interested publics. As much as specialization may be necessary to the development of knowledge, as some argue, equivalent institutional means are necessary to decentralize the production and discussion of knowledge if we as academics are serious about participatory democracy. As pragmatists like John Dewey (1916, 1927) stress, knowledge, like civic participation and the sociological imagination, means little to people unless it is regularly practiced, unless it forms part of their everyday life. Making knowledge and participation routine elements in everyday life is hence key to addressing the democratic problems of knowledge concentration, civic disengagement, and anomic individualism at their roots.

To these ends, here are some pragmatic ideas:

1) Reform graduate student training and the tenure system to encourage teaching and writing for wider publics as much as for academic specialists. Publishing sociological articles in popular magazines and newspapers should be established as a condition for tenure, or at least count toward tenure. Graduate study in turn should include an optional if not required course on ways of being a public intellectual and effectively reaching larger publics.

2) To encourage sociologists to publish for larger publics, the American Sociological Association should help spur more outlets for such publishing. ASA recently took a step in this direction by starting Contexts, an already award-winning journal aimed at demonstrating sociology’s relevance to wider publics. But this is only a first step in what should be a far more ambitious agenda to truly popularize sociology. One of the next steps could be a popular magazine called Sociology Today to rival Psychology Today and reach a far wider public than Contexts reaches.

3) Take the emerging field of visual sociology more seriously. In a televised world where images dominate and those images often powerfully convey social meanings, sociology should help people navigate critically through those meanings, and the most effective way to do so is visually. Further, sociologists should nurture ties with artists, photo-journalists, documentarians and filmmakers to create powerful visual productions that fundamentally work to expand the sociological imagination and challenge American individualism. We might also consider making the publishing of visual sociology as important in the tenure process and graduate training as book and article publishing.

4) Make Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees in sociology mean something in the real world of work. This will help make the practice of sociology professionally relevant to more than Ph.D.s. Building ties with filmmakers and others to produce sociological films and documentaries may be one way to create jobs upon graduation for sociology majors. ASA could establish an “Office for Popularizing Sociology” which would among other things help produce revenue-generating sociological documentaries and films that employ sociology Bachelor’s and Master’s to engage in creative work.

5) Work with allied academics, activists and policy makers to get local, state and federal governments to invest in deliberative democracy. Like capitalism, democracy requires investment. As some have argued (e.g., Fishkin 1991), the development of televised “town hall meetings,” which engage ordinary Americans in discussing public issues together with policy specialists can, can raise civic participation and help diffuse knowledge production and discussion if done properly and regularly. Beyond town hall meetings, such an alliance can promote democracy by empowering citizens and civic associations to teach and conduct research themselves (see Isaac 1992).

These ideas are just a beginning for a much-needed, sustained conversation in sociology about its present and future in American society and its role in addressing American social problems. As the official body dedicated to connecting sociologists and advancing our discipline, ASA should be the primary catalyst for launching this discussion, and enacting the institutional reforms which arise from the discussion. But this will require ASA to rethink its fundamental mission so that it elevates sociology’s stature as much if not more by popularizing as by professionalizing the discipline.

Marxist sociologists in turn can and should play a significant role in not only bringing about, but shaping this great conversation. But this will require Marxist sociologists to follow Marx’s calling to shape institutions as much as we teach and write about them. As I concluded in the first part of this essay, we have nothing to lose but our comfortable chains.

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Building the peoples’ hemispheric movement in the midst of a growing police state
Jerome Scott & Walda Katz-Fishman
Project South

The moment – globalization & war

Today we live in a global capitalist system dominated by transnational corporations, global financial institutions and neoliberal policies, with police and military forces as the ultimate enforcers. The post-911 era and the so-called “war on terrorism” in the U.S. means the U.S. Patriot Act and proposed “Patriot Act #2,” coupled with ongoing repression, incarceration, surveillance and censorship – policies that historically and today most adversely affect communities of color, low-income communities and immigrant communities. It has brought intensified U.S. militarization of the U.S.-Mexican border and the entire hemisphere, continued U.S. complicity in Israeli repression of the Palestinian struggle and the U.S. war of aggression against Iraq. These are only the most obvious expressions of the growing police state at home and militarism abroad.

To challenge these policies of U.S. empire and global capital requires a huge global popular movement that is grounded within our communities, our country and our hemisphere. Increasingly we see stirrings of this bottom-up movement in the emerging leadership, relationships and networks forming locally, nationally and across borders and in key movement moments – e.g., the hemispheric gathering of COMPA – Convergence of Movements of the Peoples of the Americas – and against the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) in Havana, Cuba in November 2002; the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January 2003; and the millions in the U.S. and around the globe who said “no to war” in February 2003 and consolidated a global anti-war movement including ordinary folks, clergy, students and veteran activists.

The historic reality of brutal U.S. imperialism and militarism throughout the hemisphere and the current moment of economic devastation and a growing police state at home have created a shared bond among oppressed and exploited peoples within the U.S. and those across our borders. The moral unity of our struggles is rooted in these very real and concrete ties of U.S. empire beyond our borders and of ruling class privilege, white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism, and other oppressions at home.

The challenge is how to build our hemispheric movement and deepen our objective unity in response to these common forces of economic exploitation and political and cultural domination that are the enemy of us all. And how to do this is a way that develops our “popular power” to challenge the power of global capital and U.S. empire and to fight for and win the historic struggle for social transformation – for equality, justice, peace and democracy.

From colony to empire – historical context

U.S. imperialism both in the U.S. and globally is the tie that binds us. Over the last 200+ years the U.S. transformed itself from colony to empire. The U.S. ruling class – newly independent from British colonialism – immediately began to consolidate the economic and political position of their nation continentally, then globally. Lacking external colonies, they looked to the domination and exploitation of the peoples, land, labor, resources and markets of the western hemisphere as their primary source of wealth and power.

The policy of U.S. imperialism was set forth by President James Monroe in 1823 with the “Monroe Doctrine” – arguing for U.S. “manifest destiny.” Wars of U.S. aggression – internal and external – were waged against the growing slave rebellions and the abolition movement. The U.S. army defeated the Seminole nation and cleared the Southeast of the remaining Indian nations in the Trail of Tears (1830s-40s), U.S. defeat of Mexico in the Mexican-American War (1848) completed U.S. imperial expansion from the Rio Grande to the Pacific Ocean. The victory of U.S. northern industrialists and financiers over the southern slavocracy and Congress in the Civil War gave meaning to “Yankee imperialism” – with the U.S. South their first colony during the federal occupation in the Reconstruction period.

Withdrawal of federal troops in 1877 and the neocolonial status of the U.S. South served as a model for U.S. imperialism. The brutality of the Ku Klux Klan, the orgy of lynching against Blacks and their allies, the use of physical and psychological terror – including rape as a political weapon, and the violence of the Dixiecrats – Southern Democrats (and now Republicans) who were caretakers of the South and the linchpin of U.S. militarism and imperial policies in Congress – put the world on notice of what was to come. Scholar activist WEB Du Bois put it this way – the South controls the nation and Wall Street controls the South.

Before the end of century, the U.S. army fought another genocidal war against the American Indians; and the U.S. government provoked the Spanish-American War in 1898 to acquire external colonies and neocolonies – Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines – many with U.S. military bases on their soil even today.

20th & 21st centuries

Global capitalism transformed in the 20th and 21st centuries – with U.S. imperialism emerging at its core. The U.S. government, most often through military operations usually involving the CIA, embraced countless dictators and terror-
ists in the western hemisphere – and around the world – with economic, political and military support so long as they supported U.S. capitalist interests. 100s - indeed 1000s - of instances of U.S. government intervention – overt and covert – destabilized, toppled and fomented counter-revolution against progressive leaders, movements and parties. And if they had already been elected, the U.S. had no qualms about overthrowing and/or assassinating them. In New Grenada – now Panama and Columbia, in Haiti, in Guatemala, in Costa Rica, in the Dominican Republic, in Chile, in Grenada, in El Salvador, in Nicaragua, in Columbia, in Venezuela, in Peru, along the U.S.-Mexican border and more the U.S. military wreaked havoc with popular struggles and democratic processes.

Perhaps the U.S. government’s greatest fear is the ongoing revolutionary socialist project in Cuba. The U.S. arrested as “terrorists” the Cuba Five – now serving varied sentences, 15 years to life, in federal prisons across the country – for simply trying to prevent attacks and unlawful intervention in the life of Cuba. And most recently expelled 14 Cuban diplomats from the U.S.

Elections & the Movement

The U.S. ruling class has given volumes of lip service to the centrality of electoral democracy. The fact remains that their actions are quite the opposite. Today’s popular movement is celebrating the elections of Lula in Brazil, Gutierrez in Ecuador and Chavez in Venezuela. Electoral victories need to be located within the larger context of movement building and should not be confused with permanent victory against capitalist globalization and neoliberal policies. Already we have seen the attack on Chavez and the challenge to Lula’s policies from global capital.

Movement Moments

“What is our global popular movement for fundamental change over the long haul at today?” We talk a lot about the local-global connect, and for us in the U.S. building a hemispheric movement is an essential building block and next step for the global movement.

COMPA – Convergence of Movements of the Peoples of the Americas

COMPA, an example of cross border bottom-up movement building in response to capitalist-corporate globalization, is a 4-year old network of over 100 organizations and networks in the Americas and the Caribbean, including 16 from the U.S.A.. COMPA’s strategic objective is “to achieve the demise of the capitalist system in the Americas (especially in its neoliberal form) by building an alternative, popular model which is inclusive, non-sexist, non-racist, capable of achieving a self-sustaining development process and respectful of the environment as humanity’s collective legacy” (www.composite.org).

The World Social Forum

The WSF in Porto Alegre was the 3rd peoples’ forum organized to give voice to today’s popular struggles as an alternative to the world’s global capitalists’ meeting in Davos, Switzerland. This year 100,000 people from across the globe gathered to share, dialogue, network, march, and celebrate. With 1,700 workshops, 100s of panels – both Lula and Chavez spoke, concerts and marches, going to the WSF without a plan made life more than a bit chaotic. But no one could go to the WSF without feeling the groundswell of our emerging movement for global justice, equality, democracy and peace. We live in a powerful and challenging moment in history. Another world is possible and our movement to create it is underway.

The U.S. Grassroots Global Justice delegation had 100+ delegates from grassroots organizations – the majority people of color, from low-income communities and many youth. Delegates committed to staying connected and planning for 2004. The “Popular Education Group,” about 50 popular educators from the hemisphere – Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay and the U.S.A., met to share our popular education work and the context of that work in our respective countries. After a morning of rich dialogue we agreed to work together to develop popular education as a strategy for movement building.

Movement Challenges

Porto Alegre brought home the contradictions of being in a space that is radical and even revolutionary while at the same time inhabited by the institutions and symbols of global capitalism. Walking and riding through the streets of Porto Alegre we came upon many billboards for the Communist Party of Brazil and even a small building from its founding in 1922. Next to these were often advertisements for the golden arches of capitalism – McDonalds – and the Bank of Boston, etc. And many of Porto Alegre’s working poor were not among the 100,000 at this year’s WSF.

Nevertheless, in the WSF and other movement moments over the last few years we are seeing the beginning of a real hemispheric movement as part of building a global bottom-up movement.

If we see the stages of movement building as consciousness, vision & strategy – then our experience and sense of things in both the U.S. and hemispheric arenas is that we are in the “consciousness” stage. Ordinary folks and activists are pretty clear about the problems they face and “what they are against” – U.S. imperialism and the war, the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), and neoliberal policies in general, etc. We need to move to the “vision” and “strategy” stages. We have to be clear about what we are fighting for and what our strategy is – our plan to get there. And for us this means using popular education to develop new leadership and as a strategy for movement building for the long
Baghdad and its 5 million residents, half of whom are children, were pounded and pummeled by the US military's policy of "shock and awe" in its illegal invasion of Iraq. Designed to be "the non-nuclear equivalent of the impact that atomic weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had on the Japanese", the stated purpose of "shock and awe" is to "take the city down... In 2, 3, 4, 5 days they are physically, emotionally and psychologically exhausted". In an effort to fuel the U.S. empire with another oil war, Bully-in-Chief Bush describes this form of terrorism as "liberation".

Using Bush's rhetoric, reasons, and rationale, a hypothetical country could choose "pre-emptive" or "preventive" war against the US. Since Bush is unelected and authoritarian, is a unilateralist bully and warmonger, has and threatens to use any and all weapons of mass destruction (including cluster bombs, depleted uranium, chemicals, and first-strike tactical nuclear weapons!), menaces the global environment, restricts the rights of his own people, invokes false evidence, supports dictators and terrorists around the world, wilfully violates international law, has war criminals in his cabinet, and commits crimes against peace and humanity and other war crimes, another country could easily make the argument that a "coalition of the willing" should be assembled to "disarm" Bush and the US in order to "liberate" American citizens. We do, of course, need to be liberated from Bush and his crony capitalist gang of thugs - through by popular education, active resistance, and grassroots organizing, not the odious weapons of war.

Herb Caen once called San Francisco "Baghdad by the Bay". The name stuck. If, instead of Baghdad, the city of San Francisco were being attacked by another country for Bush's many crimes, we would be the unwitting and unjust victims. Let's try to imagine what that would be like. Judging by the US military's recent tactics of war against Baghdad, Kabul, and Belgrade, for example, we could easily picture some of the local targets in a war on San Francisco.

In the first night of air raids, many governmental and other sites would be bombed and destroyed: City Hall, the State Building, the Federal Building and the construction site of the new Federal Building, the various court houses and police stations, and other "leadership" and "command-control" buildings would all be ablaze. Either that first night or shortly thereafter, cruise missiles and massive "bunker busting" bombs would fall on the Pacific Stock Exchange, Federal Reserve Building, the old Mint and Federal Reserve (now housing a law firm), the Transamerica Pyramid, and the headquarters and offices of Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Schwab, Bechtel, McKesson, as well as the Moscone Center, the Civic and Masonic Auditoria, and the Embarcadero and other downtown buildings, as well as others (regardless of who was in or near them at the time). Other symbolic targets, such as Coit Tower, the ball park, and the Ferry Building as examples, might be bombed to demoralize us. Fire would be all around us. Broken concrete, twisted metal, and shattered glass would be everywhere. Smoke, dust, and the stench of death would fill the air.

At some point, the bridges would be bombed: the Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge, as well as the San Mateo Bridge, Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, and the Carquinez Straits Bridge (regardless of who was on them at the time). Based on the military logic of cutting supply lines, disrupting communications, disturbing normal activities, and intimidating and exhausting us, missiles and bombs would also target all SBC/PacBell and PG&E offices, stations, and substations, gas stations and storage facilities, as well as Sutro Tower and other antennae, TV and radio stations, local internet service providers and many key technology companies. Of course, SFO, the piers and their ships, and other strategic "targets of opportunity" would have to be "taken" as well. Certain BART and MUNI stations, in addition to Caltrans, the bus terminal, and the Cable Car building and turnarounds, would also likely take hits. Gas, water, and sewer lines would be ruptured. We would be physically and electronically cut off. We would be scared. We would be suffering. Some of us would be dying; some of us would be dead.

Perhaps if this hypothetical country were using unknowable analysts or outdated maps, they might also heavily bomb the Presidio, Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, Treasure Island, Fort Mason, Fort Point, and Fort Funston, the old Chevron headquarters, the Veterans Administration, Old Navy stores, the Marines Memorial Club and the War Memorial Opera House, as well as the entire length of Army (now Cesar Chavez) and Bush Streets. Perhaps Clinton Street too. In the Bay, Alcatraz and Angel Island could also be targeted. The carnage would be absolutely horrific.

Outside the city, the oil refineries would be a major target. So would the Oakland Airport, Port of Oakland, various industrial and technology companies, all Bay Area city halls, state and federal buildings, the Oakland Army Base and Alameda Naval Base, Fort Ord (which now contains a state university and civilian housing), and other active and former military bases. IKEAs, Home Depots, and other home supply, construction, and hardware stores might be targeted for their many potential "dual use" products. The new Chevron headquarters in San Ramon would be destroyed. San Jose and Silicon Valley would be the recipients of heavy fire, with the possible destruction of Microsoft, Intel, Apple, Cisco, Sun, Oracle, and other major technology facilities. The devastation would be tremendous.

Even the universities would not be spared, as they ac-
tively contribute to the military-industrial complex. Many science and computer labs, weapons research and engineering centers, administration buildings, institutes, and political science and other departments would be decimated at UC Berkeley, Stanford, UCSF, San Francisco State, San Jose State, and possibly other schools. Stanford’s multi-billion dollar linear accelerator would be destroyed. Symbolic structures like Berkeley’s Campanile would almost certainly be bombed as well. Our landmarks and landscape would be in rubble.

Even if this hypothetical country’s military were using so-called “smart bombs” and “precision missiles”, we can again extrapolate from the recent US bombing campaigns against Baghdad, Kabul, and Belgrade that there would be serious “collateral damage” (read: death and destruction) against a variety of “soft targets” (read: people and civilian sites). Some of the powerful cruise missiles, fired from ships far out in the Pacific, would hit residential neighborhoods. Perhaps the Sunset, Castro, Chinatown, North Beach, Bernal Heights, Western Addition, or the Mission would be hit hard. Other “ordinance” would -of course? regrettable?- hit markets and shopping centers like Stonestown Mall, hospitals like Kaiser or SF General, schools like Lowell or Mission High, MUNI buses and trains filled with passengers, and possibly museums, libraries, religious institutions, the Zoo, water storage facilities, supermarkets and restaurants, parks and playgrounds, and other civilian city sites. It is impossible to predict how much looting and arson would occur. Many people and animals would be wounded and killed. The environment- air, soil and sand, the ocean, Bay, and Lakes- would be terribly, and possibly permanently, polluted with various chemicals, toxic substances, poisonous gases, heavy metals, and radioactivity. People would suffer the horrible, inescapable mental and physical effects for generations.


Tragically, Iraqi citizens personally experienced attacks like those on New York’s Twin Towers by being attacked themselves by a military several hundred times more powerful than its own. To many of those who were bombed, the differences between Bin Laden and Bush are minimal. In the spirit of thinking globally and acting locally: I mourn for Baghdad and other cities. Just imagine it. Despite the difficulty and anguish, imagine what it would feel like. Then imagine Baghdad. And Basra, Nasiriyah, Mosul, Zubayr, and other Iraqi cities.

Association for Humanist Sociology

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

The 28th Annual Meeting of the Association for Humanist Sociology will be held in Burlington, VT, Oct. 30-Nov. 2. 2003. Our theme and purpose will be to Celebrate Humanist Sociology.

We chose the Burlington, VT site for its beauty and vitality, the progressive traditions of the town and the state, and our connections to local activists.

Gina Petonito is Program Chair, phone (309) 298-1156, e-mail, ahsp program@hotmail.com. Please send her your presentation information, a title with a three sentence

Anti-War Resolution

About 67% of the ASA membership supports the ASA opposing the war and about 85% voted that they personally opposed the war.

Global Studies Association

The Global Studies Association, is a relatively new group about 4 years old. Last year, as a result of efforts by Lauren Langman and Jerry Harris (a Marxist historian), Loyola University of Chicago hosted the first GSA-North America meeting. Bill Robinson attended. He suggested that UCSB might host the next meeting. Well, given major university support and tireless efforts of Bill and Richard Applebaum, the Critical Globalization conference was a smashing success. There were a number of plenaries and workshops, bringing together activists such as Walden Bello, Susan George, Kevin Danaher and Tom Hayden, with globalization scholars such as Saskia Sassen, Leslie Sklair and Roland Robinson. Topics ranged from debates over the nature of globalization, terrorism, decline or growth of American hegemony, culture in a global age etc.

If anyone is interested, next July 21-23, GSA will meet in London. Our next meeting, May of 2004 will be somewhere on the East Coast, but we don’t have a host yet. (If anyone’s school can provide an auditorium, 4 small rooms, please contact Lauren, Llango44@aol.com, and if your school is willing to provide financial support, all the better).
terror. Same war, different justification. But it is neither communists, nor drugs, nor terrorists that have drawn the military attention of the U.S.. It is the oil. The steadily in-communists, nor drugs, nor terrorists that have drawn the terror. Same war, different justification. But it is neither oil and National Security (Continued from page 4)

Oil and National Security (Continued from page 4)

over $30 billion worth of oil since 1958, yet malnutrition and oil to murder anti-oil protestors. Ongoniland has produced as the “kill and go”, the military personnel flown in by Shell lands of the Ongoni are kept open by what is locally known the U.S. demand for cheap and plentiful oil exports.

The story is the same in Nigeria, where the oil despoiled lands of the Ongoni are kept open by what is locally known as the “kill and go”, the military personnel flown in by Shell oil to murder anti-oil protestors. Ongoniland has produced over $30 billion worth of oil since 1958, yet malnutrition and oil related illness are the leading causes of death for Ongoni children. The military dictatorships of Nigeria have always depended on oil revenues and the support of industrial nations to maintain their power and repression, as long as the oil keeps flowing.

And the U.S. government supplied weapons to bolster the regimes of the Ayatollah in Iran, and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Our tax dollars are used to arm these regimes to maintain access to oil. And when these regimes become problematic, out tax dollars are used to replace them with new regimes to maintain access to oil. We arm the regime in Saudi Arabia to maintain access to oil. And the poor people of Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Nigeria, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other U.S. oil suppliers know this.

While these actions do keep the oil flowing to our industries, power plants, homes and vehicles, they also engender the resentment and anger of millions upon millions of people. And sometimes that anger erupts in violence. And sometimes that violence reaches us. And to insure that the oil keeps flowing, and the anger doesn’t reach us often, we must fund the largest, most expensive military force in the history of the world.

Secure access to natural resources and markets.

Militarization is necessary to protect Americans’ ecologically destructive way of life and the economic interests of TNCs. A primary use of U.S. military production has been to secure access to natural resources and markets for U.S. based TNCs. That is, military production is essential to keep unsustainable levels of domestic production and consumption going. The U.S. economy is completely dependent on the extraction of resources from other nations for its survival. Oil is only the highest profile example of America’s dependence on expropriating the natural resources of other nations. Occasionally, other nations seek to use their natural resources to support their own populations, demand a higher price for external access to their resources, or simply refuse to make their resources available to support U.S.-based transnational corporations. The threat of America’s military limits the occurrence of such instances. In cases where the threat is insufficient, military force is needed to overthrow uncooperative governments and replace them with those that will prioritize America’s needs over those of their domestic populations.

Resource scarcity increases globally.

As resource scarcity increases globally, incidents of violent conflict over vital and strategic resources are likely to increase. Oil wars are already quite common. Water wars are certainly in our near future. As economic growth continues, resource-scarcity related violence will generate increased state and corporate demand for further militarization to take or defend resource access. Increased militarization will deepen scarcity, resulting in a cycle of escalating violence and ecological decay.

Ecologically and socially destructive oil development is necessary to maintain our current lifestyles. Militarization is necessary to maintain our access to oil. Military production generates even more pernicious ecological and social degradation. That militarization requires yet more oil to support. Resource scarcity fuels a global competition to gain access to dwindling supplies. Efforts to gain and sustain that access generate ever deepening resource scarcity. And as scarcity deepens, violent competition for what remains increases. It is a cycle of environmental destruction and violent conflict that can only accelerate if we continue on our present course. And the cost to tax payers will similarly continue to accelerate. The cost of oil dependency can be measured in our lost funding for health care, for education, for veterans benefits, for environmental protection, and for alternative energy research and development. The cost of oil dependency can be measured in degraded environments, lost habitat, global climate change, and military contamination. The cost of oil dependency can be measured in the sickness and death of peoples and cultures throughout the world. And the cost of oil dependency can be measured in the resentment, anger and hatred of our nation which is engendered in those that pay the greatest and most immediate costs of corporate and government efforts to maintain the flow of oil. ☺
Program Guide– Section on Marxist Sociology
Annual Meeting in Atlanta, August 16-19, 2003

Calendar of Events

Saturday, August 16– Tuesday, August 19th– Table-
t-shirts and tote bags (see logo on front cover), books,
journals, info and more… Hilton

Sunday, August 17th– Tuesday, August 19– Marxist Section Hospitality Suite– Hilton

Sunday, August 17th (evening)- Marxist Section Dinner/Party– Marxist Section Hospitality Suite, Hilton

Monday, August 18th (evening)- Marxist Section Joint Reception– co-sponsored with Racial and Ethnic Minorities and Race, Class, and Gender

Section Sessions

Marxist Reflections on
The Souls of Black Folk at Its Centennial
8:30-10:10am (Hilton)
.ORGANIZERS: Robert Newby, Central Michigan University, Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University & Project South, and Jeffrey Halley, University of Texas-San Antonio
PRESIDERS: Robert Newby, Central Michigan University
PRESENTERS:
Rose Brewer, University of Minnesota-Minneapolis, “A Critical Rereading of The Souls of Black Folk through the Lenses of Gender and Class”

The Crisis of Global Capitalism
10:30am- 12:10pm (Hilton)
TBA

The Development of Marxist Thought
12:30-2:10pm (Hilton)
ORGANIZER: Warren S. Goldstein, University of Central Florida
PRESIDER: Lauren Langman, Loyola University of Chicago
PRESENTERS:
1) Kevin Anderson, Purdue University, "The U.S.-Russian Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe Volume: Marx’s 1879-82 Writings on Non-Western and Pre-Capitalist Societies and Gender"
2) Paul Paolucci, Eastern Kentucky University, "Discovering Marx’s Scientific Dialectic."
4) Karen Halnon, Penn State University at Abington, “Alienation Incorporated: Shock Rock, Youth Rebellion, and the American Dream”

Roundtables and Business Meeting
2:30-4:10pm

TABLE 1: Contemporary Fascist Movements and Regimes: Debates and Analysis
2. Alan Spector, Purdue University Calumet, “The Debate About Fascism and the Causes and Nature of ‘Fascist’ Regimes Today”

TABLE 2: Culture, Hegemony and Resistance
1. Manjur Karim, Culver-Stockton College “Beyond Orientalism: Beyond Edward Said?”
2. Stephanie Farmer, Binghamton University, “Public Space and Resistance: The Graffiti and Murals of Gaza, Belfast, and Chicago”

TABLE 3: Marxism and Crime
2. Louis Konto, Long Island University, Marxism and Crime.
TABLE 4 Democracy in a Global Context

TABLE 5: Students and the Teaching of Marx
1. Cliff Staples, University of North Dakota, “How Student-Workers Respond to Postmodern Marxism”

TABLE 6: Marxism and Gender
1. Stephen Sanderson and D. Alex Heckhut, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Joshua Dubrow, Ohio State University, “Militarist, Marxist, and Non-Marxist Materialist Theories of Gender Inequality”
2. Joanna Hadjicostandi, University of Texas of the Permian Basin, “How Far We Have Come?: Minority Women in a Texas Community.”

TABLE 7: Popular Culture and Alienation, Consumerism and the Failed Revolution
1. Kyle Giblet, University of Oklahoma, “Consumerism and the Failed Revolution”
2. Marvin Prosono, Southern Missouri State University, “Popular Culture as Alienated Commodity”

TABLE 8: Mass Media and the News
2. Lloyd Klein, Louisiana State University and Donal Malone, “The War of the Words: Mass Media Depictions of Government Justification for Wartime Engagement”

TABLE 9: Marx, Marxism and Theoretical Debates
1. Mohammad H. Tamgidi, SUNY- Oneonta, “Neither Idealist, Nor Materialist: The Dialectical Method.”
2. Paul Paolucci, Eastern Kentucky University, “Reading Foucault Through the Dialectical Method”

Other Sessions of Interest

Teaching Sociology from a Marxist Perspective
ORGANIZER: Martha Giminez, University of Colorado Boulder
PRESENTERS:
David Fasenfest, Wayne State University
Barbara Chasin, Montclair State University
S. Rosenthal, Hampton University
Alan Spector, Purdue University, Calumet?
John Foran, University of California, Santa Barbara

The Local-Global Connect: Sociologists Without Borders
ORGANIZER: Judith Blau, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill & Sociologists and Political Scientists without Borders
PRESIDENTS: Judith Blau, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill & (moderator) Sociologists and Political Scientists without Borders and Rodney Coates, Miami University-Ohio
PRESENTERS:
Alberto Moncada, University of Madrid & Sociologists and Political Scientists without Borders
Walda Katz-Fishman, Howard University & Project South

Critical Theory of Religion
Association for the Sociology of Religion
(Omni Hotel at CNN Center)
Friday August 15, 1:00-2:45pm

ORGANIZERS: Warren S. Goldstein, University of Central Florida, and George Lundskow, Grand Valley State University
CONVENER: Warren S. Goldstein, University of Central Florida
PRESENTERS:
1) Rudolf J. Siebert, Western Michigan University, “The Open Dialectic between Religious and Secular Values and Norms: Their Universalization through Public Discourse”
2) Michael R. Ott, Grand Valley State University, “Max Horkheimer’s Critical Theory of Religion”
3) George Lundskow, Grand Valley State University, “Defying the Rational: The Appeal of New Religion in Late Modernity”
4) Lauren Langman, Loyola University Chicago, “Hegemony Lost: Understanding Islamic Fundamentalism”
New Book Announcements

**FEMINIST FUTURES** challenges established approaches to development, which continue to privilege the politico-economic aspects. The collection argues for a new paradigm that places women and gender at the centre, puts culture on a par with political economy and pays attention to critical practices, pedagogies and movements for social justice. This path-breaking book should be required reading for those who are determined to create a more just world, and to transform development into more than an empty practice designed to placate: the poor in an increasingly unequal world.” Marianne H. Marchand and Jane L. Parpart, Co-editors of Feminism/Postmodernism/Development

ZED BOOKS. HB ISBN 1842770284 PB ISBN 1842770292

Kum-Kum Bhavnani and John Foran are both Professors of Sociology at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Priya Kurian is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Policy, The University of Waikato, New Zealand.

In this pathbreaking study of foundation influence, author Joan Roelofs produces a comprehensive picture of philanthropy’s critical role in society. She shows how a vast number of policy innovations have arisen from the most important foundations, lessening the destructive impact of global "marketization." Conversely, groups and movements that might challenge the status quo are nudged into line with grants and technical assistance, and foundations also have considerable power to shape such things as public opinion, higher education, and elite ideology. The cumulative effect is that foundations, despite their progressive goals, have a depoliticizing effect, one that preserves the hegemony of neoliberal institutions.

"This is a landmark book. It has the potential to bring a relatively neglected dimension of the study of politics to the very center of scholarly—and popular—attention." — Victor Wallis, Berklee College of Music

Joan Roelofs is Professor of Political Science at Keene State College. She is the author of Greening Cities: Building Just and Sustainable Communities.

State University of New York Press, 2003

Berch Berberoglu is Foundation Professor of Sociology and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Sociology at the University of Nevada, Reno. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon in 1977. He has been teaching and conducting research at the University of Nevada, Reno for the past 25 years. Berberoglu has written and edited 20 books and many articles. His most recent books include Political Sociology: A Comparative/Historical Approach, 2nd ed. (Rowman and Littlefield 2001) and Labor and Capital in the Age of Globalization: The Labor Process and the Changing Nature of Work in the Global Economy (Rowman and Littlefield, 2002). His areas of specialization include political economy, class analysis, development, and comparative-historical sociology. Berberoglu is currently working on a new book, Class, State and Nation: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in the Age of Globalization, which will be published in 2004.

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND WOMEN: Offenders, Prisoners, Victims, and Workers, Third Edition

Barbara Raffel Price, John Jay College Criminal Justice
Natalie J. Sokoloff, John Jay College Criminal Justice

Consisting of original essays commissioned for the volume from leading scholars (especially criminologists and feminists), and a number of recently published, important articles in the field, this book provides a comprehensive overview of how women both affect and are affected by crime and the criminal justice system. The book looks at the underlying social, economic, racial, and cultural conditions of society and how they impact on women throughout society and the criminal justice system.

ISBN: 0-07-246399-6

2004 / Softcover / 624 pages

Publication Date: July 2003
"Like a sociological Proust, Levine has rescued an extraordinary story from the edge of oblivion. The tale of how rural German Jews succeeded in escaping the clutches of the Third Reich and reestablished a familiar world in rural New York has the plot elements that a novelist would envy. Yet, remarkably, it also has much to tell us about how immigrants construct worlds of meaning that blend aspects of their former and current homes, while ingeniously exporting the few niches that social and economic structures leave open to them. Levine tells the story with great sensitivity to the human pain and creativity it reveals and with a wonderful eye for the multiple layers of sociological explanation it requires."—Richard Alba, University at Albany

Rhonda F. Levine is professor of sociology at Colgate University.

May 2001 || 240 pages
ISBN 0-7425-0992-3 || Cloth $79.00