



TG07 SENSES & SOCIETY

International Sociological Association

Newsletter Issue 5

August 2013

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Yokohama 2014
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Editorial Note

Dear friends,

It is with pleasure that I bring to you the fifth newsletter of TG07 Senses and Society. As the President of TG07, I am pleased to share with everyone the next major meeting our TG is involved in, which is the upcoming ISA World Congress to be held in Yokohama, in July 2014. You will find in these pages, the call for abstracts for 5 panels that range from senses of place, deviance, love, to urban food cultures and the performing arts.

In the section on publications, you will also find a presentation of recent works that address the senses through various approaches, which would certainly add on to the development of scholarly endeavours on senses and society.

Please do drop me a line if you have any ideas for TG07 Senses and Society. See you all in Yokohama!

Yours,

Kelvin Low

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XVIII ISA WORLD CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY

FACING AN UNEQUAL WORLD:
CHALLENGES FOR GLOBAL SOCIOLOGY

13-19 July 2014

横浜
YOKOHAMA



After a successful gathering of sensory scholars who presented their papers at the TG07 panels at Buenos Aires in 2012, the next major event organised by the ISA and at which TG07 will be participating is the XVIII ISA World Congress.

This meeting will be held from 13 to 19 July 2014, in Yokohama, Japan.

TG07 has been allocated a total of 6 sessions, which includes a business meeting session for organisational matters.

The call for abstracts has opened and will end on **30 September 2013** for online abstract submission.

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2014/>

You will find in the next few pages, the different panels which invite papers on sensory scholarship. Looking forward to meeting everyone in Yokohama!



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I. Deviance and the Senses in the City

Session Organizer

Alexandre MARCHANT, Université Paris X Nanterre, France,
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Session in English

Deviance, in the urban environment as anywhere else, is defined by a transgression of a collective norm and identified through a denunciation discourse held by some “moral entrepreneurs” (Becker, 1963) pointing out this so-called deviation. Beyond the objective facts, always arises the question of representations and narratives, being not uniquely related to legal, social or cultural frames, but admitting also a sensorial and/or emotional dimension. Moral critics or condemnations can indeed be expressed through sensorial categories: for instance, Corbin (1986) showed how, in the French 19th century, the bourgeoisie fear of popular districts had been crystallized on smells (the stink of the unhygienic poor); or recently one of the aspects of the US criminologist theory of the “broken window” (Kelling, Wilson, 1982) is to pretend that the visual perception of a degraded environment could be seen as an encouragement for more vandalism and contribute to the development of both insecurity and criminality. Besides, perception and denunciation of deviance can also use the register of emotion: latent fear, reject motivated by hate, irrational disgust...



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Defining deviance not only as a social object but as a sensorial and emotional one, the panel will deal with the following issues: how can deviance be perceived by the public through the language of emotions and senses ? How can the latter inversely express the transgression from the side of those who commit it (e.g., visual markers, on the urban landscape, of gang territories), or be the basis of a specific identity for a particular district ?

How do “moral entrepreneurs” use in their discourses, rationally or irrationally, the vocabulary of emotions to define the so-called “vice”? How do these agents inscribe their action in a kind of sensorial battle aiming to ban harsh sensations (the seediness of a landscape) and to produce moderated soundscapes, smellscapes and visual scenes purged of any nuisance ? Finally, what is the role of the senses and emotions in the definition and enforcement of urban policies for sanitizing stigmatized places ?

The panel will include papers dealing with these specific types of deviance : drug scenes, legal or illegal “red light districts” (prostitution zones), high-crime areas, but any other suggestion will be taken into account. There is no restriction of periods or geographical frames. Papers should address the fields of sociology, history, anthropology or even any interdisciplinary perspective in social sciences. Abstracts of no more than 500 words are invited.



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II. Love as a Sensible Bond: Towards a Global Observation

Session Organizer

Adriana GARCIA, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico,
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Session in English

In the last twenty years the number of scientific articles and books on the subject of love has increased exponentially, not only in Sociology but also in other Social Sciences. The expansion has been global, suggesting that this interest reflects not only a scientific shift but also a social-global concern on such matters. The increase in the number of recent studies has called for taking love not only as a scientific object but even more as an interdisciplinary field of study (Jónasdóttir).

Even though love is a complex neuro-bio-social phenomenon which requires interdisciplinary intervention, it can be approached from a distinct sociological perspective. That is, sociologists accept the biological foundations of love (of the human being as a species), but their main interest has been to observe it as: a social discourse which constricts and allows people to express their love to others

- a process produced by interaction and which produces also social bonding – effervescence –
- a personal experience which can be expressed in words and is embodied (is felt in the body)



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Therefore, the session aims to explore the different ways love is experienced/felt, and performed/enacted and its relation to a specific region or regions. The overall objective is to present overarching theoretical elements for a global analysis of love as a social and sensory phenomenon – eg. its implications for social bonding, sexual restraint or liberation, nationalism and hatred.

Papers for this session should therefore address one or more of the following questions: What are the differences of love in the diverse geographical regions? That is, what is the impact of the differential economic, technologic and scientific development between regions in the experience and enactment of love?

- How does the globalization of technology (e.g. internet, chat, skype) influence a similar construction of love practices and rituals all around the world? And how do these new technologies create a different love-sensibility?
- Which new forms of love or loving experience have emerged in recent years, how do they relate to traditional forms of love and how are they practiced and experienced in relation to race, class, gender (e.g. Polyamory, Confluent Love vs romantic love)?
- How does love relate to the senses and how are these socially constructed as dispositions which affect our relation to others.
- How would love and love power have an impact in egalitarian relations and the construction of a different society?



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III. Making Sense of Place

Session Organizer

Phillip VANNINI, Royal Roads University, Canada,
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Session in English

Place is a type of situated affect or feeling, a mode of active, sensory engagement,” a way of being in touch with space. Making sense of place is the shaping of how we dwell in space, of how we become socialized to understand and appreciate its sounds, sights, textures, flavors, and scents. Making sense of place is how our orientations to movement, rest, and encounter, allow us to sense the speeds and rhythms of where we are. Thus place is the sum total of the sensations space gives rise to, the cumulative incorporation of those feelings carved into soils, skies, and shores, and the embodiment of its affective spaces on its dwellers.

We invite contributions to this session that help us make sense of how we apprehend and build places through all of our senses, in different worldly spaces and at different historical and present times.



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IV. Performing Arts and the Senses

Session Organizer

Florence FIGOLS, Concordia University, Canada, ffigols@me.com

Session in English

Artistic practices are related to specific sensory codes, norms and values shaped by history, nature/culture and the socio-political milieu. They enhance multi-sensorial experiences that promote social bonding as much as differences among social class. How do the performing and visual arts, by sharing sensory experiences, overcome or reinforce social inequalities? What are the sensorial implications and alterations in the division between fine and popular arts, experimental or traditional practices, arts in the city or in rural settings, doing it or looking at it? How does art, through the engagement of the senses and participative practices, blur social boundaries fostering integration and empowerment?

Through which sensorial processes are cultural knowledge and aesthetic experiences transmitted? How are these practices communicated from one generation to the next? How do aesthetic transgressions disturb the sensorial expectations and, consequently, the social order? Are 'sensory alterations' perceived as actions to generate social change or as a violation of the tradition?



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Migration and technology contribute to the global circulation of traditional, popular and fine arts. Does cultural globalization enhance or hinder sensorial diversity and social equality? Does it contribute to the richness of the sensorial life, cross-feeding art propositions and experiencing other cultures, or does it contribute to the disappearance of the sensorial uniqueness of a traditional art practice? How are perception and “sense-scape” modified or recreated through the reproduction, dissemination and re-localising of artistic forms?

Papers on music, dance, drama, visual and interdisciplinary art forms from western, non-western, traditional or popular culture are welcome including intercultural collaboration, art activism, site-specific, installations, rituals, sacred art, eco-art and any other marginalized practices.



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V. Urban Food Cultures

Session Organizer

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Session in English

Everyday urban experience for many is increasingly virtual and digital, mediated by internet communication technologies across the spheres of work and leisure. In what may be considered one of the counterweights to the digitization of quotidian life, is the hyper-development of food cultures, offering actors sensory, varied and de-territorialized gastronomic experiences with cafes and restaurants playing a central role in the distinction of cities.

The intersection of food and the senses allows us to explore the boundaries of inside and outside, private and public, individual and collective. Food is also a key component of ritual, typically understood as stimulating sensory experience and related to social values. The production and consumption of food carries cultural meaning (Levi-Strauss) and has social, economic and gender implications.



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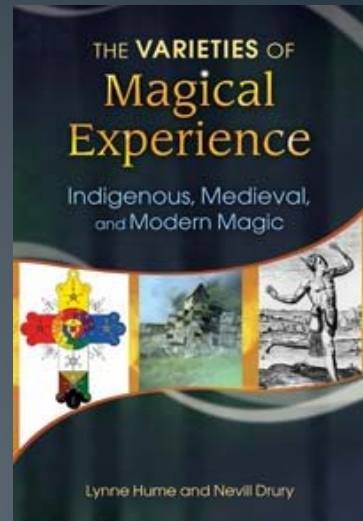
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This session calls for papers that interrogate the role of food and food cultures in the urban context and may encompass themes such as: food as a sensory and social phenomenon, the de-territorialization of food cultures, urban food practices, urban food farms and sustainability, street food in the global south, globalization of food and its implications, the public gourmand, taste distinctions, the ascendancy of café culture, food rituals such as food exchange and sharing, national food practices and their gender, economic and social implications.

Publication Highlights

Hume, Lynne and Nevill Drury (2013)
***The Varieties of Magical Experience:
Indigenous, Medieval and Modern Magic,***
Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO

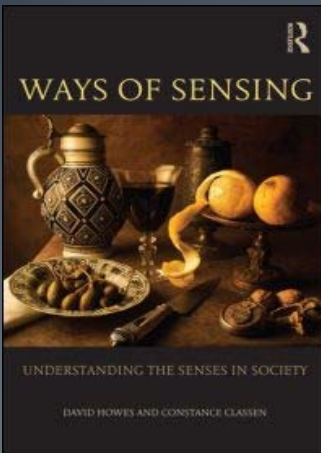


***The Varieties of Magical Experience:
Indigenous, Medieval, and Modern Magic***
provides a comprehensive volume that
examines magic in all its aspects.

The work is organised in five sections that embrace several broad themes: indigenous magical and shamanic practices; medieval witchcraft; sorcery and hermetic magic; and contemporary Western magical practices, including the role of sexuality, trance, and meditation. The introductory section explores the idea of magic, other realities, and the employment of all the senses, while the final section discusses contemporary issues of ecology and cybermagic.

The authors give voice to the powerful emotions and feelings that result from a magical encounter, providing engaging and accessible information to general readers, while those well versed in the opaque world of magic and occultism, consciousness studies, and imaginal and disembodied realms will appreciate the book's content at a deeper level.

Publication Highlights



***Ways of Sensing:
Understanding the Senses in Society***
(Routledge 2013)

David Howes and Constance Classen

Ways of Sensing is a stimulating exploration of the cultural, historical and political dimensions of the world of the senses. The book spans a wide range of settings and makes comparisons between different cultures and epochs, revealing the power and diversity of sensory expressions across time and space. The chapters reflect on topics such as the tactile appeal of medieval art, the healing power of Navajo sand paintings, the aesthetic blight of the modern hospital, the role of the senses in the courtroom, and the branding of sensations in the marketplace. Howes and Classen consider how political issues such as nationalism, gender equality and the treatment of minority groups are shaped by sensory practices and metaphors.

They also reveal how the phenomenon of synaesthesia, or mingling of the senses, can be seen as not simply a neurological condition but a vital cultural mode of creating social and cosmic interconnections. Written by leading scholars in the field, *Ways of Sensing* provides readers with a valuable and engaging introduction to the life of the senses in society.

Publication Highlights

This paper explores sensory misconduct of foreign workers in Singapore as identified by local residents in neighborhoods across the island city. Urban bodies and sensory differentiation form the focal point of discussion, given that complaints about sensory disturbances are sociocultural expressions of rejection which are connected to power relations in the city. I focus on two cases that have been identified from my research on Singapore newspaper archives dating between the 1800s and the present-day context.

Employing the notion of transnational urbanism, the paper deliberates upon urban sensory politics in Singapore and show how urban spaces are sensorially politicized by different groups through content analysis of media reports. By considering both historical and contemporary transnationalism, the paper contributes to further understandings on urbanity, migration, and sensory studies.

Low, Kelvin E.Y.

'Sensing Cities:

The Politics of Migrant Sensescapes'

in Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture.

19(2): 221-237, 2013



Publication Highlights



In a recent special double issue (March/June 2013) of *Anthropological Theory*, guest editors Lily Hope Chumley and Nicholas Harkness bring to us a total of 9 articles that focus on QUALIA – experiences of sensuous qualities and feelings. The papers in this double issue demonstrate that qualia are not just subjective mental experiences but rather sociocultural

events of ‘qualic’ – and qualitative – orientation and evaluation. These papers thus provide models for the analysis of experience by calling into question what counts for social groups as the senses, materiality or immateriality, interiority, embodiment, or exteriority. Some of the papers include:

Softer soju in South Korea

Nicholas Harkness

Tastes of Talk: Qualia and the Moral Flavour of Signs

Susan Gal

An Ecology of Sensibility: The Politics of Scents and Stigma in Japan

Joseph Doyle Hankins

Touching the Gap: Social Qualia and Cold War Contact

Alaina Lemon

Evaluation Regimes and the Qualia of Quality

Lily Hope Chumley

<http://ant.sagepub.com/content/13/1-2.toc>

Sociopedia.isa is a new online journal of the International Sociological Association, which publishes 'state-of-the-art' review articles on subjects in the social sciences.

Sociopedia.isa is a joint venture between the International Sociological Association (ISA) and SAGE Publication and was founded in 2010. Since then, more than 45 entries have been published on a range of topics. Since this year, the ten best **Sociopedia.isa** entries of the year are selected for publication in a review issue of *Current Sociology*. This issue will come out annually, starting this September.

We welcome both review papers and commentaries on current publications. For an overview of our current entries and commentaries go to:

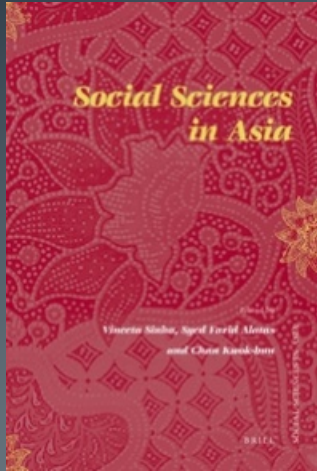
<http://www.isa-sociology.org/publ/sociopedia-isa/sociopedia-isa-list-of-published-entries.htm>

Bert Klandermans

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Announcements



We invite book proposals for the interdisciplinary ***Social Sciences in Asia*** Monograph Series. It publishes original materials and the revised editions of special issues of the ***Asian Journal of Social Science***. The ***Social Sciences in Asia*** Monograph Series welcomes submissions from specialists on any facet of Asia, including sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, economists, geographers, and historians.

The ***Social Sciences in Asia*** Monograph Series was the initiative of the editorial team of the ***Asian Journal of Social Science*** at the Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore. It was initially the Asian Social Science Series, with Brill and the Times Academic Press co-publishing the first three volumes between 2001 and 2002. In 2003, the Series became Social Sciences in Asia and henceforth carries only the Brill imprint.

www.brill.nl/publications/social-sciences-asia

For all enquiries, please contact the academic editor, Kelvin Low at socleyk@nus.edu.sg

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