Note: Books

This section provides very short reviews of some of the books sent to us by publishers that we think may be of interest to our CS readers. A *NOTE: BOOKS* does not preclude the possibility of a more substantial review of the following books appearing in a future volume. Anyone wishing to review the titles below or any of the other books we currently have in stock for future issues of *Critical Sociology* are encouraged to contact the Toronto CS book review collective. The *NOTE: BOOKS* are written by members of CS collectives.


Thomas Winter’s book provides an excellent historical sociology of the YMCA in its formative years, and its’ attempt to provide a “wholesome” and Christian masculinity for working-class men. The book is a case-study of the organization’s attempts to “reach out” to the burgeoning population of urban industrial workers (at a time when the U.S. was becoming a predominantly urban and industrial society). In the effort to stave-off labour radicalism, the YMCA became one of the most important tools of industrial capitalism. Winter shows the connections between the new ideals of masculinity that the “Y” was promoting and the new middle class ideologies. Thus, as the organization began to promote its masculine ideals, it contributed not only to the formation of manliness, but of certain class ideals and values as well. [AM]


Paul Lyons has written a thorough, well-documented and amply footnoted history of the Left, New Left, anti-war, and civil rights movements in the Philadelphia area covering the period from the late 1950’s to the end of the Vietnam war. He concentrates on the campuses: the Quaker schools (such as Haverford), the Catholic schools (such as Saint Joseph’s), and then contrasts “plebian” Temple University with the “elite” University of Pennsylvania. These chapters are followed by two on the wider community
anti-war, and anti-racism, movements. A great many individuals (including the undersigned) are mentioned and cited, to the degree that the overall forest is occasionally lost for the trees, but the final chapter contributes usefully to debunking the myth of the Big Chill by listing the many veterans of the New Left who are still, today, playing leading roles in progressive movements in Philadelphia.

[MO]


Most accounts put the final death toll of the people killed in Rwanda during those two infamous weeks in April of 1994 at 1.5 million. In this book, Semujanga, a Canadian scholar and Rwandan by birth, considers the ideology behind the Hutu led (presided by then President Juvenal Habyarimana) extermination of their fellow country-men, the Tutsi. Beginning with the historical precedents of European favoritism toward the Tutsi (the myth of Ham) during the era of colonialism, Semujanga shows how, following independence from Belgium in 1962, the tables were quickly turned as Hutu representatives quickly attained positions of power and made life miserable for the Tutsi. By the 1990s, this “culture of hatred” and suspicion had reached its boiling point as was plainly evident in radio and television broadcasts as well as in newspaper reporting. As Semujanga goes on to argue, these public proclamations of fear of the “inside enemy” should have alerted the international community of the impending danger. Together with actual lists compiled by the Rwandan Armed Forces of the “enemies” to be exterminated and those who should lead the charge, one can only wonder why the international community showed no interest in curtailing the hideous events that soon followed. This book contributes to our understanding of genocide everywhere: the conflation of ideology, language, and political system are major contributing factors of any modern genocide.

[DW]


Although a criminologist by formal education, Shoham has published extensively on psychology, namely on the currently unpopular subject of theories of personality. This book is an attempt to expound one element of his theory: a connection between morbidity, deviance and art. While his adaptations of Jungian theory of the myth and Collins’s theory of
philosophical schools are not original, his essayistic and interdisciplinary spirit is refreshing. Using his rich material in further scholarly work might be difficult, because the threat of anachronism is always just below surface, but the heuristic value of his broad erudite associations might be significant.


This is a book long overdue. Scholars have long debated the ways in which ethnic minority groups within national contexts (Canada, United States, many European countries, and previously homogeneous countries throughout the world) maintain ties to their places of origin. In Germany today, this question has animated discussions around its Jewish population but not other ethnic minorities. Ostergaard-Nielsen’s interest revolves around how members of the Turkish community in Germany (the largest immigrant ethnic minority in Europe and the single largest group of immigrants in Germany – 2.4 million), mainly Berlin, maintain ties to Turkey. It is her assumption that migrants and refugees do not always make a clean break with their country of origin, especially when it comes to matters of politics such as the formation of solidarity groups with persecuted movements or movements that come about in the way of defending/criticizing their homeland regime. This becomes an interesting problem for political sociologists where migrants’ transnational political networks and practices are usually assumed to be state-bound rather than transgressing the boundaries of political systems and societies.


In this book Patricia Cormack considers the work of what would at first appear to be three completely different and uncommon traditions as represented by Emile Durkheim, C. Wright Mills, and Jean Baudrillard. However the main thread that serves to unite these disparate voices – sociology’s relationship, on the one hand to its audience and, on the other hand, the influence of modern culture on sociology – helps create commonalities where none might be thought to have formerly existed. Taking up specific works constitutive of each of the three individuals in question (Durkheim’s *Rules of Sociological Method*, Mills’ *The Sociological Imagination*, and several texts in which Baudrillard attempts to come to terms with the ‘death of the social’) Cormack’s main aim is to show
how, in her words, the rhetorical and representational issues characterizing modern literature and culture appear and are taken up in sociological writing. For the most part the trope of the ‘social’ is brought to bear, in a culturally relevant way, within the rhetorical and literary conventions of each of these three theorists. The book is then not another treatise on the unfolding of sociology as a social science, nor should it be considered as a kind of sociology of knowledge approach where sociological thought is a product and reflection of its social conditions. Most important perhaps, the book does not pretend to offer another story of sociology’s progress through modernity. Instead, this book deals with the dialectical interaction of sociological thought together with modern culture.


*Liquid Love* contributes to a small but fascinating sociological literature on “love”: Ann Swidler’s *Talk of Love*, Eva Illouz’ *Consuming the Romantic Utopia* (1997), Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim’s *Normal Chaos of Love* (1995), not to mention Erich Fromm’s classic – though somewhat antediluvian book – *The Art of Loving* (1956). Finally, sociologists are starting to make a serious attempt to come to terms with one of the most powerful and fundamental human experiences – without lapsing into the sterility of demographers’ sublated discourses on the topic (however important these may be). Bauman places love (and the ambivalent attempts at relating it implies) at the center of modernity. To love, to relate, requires both risk of not being loved and the freedom to not love, making it a charged and insecure experience and throwing the individual in a liquid society into the dialect of ever tightening and loosening bonds. The book will be of interest for any sociologist trying to understand the nature of love and relatedness, and it has enormous potential (perhaps along with some of the other recent books on the topic) of stimulating students’ sociological imagination – using a topic that they will already love.


This a strange book to have been published by the usually nomothetic Columbia Press. Following Deleuze’s concept of genealogy as a history of possibilities within a context, rather than a history of origins and causes, Driscoll defines “girlhood” by knowledge and discourse of girls. After a
brief introductory chapter on historically changing definitions of female adolescence (quite in the tradition of British historical sociology of the family), she turns to a discursive exposition on adolescent female sexuality, with predictable conjunction between sexuality and power, and to the place of girlhood in mass culture. The latter section, interestingly, does not stop at the usual ethnography of preconceptions about female adolescence, but extends into some interesting ideas about the connection between the “girl culture and girl market.”

[IK]
Nicholas Sparks. Fell in love with the movie years ago. I don't much do romance novels anymore - at least not these sacchrine kind, but I love the relationship devotion over the years, and that this was not just about. "young love," but a couple who weathered the times and still loved each other despite heartache and illness. Love this edition, it has an author's interview and brief life story at the end. Barry Bostwick does an amazing job of narrating. = It is a heart warming good story, told brilliantly. basically you buy one (1) note book once. and then you only buy new paper booklets and likeâ€¦ chuck? the booklets into your note book with these long gummies (there are small kind of lugs as you can see).Â Perform! I wrote this in 1998 after one of our most amazing performance. #Note books #Moment in time #Simply Smooth. 13 notes. monstervsme.