IN THIS ISSUE

1  Introduction. New Essays for a New Century
   Jay Corwin

7  Shusaku Endo: from the Silence of the East to the Silence of God
   Rodica Grigore

24 Homage to a Father: Family Tradition and Revolution(s) in Palace Walk
   Fadwa Mahmoud Hassan Gad

38 Liberation through the Acceptance of Nature and Technology in Octavia
   Butler’s Parable of the Sower
   Melanie A. Marotta

51 Eliade’s Romanian Past: Religion and Politics
   Mihaela Gligor

75 American Jeremiads: The Winter of Our Discontent and Into The Woods
   Michael J. Meyer

96 Crossing the Genre Divide: Women and Ethics in the Detective Novels
   of Dorothy L. Sayers
   Suzie Remilien

107 Close Encounters of the Third (Space) Kind: La guaracha del Macho
    Camacho and the City as Site of Unavoidable Contact
    Chris T. Schuleenburg

125+ Book Reviews
Theory In Action

Theory In Action
Journal of the Transformative Studies Institute
39-09 Berdan Avenue
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410
Telephone: (201) 254-3595

www.transformativestudies.org

Theory In Action is published quarterly. Subscription rates, print version:

Individuals: $35.00 USD* per single issue, $105.00 USD* yearly with free online access. Institutions: $200.00 USD* per year with free online access.

* For orders within the continental U.S. add $2.00 USD for shipping & handling for each copy, $8.00 USD for yearly subscription. For orders outside the continental U.S. please add for shipping & handling $25.00 USD per individual issue, $100.00 USD for yearly subscription.

Advertising:
For advertising information, please visit the journal's website at www.transformativestudies.org or call (201) 254-3595.

© 2010 Transformative Studies Institute
ISSN 1937-0229 (Print)
ISSN 1937-0237 (online)

Indexed and Abstracted by:
EBSCO, H.W. Wilson, ProQuest, Modern Languages Association,
Library of Congress:
H1 .T485
361 14  2007214369

Cover design and page layout by Elsa Karen Márquez-Aponte.
Print compilation by Sviatoslav Voloshin.
Dedicated to the memory of my professor, Beate Waller (1922-2009), for whom literature was liberation. She lives forever in her garden apartment next to Queens College, with the words of Tolstoy and Galczynski.

Jay Corwin
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction. New Essays for a New Century</td>
<td>Jay Corwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Shusaku Endo: from the Silence of the East to the Silence of God</td>
<td>Rodica Grigore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Homage to a Father: Family Tradition and Revolution(s) in Palace Walk</td>
<td>Fadwa Mahmoud Hassan Gad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Liberation through the Acceptance of Nature and Technology in Octavia Butler’s Parable of the Sower</td>
<td>Melanie A. Marotta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Eliade’s Romanian Past: Religion and Politics</td>
<td>Mihaela Gligor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>American Jeremiads: The Winter of Our Discontent and Into The Woods</td>
<td>Michael J. Meyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Crossing the Genre Divide: Women and Ethics in the Detective Novels</td>
<td>Suzie Remilien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Close Encounters of the Third (Space) Kind: <em>La guaracha del Macho</em></td>
<td>Camacho and the City as Site of Unavoidable Contact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mark Fulk


Noel Hawke


Jason Caro


David Weiss
GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

General

Theory in Action is an interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed journal, whose scope ranges from the local to the global. We do not privilege any particular theoretical tradition or approach and there are no strict word or page limits for our articles. We publish papers that connect academic scholarship with activism, what R.K. Merton calls ‘theories of the middle range.’ We value radical and unconventional ideas, expressed in different styles, whether academic or journalistic. Furthermore, we are interested in how theory can inform activism to promote economic equality, create democratic political structures and promote self-organization and direction. We seek to promote racial, ethnic, and gender equality as well as resistance to all forms of injustice.

Drafts and poorly written or formatted manuscripts will not be considered. We will only consider final polished manuscripts that are of high-quality writing, have an innovative approach or ideas, and that are congruent with the institutes’ overall mission. Manuscripts deemed important, but not selected for the journal, will be considered for online-publication under either the Policy or Activist sections of the TSI. This may occur if for example the article does not fit with a particular focus or theme of the Journal issue or if space limits us to these difficult decisions. However, TSI will make every effort to provide the authors work with as much exposure as possible.

What we Accept

- Multiple/simultaneous submissions of original manuscripts
- Book reviews
- Art/Poetry (if it reflects the journal’s goals)

Copyright

The copyright to this article is transferred to the Transformative, Studies Institute effective if and when the article is accepted for publication. The copyright transfer covers the exclusive right to reproduce and distribute the article, including reprints, translations, photographic reproductions, microform, electronic form (offline, online) or any other reproductions of similar nature. An author may self-archive an author-created version of their article on their own website and their institution’s repository, including his/her final version; however the author(s) may not use the publisher’s PDF version which is posted on www.transformativestudies.org website. Furthermore, the author(s) may only post their version provided acknowledgement is given to the original source of publication and a link is inserted to the published article on the Transformative Studies Institute’s website. The link must be accompanied by the following text: “The original publication is available at www.transformativestudies.org”. Please use the appropriate DOI for the article (go to the Linking Options in the article, then to Open URL and use the link with the DOI). Articles disseminated via www.transformativestudies.org are indexed, abstracted, and referenced by many abstracting and information services, bibliographic networks, subscription agencies, library networks, and consortia.

The author(s) warrants that this contribution is original and that he/she has full power to make this grant. The author(s) accepts responsibility for releasing this material on behalf of any and all co-authors. After acceptance of this agreement by the corresponding author changes of authorship or in the order of the authors listed will not be accepted by the Transformative Studies Institute. This agreement is designed to provide authors with as much control over their work while protecting the legitimate rights of the Transformative Studies Institute for its peer-review process and related expenses.

Online Manuscript Submission

TSI/Theory in Action has an exclusive online submission policy. Only MS Word formats will be accepted as attachments. This is designed to expedite the review process and for accuracy in manuscript reproduction. Submissions to Theory in Action require a $25 tax-deductible donation/submission fee through our automated online submissions process. The funds help TSI cover part of the operational costs associated with the journal and are non-refundable.
Book Reviews
We accept book reviews of all types that reflect our mission. There is no submission fee for book reviews. The length should be a minimum of 1000 words but not more than 3000. Send all reviews with author contact information and cover letter in Word format to: journal@transformativestudies.org

Manuscript Length
5-40 typed pages (see manuscript style)

Manuscript Style
As a non-elitist journal we do not privilege any particular style. Preferred styles though include APA, MLA, and Chicago. We do request, however, that authors be consistent and accurate with their chosen style. References should be double-spaced and placed in alphabetical order.

Manuscript Preparation (as an attachment)
Prepare in MS Word format only. Number every page consecutively. Double-spaced, including endnotes and references; 12-point font; One inch margins on all four sides; set all notes as endnotes. Submit a cover page with the manuscript, indicating only the article title (this is used for anonymous refereeing), the abstract, and keywords. The online submission form will ask separately for information regarding:

- full authorship
- an ABSTRACT of about 100 words (below the abstract provide 3-10 key words for indexing purposes)
- authors' academic degrees, professional titles, affiliations, mailing and e-mail addresses, and any desired acknowledgement of research support or other credit

Preparation of Tables, Figures, & Illustrations
Any material that is not textual is considered artwork. This includes tables, figures, diagrams, charts, graphs, illustrations, appendices, screen captures, and photos. We request that computer-generated figures be in black and white and/or shades of gray (preferably no color because it does not reproduce well). Camera-ready art must contain no grammatical, typographical, or format errors and must reproduce sharply and clearly. Photos and screen captures must be saved as JPEG or BMP file format. Tables should be created in the text document file using the software's Table feature.

Submitting Art
Only electronic copies of the art should be provided as JPEG or BMP format. We reserve the right, if necessary, to alter or delete art if all else has failed in achieving art that is presentable.

Typesetting
We do not provide galley proofs. Authors are expected to submit manuscripts and art that are free from error. If necessary, editorial revisions can only be made while an article is still in manuscript form. The final version of the manuscript will be the version published. Typesetter's errors will be corrected by the production staff of TSI.

Spelling, Grammar, & Punctuation
Neither TSI nor the editor is responsible for correcting errors of spelling and grammar. We do not copy-edit articles. Authors have sole responsibility for preparing manuscripts that are clearly written in acceptable, scholarly English with no errors of spelling, grammar, or punctuation.

Reviewers Recommendations
Manuscripts are often accepted upon condition that reviewers’ recommended changes be incorporated. It is the author’s responsibility to incorporate these revisions in their manuscript.
“Redemption looks to the small fissure in the on-going catastrophe.” — Benjamin

Left Curve is an artist-produced, open, critical journal that addresses the problem(s) of cultural forms, emerging from the crisis of modernity, that strive to be independent from the control of dominant institutions, and free from the shackles of instrumental rationality. Each issue is a mix of traditional and/or experimental essays, graphics, photography, visual/verbal art, poems, fiction, documents, reviews, etc.

COVERING ISSUES SUCH AS:
• Tradition vs. Modernity • Technology and Nature •
• (Anti)Globalization • Critiques of (Post)modernity •
• “War & Terrorism” • Commodity Spectacles • Cultural Identity •
• Critiques of Neoliberalism • Post-communist culture • Underground art •
• Who are we, where are we going…?

Format: 8 1/2” x 11”, perfect bound, 144 pp.

One Copy: $12 Indiv. $20 Instit. For orders outside North America add $4 per issue for postage ($12 subs.) Subs: $35 (3 issues) $50 (Instit.)

Please make checks payable to Left Curve

For a list of published issues, orders, submissions and correspondence please write to:

Left Curve
PO Box 472
Oakland, CA 94604
email: edito@leftcurve.org
http://www.leftcurve.org
The Transformative Studies Institute (TSI) fosters interdisciplinary research that will bridge multidisciplinary theory with activism in order to encourage community involvement that will attempt to alleviate social problems. As part of the mission, scholars, activists, and other concerned individuals in fields such as social sciences, humanities, and law will be invited to conduct research and become involved in like-minded various grass roots organizations. The Institute is concerned with issues of social justice and related activism, and its aim is to provide a working model of theory in action, through shared research, governance, and operation of the center. As such, the institute may provide a working laboratory for evolutionary socioeconomic forms of organization. Further, we invite literary participation through our independent, peer-reviewed journal Theory in Action, through which research associates, scholars, activists, and students may disseminate their research and expand thematic social dialogue. TSI also welcomes opportunities to work with national and international scholars who serve as research associates and fellows. In addition, the institute plans on collaborating with various worker education programs, labor centers, universities, think tanks, advocacy groups and non-profit organizations. TSI is managed and operated by a dedicated global team of academic scholar-activists, grassroots activists, and the concerned public. Many of TSI’s members have multiple graduate degrees, multiple years of secondary and college level teaching experience throughout most disciplines. TSI also provides consulting services, custom policy papers and projects, and operates a speakers’ bureau.

Publish with our Journal

Ever wonder why activist scholarship is routinely rejected by ‘serious’ peer-reviewed journals? So did we and decided to do something about it! The purpose of our flagship journal Theory in Action is to legitimize scholar-activism through an international, interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed, quarterly publication that is available both in print and online. If you are too radical for acceptance by your association’s journals, well check us out because WE WANT YOU! We welcome assistance in disseminating our journal through your social networks and increasing its subscription base through your recommendations to your institution’s librarian.

Fellowships

If you wish to pursue grants without institutional restraints, you may now do so as a TSI research Fellow or Associate. We recognize that journals, colleges, and foundations often do not take contingent faculty and independent scholars seriously. TSI, however, believes that all scholars have something to contribute, which is why we offer them an opportunity to affiliate with TSI as research Fellows and Associates. Upon acceptance, scholars will be able to affiliate with TSI as their home institution. We will provide support, institutional email, letterhead, and other materials. Furthermore, since we do not require exclusive rights to their intellectual work, our scholars are free to disseminate their research through any outlet.

A New University

The corporate university actively impedes free thought and discourse in the United States. In response, TSI is establishing an accredited graduate school in which ‘radicals’ will be welcomed rather than muzzled or fired. Students will be educated, not trained. They will learn by doing rather than through cookie-cutter online modules or exploited sharecropper adjuncts. They will question, challenge, and advocate at a university whose core curriculum will speak for the poor, the forgotten, the environment, and animals. The college seeks to be tuition-free if we build a sufficient endowment. The college will have a participatory and democratic structure, and its purpose will be nothing less than the transformation of society via a new social movement based on equality and facts versus poverty, propaganda, and superstition!

WWW.TRANSFORMATIVESTUDIES.ORG

Transformative Studies Institute is a U.S. registered 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. All funds received by TSI are tax-deductible. © 2007-2010 Transformative Studies Institute.
In Search of One Big Union:
A Singing Lecture by Corey Dolgon, Folksinger & Sociologist

Corey Dolgon, a Ph.D in American Culture and Sociology Professor has been performing “singing lectures” for almost a decade. Focusing on the role that folksongs play in the U.S. labor movement, Corey’s words and music bring both history and theory to life. He is a long-time labor activist and community organizer and has used folk songs to build solidarity on the line and engage students in the classroom. This singing lecture covers labor history from a multicultural perspective and examines the function of folk songs in workers’ lives, labor, and organizing.

“I learned about the importance and power of strikes and labor unions. I never knew there were songs about them. [The lecture] made the period come alive for me.”
--Stonehill College student

“Corey’s work weaves together a coherent and accessible narrative about labor struggles with a tour de force of labor songs that moves audiences.”
--Chris Dale, Professor of Sociology, New England College

“Corey's music added tremendous spirit to our National Labor Assembly. I encourage other unions to add Corey's talents and expertise to their agendas.”
--Cheryl Johnson, President, United American Nurses, AFL-CIO

“Corey Dolgon’s “singing lecture” is a hit. From union retirees to active union members, from academics to management, all received a good time and good learning.”
--John Ralston, U. of Louisville Labor-Management Center

“Corey’s wonderful voice, abundant energy, and great knowledge about folksongs, labor, and other social movements were entertaining, very informative, and inspiring.”
--Kathleen Odell Korgen, Professor of Sociology, William Patterson U.

Please contact Corey for scheduling a lecture or receiving a sample CD at 617-298-0388 or at cdolgon@worcester.edu.
More info @ www.coreydolgon.com
**Balkanistica**

Volumes 1-22 (1974-2009)
The peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal of Balkan studies

For information or to order, contact:

Professor Donald L. Dyer  
Editor of *Balkanistica*  
Department of Modern Languages  
The University of Mississippi  
University, MS U.S.A. 38677

Telephone (662)915-7298  
Fax: (662)915-1086  
E-Mail: <mldyer@olemiss.edu>  
Internet: <http://www.olemiss.edu/~mldyer/balk/>

*Balkanistica* is supported by SEESA, the South East European Studies Association, formerly known as the American Association for Southeast European Studies (AASES). SEESA is an organization of scholars working in interdisciplinary studies in southeast Europe. Membership in the organization costs $30 for one year ($15 for students) two-year memberships are $55 and $25, respectively. All memberships include a subscription to *Balkanistica*. North Americans may opt for a one-year $33 Joint-SEESA-SRS Membership, which includes membership in both SEESA and the Society for Romanian Studies (separate memberships total $45, so you save $12 with joint membership). The joint SEESA-SRS Student Membership is only $19.  

**Dues for membership in SEESA should be sent to:** Professor James Augerot, Treasurer of *SEESA*, Department of Slavic Languages, Box 353580, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195. Email:<BigJim@u.washington.edu>.
Humanity & Society is a peer reviewed quarterly journal containing feature articles related to humanist sociology, as well as action notes, film reviews, and book reviews. Accepting work from a wide range of areas and methodologies, Humanity & Society publishes articles on topics that include: inequalities, human rights, globalization, gender and sexuality, aging and gerontology, crime and deviance, international relations, war and peace, teaching and sociology practice, urban and environmental studies, and related topics.

Humanity & Society is edited by Dr. Kathleen A. Tiemann at University of North Dakota, Gillette Hall Room 202, 225 Centennial Drive Stop 7136, Grand Forks, ND 58202-7136 and published by the Association for Humanist Sociology. A one-year subscription to Humanity & Society is included with membership to AHS for all but student/unemployed members.

The yearly membership fee is based on annual income and includes a one year subscription to the journal, voting privileges and discounted registration for the annual meeting. The fee schedule is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Membership Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student/Unemployed</td>
<td>$12 (H&amp;S subscription not included)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $15,999</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$16,000-$24,999</td>
<td>$38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>$55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>$70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$69,999</td>
<td>$80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000 and over</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>$150 (Domestic) $165 (International)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Send your check payable to AHS to:

Dennis Kalob or Chris Dale
New England College New England College
Henniker, NH 03242 Henniker, NH 03242
dkalob@nec.edu cdale@nec.edu
Introduction
New Essays for a New Century

Jay Corwin

During the seventies and eighties, academic articles tended to cling to models of reception offered by French critical theory and, to a lesser extent, by Russian formalism and Saussurian linguistics. Rarely now does one hear of the signifier and signified, surveillance, polyglossia. In that era, an article about a work of literature may have been a threnody of tightly strung neologisms, questions posed but left unanswered or hinted at through quotations by popular cultural theorists. Clarity of thought had been supplanted by sonorous jargon. The Prufrock peach that critical analysis had become was momentary; a breaking away from an earlier, rigid and sometimes starchy means of interpretation, but the new model had later become rigid and uninviting.

21st century visions of literature are perceived through eyes that have witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the shrinking of the ozone layer, global warming, and the resultant generational move away from the self towards a collective consciousness. Reactions to the postmodernist vision of arts and culture were varied. Stanislaw Lem’s 1974 dissection of Tzvetan Todorov’s theory of Fantastic Literature is one example of dissatisfaction with theories generated mainly by the French. Victor

---

1 Jay Corwin, Ph.D., is Senior Lecturer of Spanish at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. He received his Ph.D. in Spanish from Florida State University in 1995. His first book was La transposición de fuentes indígenas en Cien años de soledad [The Transposition of Indigenous Sources in One Hundred Years of Solitude], (Romance Monographs number 52, 1997). He recently gave a keynote presentation at an international conference in Lima, Peru, to mark the fortieth anniversary of the publication of One Hundred Years of Solitude. His recent publications include articles about the works of Gabriel García Márquez, Juan Rulfo and other contemporary Latin American novelists. He is currently working on a book about myth in the novels of Gabriel García Márquez, and editing a volume of essays on One Hundred Years of Solitude for Rodopi Press’s Dialogue Series.
Farias’s 1987 tome, *Heidegger et Nazisme*, spells out the deep commitment of Heidegger to the Nazi party he belonged to in the 1930s and beyond. It is what Joseph Grange commented on as follows: “Is there anything in Heidegger’s philosophy that would have made his involvement with the Nazis impossible? The answer, tragically, is no, and therein lies postmodernism’s scandal”\(^2\). David Hirsch’s *The Deconstruction of Literature: Criticism after Auschwitz*, published in 1991, expounds further on the direct involvement of Heidegger and Paul de Man in Nazism. In the same year Camille Paglia emerged in full combat gear as the Academic Queen of Mean. Her 1991 essay, “Junk Bonds and Corporate Raiders: Academe in the Hour of the Wolf,”\(^3\) vivisects the flaws of post-structuralism in a 78 page rant that reads like George Carlin high on the Classics. The notorious Sokal affair\(^4\) proved another serious blow to the way we once were forced to think and write, if we were to write at all. The same year saw the creation of the “Postmodernism Generator,” created by Andrew Bulhak to produce meaningless essays employing grammatically correct sentences littered with postmodern neologisms\(^5\).

Our new century has an altered vision of the world. We speak of September 11\(^{th}\) in the United States and elsewhere as a turning point in the way we view life. That moment would have marked for many, as it did for me, the end of the 20\(^{th}\) century, and the way we perceive its writings. I did not personally witness the destruction of the World Trade Center, but watched the news on the BBC and CNN. The day it happened I phoned a friend who lives in Jersey City, New Jersey. She told me of the plumes of black smoke, the near loss of her husband who had missed his usual 8:20 path train to the World Trade Center because he decided fatefully to clean the cat box. His fellow 8:20 riders died that morning. Those conversations humanized this for me, and for many months she recounted her nightmares of buildings she watched burn and collapse from the windows of her apartment. Because I read her accounts of the moment and its aftermath, and I know the person she was before and who she became afterwards, this is the person whose words marked the change of my century.

It is no longer acceptable to feign indifference to the have-nots, or to condescend to the “other,” which is in fact ourselves.

Collective consciousness has replaced paranoiac visions once implicit in ideas of “surveillance” and “the other,” terms that no longer bear meaning except in reference to an old, apocalyptic vision of the future. Now, instead of referring to a past that never was in nostalgic writings of bygone eras, we may refer to the older era of analysis as heralding a future that would never be. Our post September 11\(^{th}\) world is not apocalypt-
tic, only a bit sadder for the wear, and more conscious of real concerns over scarcer resources, and the need for a movement of thought that transcends the last generation’s questionable ideals, one which embraces generosity of spirit as divinely inspired.

There is no need to coin a term for a generation which has barely begun, although we might recognize that the current era is marked by a rejection of slogans and standard bearing, replaced by a global village mentality. This is clearly pointed out by Fadwa Gad in her essay on Mahfouz’s *Palace Walk*. Gad’s projection of the Egyptian middle class and its sense of protectiveness over the figure of the Father, well illustrated in Mahfouz’s trilogy, cannot be understood when removed from its cultural context, which is literally as old as the pyramids, distinct to other Arabic speaking nations as it is to the West. Gad makes clear that we cannot pretend to understand the symbolism of a nation without understanding the nation and its spiritual centres. Gad’s point is clear: there is no understanding without mutual respect.

We view similarities in a very beautifully written essay by Rodica Grigore about the tensions of East and West in Shusako Endo’s *Silence*. The only possibility for acceptance of Western religious beliefs in 16th century Japan is nativization and syncretism. It is an external view of Japan and the Portuguese efforts at evangelization, but written with careful attention to detail, sensitivity, and with respect for Endo, his work, and his personal struggles implicit in the novel. Endo’s is a vision of the Divine that is both Western and Japanese, a point made in flawless English by a Romanian scholar who deserves recognition in literary and academic circles.

Both of these essays centre on collective consciousness: in the first, Gad illustrates the impenetrability of the Egyptian family, and in the second, Grigore hones in on choice of the priest to dismiss his pride and convictions in order to spare the lives of victims of torture whom he is charged with protecting. These ideas are mirrored in Michael Meyer’s essay on the culture of deception surrounding the American Dream, illustrated in Steinbeck’s *Winter of Our Discontent* and mirrored by a Sondheim musical, *Into the Woods*. Meyer’s knowledge of Steinbeck is vast, and his understanding of Steinbeck’s critical view of American society is firmly grounded. He writes from an admirable position as one of America’s foremost scholars on Steinbeck. Meyer presents the possibility that Steinbeck’s critical view of the nation flowed into the musical theatre of a genius who loved the author’s books. It is more than plausible that most teenagers of the 1950s would have been aware of the filmed versions of *The Grapes of Wrath* and *East of Eden*, both monumental as
their points of origin. Steinbeck’s love of the nation was seasoned with criticism over deceptive tactics used to attain an American Dream. The remedy is also suggested, as Steinbeck and Sondheim both note, and Meyer highlights: an ethics of responsibility towards the larger group.

Melanie Marotta makes similar points in her interpretation of Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*: collective conscience is the basis of the novel. Adding to that, Marotta presents credible arguments for better group survival through a marriage of nature and technology, which takes the ideas from the notion of collective responsibility to means of best attaining it. Butler was notable as a science fiction novelist, and possibly the only African-American woman to have achieved great success in the genre. Biographical details aside, the quality of Butler’s writing assumes for the novelist a great position in American letters, and broadens the spectrum of examination in this volume, much of which is presented here from physical, temporal, geographical or ethnic distances.

Suzie Remilien addresses the shifting role of women in detective fiction, choosing as a base the well known works of Dorothy L. Sayers, specifically the Harriet Vane novels for which she is best known. Remilien’s treatment of gender in these works comes through the author’s divergence from the standards of detective fiction and her crossing into mainstream fiction, with a female protagonist. It is a 21st century take on works penned in the 1930s and 1940s, and specifies the contribution of Sayers to detective novels and mainstream fiction. It is a fact that male and female authors were subject to different standards in the reception of their works. Remilien brings to light that it is the quality of the writing, not the gender of the author, which is most important in addressing the aesthetics of a novel, and she demonstrates the movement in Sayer’s fiction away from confining norms and towards a universal standard of writing.

Chris Schulenburg’s essay on the Puerto Rican novel, *La guaracha del macho Camacho*, examines the notions of physical space in a once fortified city in the Caribbean. This space is noted by Schulenburg to include physical spaces where persons artificially separated by money and social status may freely converge: traffic. Like all the above mentioned essays, this one focuses on responsibility of individuals for the larger society. The themes in Schulenburg’s essay converge on the poignant issue of responsibility of the haves for the have-nots implicit in the plot of the novel, and where the physical space converges with the spiritual, so to speak.

The most pointed example of responsibility is in Mihaela Gligor’s essay on the early history of Mircea Eliade, Romania’s best known scholar
of the 20th century. Gligor balances Eliade’s tenuous association with the nefarious Iron Cross, an early flirtation with the sort of ubermensch ideals that fascinated Adolf Hitler, with his later contributions to the study of world religion. It is not apologetica, but an attempt by an impressive young scholar to clarify the relations of the young Eliade and demonstrate through his writings and records that he was not a member of the Legion of St Michael, aka, Iron Cross, but rather a witness to its ugly excesses, and that his responsibility in the matter was of someone who perhaps did not distance himself enough from the organization and who paid the price of a later tarnished reputation. Here again the centre of focus is individual responsibility for the collective benefit of the large social group.

These essays, as noted, originate in the US, Romania, and the United Arab Emirates; the subjects are English, Egyptian, Japanese, Puerto Rican, American, Romanian, mainstream novels by Nobel Laureates, science fiction, detective fiction, ethnographers, female authors, male authors, female protagonists, male protagonists. But the unifying theme may be reduced to individual and group responsibility, either in the historical treatment of real persons (Sayers and Eliade) or characters in novels. This was purely accidental, as there was no particular theme requested in the calls for papers, only major authors or works of the 20th century for a volume of Theory in Action called “20th Century Literature in the 21st Century Eye.”

These widely scattered essayists have offered in their writings an idea of what may be a central focus of modern thinking, swaying from the excesses of postmodernism and entering a phase that seeks a global culture of responsibility, critical of self and protective of nature, including humanity. Unlike the anti-clerical humanism of the 19th century, there appears to be no culture of religious or anti-religious sentiment implicit in these articles, only a lateral acceptance of religious thought within the wider ethical dimension of the place of the individual in the wider sphere of humanity and the natural world.

If there is a thought further to this that should be expressed at this point, it is one of gratitude. This author wishes to express his thanks to Ali Shehzad Zaidi and John Asimakopoulos for their assistance in the preparation of this edition, and also for their reception to the initial idea of a special literary edition of Theory in Action. This has brought me into contact with interesting scholars from far reaches whose work converged via email in my office in New Zealand, and brought one pleasurable read after another. My thanks, in the words of my Tlingít forebears: gunalchéesh.
ENDNOTES

4 A link to Professor Alan Sokal’s article in which he describes his experimental article which was published as a hoax. Accessed 12/2/2009.
“There is an opportunity before us to reinvigorate journalism and, with that, democratic governance in the United States. But we need to correctly understand the source of the problem to prescribe the solutions ... [W]ithout viable journalism we not only make democracy unthinkable, we open the door to a tyranny beyond most of our imaginations. I argue herein that the political economy of media is uniquely positioned to provide the insights necessary for constructive action.”


Robert McChesney opens his 589-page tome by acknowledging that “whereas some readers may devour the book from beginning to end...many readers will be as likely to read only a handful of chapters, or read the chapters out of order” (8). For better or worse, and despite having separately read and taught sections of this book, I chose to read *The Political Economy of Media* (henceforth, *TPEOM*) from front to back.

Doing so revealed the book’s flaws as a collection (as I detail below), yet also its strengths—or, more accurately, the strengths of its author’s ideas, the depth of his copious research, his profound and broad knowledge of media and economic history and theory, his personal and professional devotion to education in all the best senses of that word, and his commitment to bringing the fruits of his academic labor to bear on the process of social, political, and policy change. For Robert McChesney is

---

1 David Weiss is Assistant Professor of media studies at Montana State University-Billings. His research encompasses critical approaches to mediated and other public discourse, particularly debates over identity and representation; political communication; religious rhetoric in the public sphere; and governmental/legal language. He is currently editing a book about religious discourse in Democratic Party politics and co-editing a collection of essays about the rhetoric of American exceptionalism. Address correspondence to: David Weiss; e-mail: dweiss@msubillings.edu.

©2010 Transformative Studies Institute
not merely a brilliant scholar and perhaps the foremost political econo-
mist of media of our time; he is a passionate advocate and tireless activist
for media reform, embodying personally the claim he makes (repeatedly)
throughout TPEOM about the study and critical analysis of political
economy being inextricably linked to political and social action and
reform. In McChesney’s words, “the political economy of media has al-
ways been about the task of enhancing participatory democracy; media
and communication systems are a means to an end, with the end being
social justice and human happiness . . . It is only in the context of people
coming together to struggle for social change that depoliticization is van-
quished and victory becomes plausible, even inevitable” (151, 153).

McChesney, an endowed professor of communication at the Universi-
ity of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is also host of a weekly radio show,
Media Matters; the co-founder of Free Press, a leading media-reform
organization; and a fixture on the public radio and live lecture circuits,
where he speaks regularly about media, journalism, and politics—and
most recently, about net neutrality, an issue for which he is a tireless ad-
vocate. His writing frequently informs speeches and position papers on
issues of media reform and regulation delivered by U.S. senators and
representatives. Fittingly, TPEOM reflects, even exemplifies, McChes-
ney’s approach to media political economy as a field of study that inevit-
ably imbricates theory and political and social action.

As McChesney explains in the introduction to TPEOM (and else-
where, many times, in only slightly varying ways), political economy of
media is

a field that endeavors to connect how media and communication
systems are shaped by ownership, market structures, commercial
support, technologies, labor practices, and government policies. The
political economy of media then links the media and communication
systems to how both economic and political systems work, and so-
cial power is exercised, in society. (12)

However, while many scholars who categorize themselves as political
economists of media limit their work to merely the (critical) study of
those issues, McChesney sees—and enacts—the direct connection be-
tween his scholarly specialty and direct political action. Indeed, his defi-
nition of political economy of media does not stop with theoretical con-
cerns and questions, but, rather, only begins there:
David Weiss

The central question for media political economists is whether, on balance, the media system serves to promote or undermine democratic institutions and practices. Are media a force for social justice or for oligarchy? And equipped with that knowledge, what are the options for citizens to address the situation? Ultimately, the political economy of media is a critical exercise, committed to enhancing democracy.

Given this “mission statement” at the center of a discipline that, in other scholars’ hands, is purely an academic pursuit, it should be no surprise that TPEOM serves as both a virtual encyclopedia of the theory of political economy and also a call for, and practical guide to, taking direct action.

TPEOM consists of twenty-three chapters, most of which were published as either book chapters or journal articles between 1984 and 2008, usually in somewhat different form, and often as co-authored pieces with other activist-scholars in the fields of political economy, media reform, and/or journalism. As McChesney warns in his book’s preface, TPEOM “brings together what I regard as the best elements of much of my research in the political economy of media over the past two decades. It is not meant to be representative.” This non-representative “bringing together” approach captures what is both praiseworthy and problematic about TPEOM, an excessively large even if not strictly exhaustive assortment of the author’s writings between 1984 and 2008. For, despite McChesney’s grossly understated claim that he “edited out as much repetition as possible, because I tend to return to a number of familiar themes in my articles” (8), the degree of repetition—and, in too many cases, overt recycling of content—in the book is, in fact, rather mind-numbing.

Repetition notwithstanding, the quantity and importance of the topics covered in TPEOM, and the consistent, direct application of theory to practice in the coverage of those topics, is impressive. The book’s contents span articles and chapters about the current, sorry state of journalism both domestic and global; the history of the development of the broadcast media system in the United States (and its tragic hijacking by corporate interests); explorations of the inevitably insidious intertwining of corporate, political, and media power; ruminations about the role the Internet might or might not play in the democratization of media control and content; critical analyses of media reform movements around the world (and comparisons to the virtual non-existence of such movements in the U.S.); systematic deconstructions of neoliberalism and, in particular, the neoliberalist claim that the only truly “American” media system
is an unregulated “free-market” system (despite the fact that, as McChesney repeatedly demonstrates, U.S. media systems have always and only been beneficiaries of government policies granting media owners not only massive subsidies but also near-monopoly licenses); and comparisons between Left/labor movements in the U.S. and abroad—among many, many other topics.

Of particular relevance to readers of Theory In Action, McChesney consistently and expressly links virtually every historical fact, theoretical explication, philosophical argument, critical analysis, and statistical data point to a call for action (including, in many cases, specific directions to follow in the process of building or revising a platform for change)—even in those sections of his book not ostensibly devoted to the cause of reform. What inevitably results, though, is a reading experience that is useful but redundant, despite McChesney’s intention to segment his volume into different areas of focus.

The first of three large sections, entitled “Journalism,” has as its stated purpose the presentation of “research that is to assist us as we attempt to establish a media system that we can rationally expect to generate the journalism we need to engage in self-government” (23). Specific topics critically addressed in the section’s five chapters include the gutting of newsroom staffs (and the inevitable result: shoddy journalism) in the pursuit of corporate profits; the “exhuming” of the century-old tradition of radical media criticism in the United States, touching on the work of everyone from Upton Sinclair to Noam Chomsky; the failure of the American press to challenge the Bush White House’s claims and rationalizations during the 2002-2003 run-up to the Iraq War; and the media policies and subsidies historically and currently in place that encourage the maintenance of the status quo. This section of the book is most successful as a cohesive, thematically unified collection of essays. Still, given the repetition of what McChesney calls his “familiar themes”—most important, the critique of contemporary journalism’s failure to serve as a “rigorous watchdog of those in power and who want to be in power,” to “ferret out truth from lies,” and to “present a wide range of informed positions on the important issues of the day” (25 and elsewhere), it is not necessary that an interested reader tackle all five of its chapters, nor that she read them in order.

“Critical Studies” is the name of section II. As this amorphous title suggests, the issues covered in this nine-chapter section are rather diverse—everything from the history of public broadcasting and a warning about the dangers of advertising and hyper-commercialism, to a detailed statistical exegesis of the “new” digital economy, a critique of the globa-
lization of media corporations and content, and a survey of the centuries-
old interrelationships between the worlds of media and professional
sports. It is not always clear why some Section II essays were placed
where they were—or, in some cases, included in the book at all. Chapters
six and seven, for example, both explore the struggle between commer-
cial forces and educational/social reformers for control of radio in the
1920s and ‘30s; in doing so, they tackle many of the issues addressed in
Section I (“Journalism”) and would have therefore been just as effective
there. More problematically, the two chapters cover nearly the same
ground, actually including identical sentences and some nearly identical
paragraphs. (The chapters’ titles alone should have raised a red flag for
and “The Payne Fund and Radio Broadcasting, 1928-1935.”) Surely a
more forceful editorial team might have succeeded in convincing Mc-
Chesney to leave one of these chapters out of TPEOM—or, failing that,
in merging the contents of the two into one non-redundant essay that
would still “provide a tradition to draw from as we face important ques-
tions of the relationship of communication to democracy” (212). Chapter
eight (“Media Made Sport: A History of Sports Coverage in the United
States”), while interesting reading, might also have been omitted from
TPEOM, as it—uncharacteristically for a McChesney essay—offers little
or nothing in the way of recommendations for leveraging its historical
content into pragmatic guidelines for reform. Still, the middle section of
the book provides evidence that the pressing concerns of McChesney’s
activist political economy of media reach well beyond the confines of
journalism, extending into nearly all aspects of popular culture and enter-
tainment, government policy, and First Amendment law.

The final section of the book is “Politics and Media Reform.” A reader
scanning only the table of contents of TPEOM might assume that it is
only (or primarily) here that she would encounter proposals for effecting
meaningful change in the service of participatory democracy. But she
would be wrong. Indeed, by the time the reader reaches this third section,
she will have already encountered McChesney’s prescriptions for change
(policy reforms to strengthen or enforce journalism education, media
literacy programs, student media, the public broadcasting system, net neu-
trality, enforcement of antitrust laws, community broadcasting, and a
host of others) and, in most cases, steps that must be taken by Left, labor,
and other social change-minded factions to move these media policy is-
ues to the center of their broader reform agendas. Still, in Section III,
she will encounter a few new topics, such as a particularly insightful ex-
planation for the dearth of debate in U.S. political culture about the legi-
timacy of corporate media, a fascinating account of the (sadly) anomal-ous 2003 citizen uprising against the Federal Communications Commis-
sion in the wake of that agency’s attempt to further loosen media owner-
ship regulations, and a stunning criticism of the Left’s failure both to use
the media effectively and to recognize media reform as central to its
broader mission of social change. (“The Left can use media as an educa-
tional tool to explain the flaws in the existing social order and to present
its vision of what a more democratic society would look like [and] can
also use media reform as an issue that unites its disparate elements”
(388)). Of course, if the reader is smarter than I was, and approaches
TPEOM in a piecemeal fashion rather than reading it in its entirety from
front to back, she will find in just about any Section III chapter the same
useful blend of history, theory, critique, and call to action (and variations
on McChesney’s favorite “familiar themes”) that can be found in just
about any section I or section II chapter—again, for better or worse.

The advantage of the repetition (or, depending upon your perspective,
the consistency) of the contents of TPEOM is that its facts are important,
its arguments persuasive, its connections insightful, and its recommended
actions appropriate and necessary—meaning that a reader who decides to
peruse even just one chapter of TPEOM is more than likely to encounter
something both convincing and useful, usually an essay that combines
fascinating (and often surprising) historical background about the devel-
opment of media systems and their intricate relationships to government
and society; insights from political economic theoreticians and other crit-
ical scholars of the media, including but by no means limited to Mc-
Chesney himself; a practical rationale for being aware of said history and
theory; and, finally, recommendations for specific actions that can and
must be taken to raise public awareness, challenge and change current
media systems, and agitate for reform of government media policies. In-
deed, McChesney’s defense of his predilection to repeatedly explore past
movements, struggles, defeats, and occasional victories can be applied to
the project he urges into action by the publication of his own book:
“Studying the structural press criticism across numerous eras [and socie-
ties] amounts to locating the indisputable common denominators of the
current crisis. It is a tool for greater understanding, stronger critique, and
a robust movement for that elusive goal: change” (82).
Theory In Action is published quarterly by the Transformative Studies Institute. Subscription rates ($USD) for the print version are:

**Individuals:** $35.00 per single issue, $105.00 yearly with free online access*.

**Institutions:** $200.00 per year print with free online access*.

*For orders within the continental U.S. add $2.00 for shipping & handling per individual issue, $8.00 for yearly subscription. For orders outside the continental U.S. add $25.00 for shipping & handling per individual issue, $100.00 for yearly subscription.

Individual and institutional subscription orders can be placed online at:
http://transformativestudies.org/content/theory-in-action-the-journal-of-tsi/subscriptions/

Alternatively, you may mail this form to:
Transformative Studies Institute, Orders, 39-09 Berdan Avenue, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

First Name: __________________ MI ___ Last Name: _____________________________

Mailing Address:

Institution: _______________________________________________________________

Street: _____________________________________________ Apt. # ________

City: _____________________________________________ State/Province: __________

Country: ___________________ Postal Code: ___________________

Tel.: __________________ Email: ____________________________

One Year Subscription:      Individual      Institutional

or

Single Issue: Vol. ______ No. ______ Year _________ Number of Copies: ______

**Order Total: SUS ________________ (Do not forget to add Shipping & Handling*)**

I am enclosing a check or money order made payable to: Transformative Studies Institute

Please charge my credit card:  Visa  Mastercard  American Express  Discover

Card number ____________________________
Expiration date _________________________
CVC Code (last 3 digits on the back of the card) ___________________

Signature ____________________________ Date (MM/DD/YYYY) ___________

Transformative Studies Institute is a U.S. registered 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization.
All funds received by TSI are tax-deductible.
Dear reader: If you wish to recommend this journal to your library fill out the information below and forward it to your institution’s librarian in charge of serials/orders or electronic resources specialist.

Attn: Journal Selection/Electronic Resources Librarian

Name/Title:__________________________________

Library:_____________________________________

College/University/Institution: ________________________________________

Address:  ___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

Here is our library recommendation for the print journal:

Theory in Action (Print ISSN 1937-0229)

Recommended by:

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Title: _________  Department:  ______________________

Signature: _________________________ Date (MM/DD/YYYY):  _____________

I plan to use this journal:

as a publication outlet  for my own research
for articles as class handouts  for coursework assignments
professional discussions  other _________________

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Title: _________  Department:  ______________________

Signature: _________________________ Date (MM/DD/YYYY):  _____________

I plan to use this journal:

as a publication outlet  for my own research
for articles as class handouts  for coursework assignments
professional discussions  other _________________

Theory in Action – the Journal of the Transformative Studies Institute
39-09 Berdan Avenue, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410 USA
www.transformativestudies.org
Email: journal@transformativestudies.org
The Transformative Studies Institute (TSI) fosters interdisciplinary research that will bridge multidisciplinary theory with activism in order to encourage community involvement that will attempt to alleviate social problems. As part of the mission, scholars, activists, and other concerned individuals in fields such as social sciences, humanities, and law will be invited to conduct research and become involved in like-minded various grass roots organizations. The institute is concerned with issues of social justice and related activism, and its aim is to provide a working model of theory in action, through shared research, governance, and operation of the center. As such, the institute may provide a working laboratory for evolutionary socioeconomic forms of organization. Further, we invite literary participation through our independent, peer-reviewed journal Theory in Action, through which research associates, scholars, activists, and students may disseminate their research and expand thematic social dialogue. TSI also welcomes opportunities to work with national and international scholars who serve as research associates and fellows. In addition, the institute plans on collaborating with various worker education programs, labor centers, universities, think-tanks, advocacy groups and non-profit organizations. TSI is managed and operated by a dedicated global team of academic scholar-activists, grassroots activists, and the concerned public. Many of TSI's members have multiple graduate degrees, multiple years of secondary and college level teaching experience throughout most disciplines. TSI also provides consulting services, custom policy papers/projects, etc.

TSI Principles and Policy Positions

‘No one is free unless we are all free’

We do not believe in the privatization of socially important goods and services e.g. education, health care, utilities, transportation, public infrastructure, military, housing, social services. What we do believe in:

- The supremacy of community decision making over corporate governance.
- Free and equal public education at all levels and the elimination of all private educational institutions.
- No corporate governance/involvement in news media and the creation of an independent public foundation with tax funds to finance free and independent journalism.
- All laws providing full and equal treatment to all individuals and groups regardless of any and all characteristics.
- Sustainable development and the use of renewable resources for the protection of the environment.
- Family planning and a woman’s right to make her own reproductive decisions with the availability of the required services.
- Zero tolerance policies for conflicts of interests and political patronage for government positions at all levels.
- Zero corporate involvement in the political process at all levels.
- Direct political and economic democracy.
- Free not for profit universal quality comprehensive health care as a human right.
- A minimum living/family wage and job security laws with guaranteed universal quality housing.
- Fair Trade
- Direct action to foster meaningful change and social justice.

In order to achieve these goals TSI believes we must change how people perceive the world around them in order to foster fundamental and thus meaningful change. This requires objective information and a process of transformative learning. Transformative learning goes beyond the mere acquisition of factual knowledge. It seeks to positively impact participants by empowering them with skills that develop their awareness and initiative and to also help them create meaningful learning in their lives. It involves questioning assumptions, beliefs, and values, as well as considering multiple viewpoints. Transformative learning inspires action for change by questioning and challenging what is valued.