

ANTHROPOLOGISTS VIEW AMERICAN CULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

Anthropologists, including Franz Boas (7), have written about American culture since the beginning of the discipline. The 1940s witnessed an explosion of interest, expressed well in the popular books by Margaret Mead (80) and Clyde Kluckhohn (60). An early issue of the *American Anthropologist* (2) was devoted entirely to American culture, and the works of Lloyd Warner (150, 151), John Dollard (20), Allison Davis (16), James West (152), and the Lynds (73, 74) stand today as solid examples of how anthropological concepts and methods of research can be applied to the study of communities in our own complex society. The works cited above were all published before the mid-1950s. Various shifts in conceptual ordering and to a minor extent in the methods of research employed by anthropologists in studies both at home and abroad occurred at that time. These shifts include a movement away from the notion of community as a bounded, isolated, and self-sufficient place toward a concept of community as a dependent part of a larger system (59). Vidich and Bensman, for instance, clearly represent this move in their benchmark *Small Town in Mass Society* (145). A loss of interest in national character and related concepts and a turning to particularistic analyses of single contexts also occurred. Spradley and Mann's *Cocktail Waitress* is a good example (131).

The longevity and discontinuity of anthropological approaches, as well as of certain continuities, make this review particularly difficult to write. An adequate analysis would require an in-depth sociology of knowledge approach. Social scientists in general, and anthropologists more than most, seem to project the special disciplinary and intellectual dogmas of their times in their

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writings, and especially when they write about their own culture. An adequate analysis would relate what anthropologists have written about American culture to not only the unfolding history of anthropology but also to the changing character of American society and culture. When we write about our own culture we are ourselves expressions of what we are writing about.

This embeddedness has recently become a special issue to anthropologists who have rediscovered the study of their own culture as they have been rebuffed abroad or have become convinced that there is a moral imperative to “study up,” as Nader (88) has phrased it. These themes are particularly well developed in *Anthropologists at Home in North America* (82). Various contributions to this volume highlight the problems of credibility, preconception, social status and role, relativism, and objectivity that are inherent in working at home.

In this chapter we will cite works that in our opinion represent major trends or characteristics of anthropological studies of American culture—by which we mean in this instance the United States. No attempt will be made to cite exhaustively, though we will confine ourselves, with a few necessary exceptions, to works by anthropologists. We will not cover certain topics some would consider essential, such as kinship, socioreligious movements, and ethnicity, although we will refer to such studies as relevant to other problems. The literature of kinship, of ethnicity, and of movements in America cannot be reviewed adequately in the context of a review of works on American culture. We have chosen to write an essay in which we try to think through on paper what appear to us to be some of the important problems posed by our own work as well as that of our colleagues. We want to express our gratitude to Mariko Fujita and Karen Field, who prepared annotated bibliographies and working papers for their PhD exams, and to Barbara Nay, who did her senior honors thesis on the topic (89) under our direction at Stanford University.

WHAT ANTHROPOLOGISTS STUDY AT HOME

It is sometimes difficult to decide what anthropologists are studying when they study American culture. The anthropologists of the early period studied cultural values, themes, symbols, configurations, postulates, social character, national character, social class, and communities. Anthropologists of the later period are still studying some of the same phenomena but with different labels and different emphases. They are also paying much more attention to language, both as a model for the organization of cultural knowledge and as social discourse.

Varenne's *Americans Together* (142) is a good example. He studies a midwestern community in which he established residence, gained access to peer groups, family life, and institutions, and did what anthropologists always

do in the field—watched, listened, inquired, and learned as people went about being themselves in customary contexts. But Varenne's analysis is quite different from that of a Lloyd Warner or Allison Davis. Where Warner and his contemporaries attempted to delineate structures such as social classes that apparently had boundaries and membership as well as community symbols, values, rituals, and ideology, Varenne describes exchanges among persons that define transient nodules in the flow of social interaction and communication. He pays a great deal of attention to how and when things are said by whom in what context. Both Warner and Varenne use what people say about themselves and others, as well as direct observation of their behavior, and collected indices of their behavior as data. Both attend to symbols and rituals, though Warner et al (151) attend to them more formally. But the analysis of one leads to a delineation of bounded, defined social entities and the other leads to the description of a loosely bounded, almost nonsystem of social interaction. Though the people in Varenne's midwestern community are subject to cultural imperatives of which they are only dimly or not at all aware, just as people are in Warner's Yankee City, they seem to express these imperatives in social dramas and contexts that are more fluid and unbounded than in Yankee City.

One is left wondering: are the communities described by Varenne and by Warner and his associates so different, or are the anthropologists? It seems reasonable that midwestern American communities have changed significantly in the nearly 50 years between the two studies, and in the direction of loosening boundaries between social classes, statuses and roles, sexes, families, and identities. It can be argued that in the American cultural system as a whole, boundaries have become so permeable as to create problems in communication and order. The oppositions between parts that make social structure possible are so weak that the structure itself may be dissolving. Richard Merelman, a political scientist using models of analysis drawn from the anthropological structuralists, develops this interpretation tellingly (81).

Is Varenne simply recording and interpreting phenomena that Warner, Davis, Dollard, or the Lynds would have described in similar fashion? Or is Varenne really a different kind of anthropologist, influenced by a Lévi-Struss, a Saussure, a Turner, and a Schneider who did not influence Warner and his co-workers? It seems clear that Varenne is a different kind of anthropologist but that the phenomena he studies are also different. The relative weight of these two factors is precisely what an adequate sociology of knowledge analysis might illuminate. It is a kind of question that a review can raise but not answer.

We do know that the earlier workers as well as most contemporary workers have acted like anthropologists are supposed to act as they have worked their field sites. They participated, observed, conversed, collected census and other quantifiable data, and interviewed. They elicited and explored the cultural

knowledge of their informants; they took the view of the native as important; they attended to symbols and rituals. In these respects there is a high degree of continuity in anthropological work in American communities, however different the end results of the work may be.

There is another genre of anthropological writing on American culture inherited from the earlier period. The writings of Mead (80), Kluckhohn (61), Hsu (45), Gorer (31), and others, including early work by Bateson (109), were not studies of single communities or limited sectors of American society. They were studies of the whole. They were attempts to extract and expand upon the central themes and ethos of American culture. It is not that they lacked specific data or that their writings did not use direct experience and observation, but their interest was in the culture as a whole system, or at least in those essences of the system as represented in values, themes, or national character.

Though one rarely hears talk of cultural values, themes, or national character today, some anthropologists are still trying to capture the essence of the whole (28). In *America Now*, Harris (34) attempts to explain technological breakdown from errant toasters to space capsules, as well as uncivil help, the shrinking dollar, women's liberation, gay liberation, rising crime rates, and religious movements in the phrasings of material determinism. As he says, "In the holistic tradition of anthropology, this book provides a general framework for understanding the bewildering changes taking place in America today."

No matter that Harris's form of material determinism seems to slip occasionally into psychological determinism in the use of such concepts as alienation, depersonalization, and apathy as intermediate interpretive concepts, his is a brave attempt to produce a coherent explanation for diverse and perplexing phenomena.

It is clear that Harris is studying American culture holistically and it seems clear at first that Varenne is studying a community. It is not true, however, that Varenne is confining his interpretations to his midwestern community. He studies in Appleton but in a sense is not studying Appleton at all. He studies in Appleton, just as he studies later in Sheffield High School (144), in order to understand how American culture works. His discussions in *Structured Diversity* are surprisingly unbound by Appleton. In fact, one never knows what Appleton is like. One does find what some Americans are like as they try to make sense to one another in Appleton.

Varenne discovers that the Americans he knows who happen to live in Appleton are *individuals*. They believe they are individuals, that individuals are important, and that as individuals they must act in certain ways. They are not only free to make personal choices from a variety of possibilities but they *must* make them, even when the choices turn out to be destructive. In their valued individual freedom they are subject to uncontested cultural imperatives.

But Varenne also discovers community. Not community in the sense of a bounded Newburyport (Yankee City), but community in the sense of voluntary associations and of *communitas*. Love, in the sense that Schneider uses it in his writings on kinship and community (113–115)—as a symbol of enduring solidarity—is what pulls and holds individuals together, and at times separates them. It must be love that does this because there is little else that could do so in the very loosely bounded “community” that Varenne discovers in Appleton. Individual and community are then complementary though in opposition. They are never entirely separable. They are in a fluid relationship to each other, like everything else in Appleton.

Warner and Varenne are both trying to understand American culture through a place called a community, but their conceptions of the relationship between the part and the whole are different. Warner sees the community as a replication, at least in significant parts, of the structure of other communities equally separate and equally bounded. Varenne sees his community as a place through which individuals pass, making sense to each other in cultural terms, using cultural symbols and meanings. They are making sense to each other even when their actions sadden and confuse, particularly as the generations confront one another on a stage set for the enactment of cultural scenes over which they seem to exert little control even as they exercise their rights as individuals to make free choices.

A quite different kind of community study is represented by the social history of Starkey, a small rural town in central California, by Elvin Hatch (35). The author is not concerned with understanding American culture so much as understanding the deterioration of small-town life in America. Of course, such an understanding could not be irrelevant to the larger whole. Hatch traces early settlement, land grants to homesteaders, the emergence and stabilization of farming patterns, and the development of Starkey as a service town. He describes the loss of morale about rural life after World War II, a process he believes to be widespread if not universal in the United States. He points out that although there is an enormous literature on community deterioration, our understanding of the process is primitive.

His analysis centers on Starkey as a place where people were sufficiently important in one another’s social universe that their assessments of social position counted very much. This did not result in the development of sharp social class or status lines. Social merit was awarded for individual personal achievement but the achievement was linked with, in fact partly expressed in, community service and leadership. “Boosterism,” widely ascribed to leadership in small towns in the literature, is not motivated in Starkey by the prospect of individual material self-gain but by the desire for recognition—a positive assessment by the members of one’s reference group.

The deterioration of Starkey as a community occurred because of a growing emphasis on individual economic achievement rather than on achievement as

social merit. This in turn is linked with the capitalization of agriculture and the emergence of the middle-class businessman farmer-rancher. The validity of social merit in Starkey is further eroded by the difference between ideas and styles from outside, diffused to Starkey by the mass media, and those that had governed life and the award of social merit inside Starkey.

In contrast to either the Warner school or a modern study in but not of a community, Hatch has produced a biography, a social history of a small town. By attention to a sequence of related events within Starkey and between Starkey and the outside world, he provides dimension that makes both Warner's and Varenne's analyses look dimensionally flat. There is an implication of timelessness in both approaches that is, of course, unrealistic. The historical dimension, when coupled with anthropological analysis, produces a valuable kind of understanding that is lacking in either the functional model of the earlier school or the contemporary communication-in-context model.

Anthony Wallace's recent book *Rockdale* (148), reconstructs the growth of an American Village in Pennsylvania in the early industrial revolution. This surprising volume does everything, and more, that a good ethnography based on 2 years of fieldwork could do for a village of 2000. It is a reconstruction of a way of life and the effect of industrialization upon it over time, the emergence of Christian capitalism, machines and human adaptations to them, the human costs of work under the conditions imposed by the cotton mills, the forms of family, sex roles, life careers, values, evangelicism, antimasonry, personalities, the Civil War, voluntary association, and good works. All of these diverse but interrelated elements are woven together into a compelling social history that is as lively as any lively ethnography of a contemporary community. And it was all done with data gleaned from a wide variety of public and personal documents, a little oral history, and the author's personal exploration and observation of surviving mill and hamlet sites and the remaining mansions in and around Rockdale.

It seems probable that the kinds of ethnographic social history represented by Hatch's and Wallace's volumes will constitute one of the major productive approaches to the study of American culture by anthropologists. Without the time depth this kind of study can give us, we will not understand the processes of change and will be led to the false conclusion that whatever is now is somehow permanent.

Thurnstrom, the historian, points out that the Yankee City "... whose social superstructure ... remained very much what it had been at the end of the War of 1812, was largely a creation of Lloyd Warner's imagination" (139). Its inhabitants were not descended from Yankee ancestors of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as Warner posited. Migration of old residents from the community and the immigration of newcomers had, by 1885, already created a city that was not mainly descended from old Newburyport families. Warner's

synchronic, ahistorical functionalistic commitment prevented him from exploiting the great historical resources available to him and led him to a false construct. It is not that the structures and styles Warner described were wrong, but they were not necessarily the permutations of old yankee structures and styles that he thought them to be.

Varenne's model of community is equally time-bound. He may be so biased toward flowing interaction, voluntary community, and immediate context that he overlooks elements of stability, boundedness, and structure that would make Appleton a different place than the one it seems to be through his eyes. History can function as a corrective for observations made in evanescent contexts. What he discovers may not be American culture but rather the communicative exchanges of transients. The ideal analysis of our culture must sample both the diversity contained within any single research site and the changes that occur through time. The futures of our ancestors are our own present and past.

SPECIAL CONTEXTS

Another way of approaching what there is to study as anthropologists look at American culture is represented by publications that in various ways examine specific institutions, cultural settings, and contexts rather than American culture as a whole or a community as a window to a larger cultural whole. Schools and schooling have probably received as much attention as any other special setting, together with hospitals, health services, and medical schools. Two recent collections of original research papers, *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling* (125) and *Children In and Out of School* (30), include chapters on resistance to change in educational practice, differing ethnic styles of communication and learning, the special languages of schooling, the social organization of schools and classrooms, play as a learning context, children's folklore, value systems in inner-city schools, and other topics that utilize data collected by anthropologists in schools and related settings using standard ethnographic techniques. It is probably correct to say that some of the best ethnographic studies of special contexts in our own society have been done in schools.

It is paradoxical that these studies seem to tell us relatively little about American culture, since most of them are explicitly studies of cultural transmission. They tell us about ethnicity and pariah statuses in classrooms and the effects of these statuses upon learning and teaching. They tell us about styles of communication that vary by ethnic group and social class. They tell us about the selection and transmission of working-class attributes as against managerial and professional class attributes. But they do not, by and large, tell us about the broader articulation of our cultural system, and they tell us little about mainstream culture. It may be that the preoccupation with ethnicity and social class

status differences in the schools makes it unlikely that we will find out much about anything else.

Some exceptions include G. Spindler's *The Transmission of American Culture*, in which the specific cultural orientations of a mainstream teacher are analyzed as influences on classroom behavior (123); Ogbu's *Minority Education and Caste* (91); McDermott & Aron's attention to the cultural compulsion to test, grade, and sort children in order to teach them "more effectively"—with precisely the opposite effect (77); Henry's analysis of punishment and reward in "Golden Rule Days" in the elementary school classroom (36); Peshkin's *Growing Up American*, in which he shows how a small community in the rich Illinois-Iowa farm belt depends upon the school for survival and how the school is shaped so that it functions to support the community (94, 95); and a collection edited by Sieber & Gordon (116), which includes attention to not only school but to the 4H organization, summer camp for girls, Boy Scout camp, and combat training in the U.S. Army. Varenne's *Structured Diversity* also qualifies. But even these works tell us more about their special settings than about American culture.

Another kind of special setting study, well represented by Spradley & Mann's ethnography of a college bar (131), provides a more direct look into the wider culture. In contrast to a community, a college bar is a relatively manageable context in which to study behavior. One can be fairly sure, after a sufficient period of participant observation and interviewing, that one knows what is going on. Excepting for this relative manageability, however, limited context studies of this sort seem to have some of the same problems, as points of access to the wider culture, that community studies do.

In Brady's bar, even though it is a college bar, women are viewed as passive, low in status, as peripheral to male social life, and as persons who serve others. A woman gains if she does a man's work—so the waitresses are eager to get behind the bar—but bartenders never cross over to clean up tables. Brady's bar is thus seen as a microcosm of the relationships between the sexes in the wider cultural framework.

The meanings of the bar in American culture and of this bar in the local culture, however, are not probed. Lacking information of this kind, we do not know the extent to which sex roles and relationships may be exaggerated or in some way reshaped in the setting. No matter how excellent the study of Brady's bar may be, we are left in the dark about the significance of sex roles in this bar for the understanding of sex roles in American culture (25). Anthropologists seem to display a tendency to study contexts as self-contained whether communities, schools, classrooms, drug abuse program centers (137), hospitals (138), or college bars. The open model implicit in Varenne's work in Appleton and in Sheffield High School is a useful alternative. Nevertheless, the

virtue of working in relatively restricted settings such as Brady's Bar or a single classroom is not to be gainsaid.

Quite a different approach to the study of our culture is taken by Perin in *Everything in its Place: Social Order and Land Use in America* (93). She studies neither a community nor a limited context but a process, though she terms this process an institution. Her purpose is to avoid psychological reductionism and explain social matters in terms of collective, not individual, behavior. "By postulating that ideas, beliefs, premises, assumptions, and definitions (and the signs and symbols standing for them) are independent data and that they are evident in the collective consequences of individuals' behavior, then social practices (not the attitudes and behavior of an imaginary actor) can be subjects of inquiry" (p. 25). She is very concerned with shifting the vocabulary away from psychological concepts toward cultural concepts and a semiotic analysis. She wants to unearth the conceptual framework for the activities of Americans engaged in buying, selling, planning, talking about, and living on real estate. She wants to avoid prefiguring categories of belief, sentiment, value, etc and instead to discover them. In this she sees the major difference between anthropology and the other social sciences. With these principles firmly in hand, she explores various aspects of land use such as home owning, zoning, and planning, and arrives at principles of social order through a semiotic analysis of interview material and other statements by participants. She shows how cultural conceptions invest newcomers, ethnicity, density, tenure, ownership, etc with meaning that influences land use behavior.

Perin's work is satisfying and convincing and yet one wonders why she is able to state her conclusions with such certainty. Semiotic analysis seems no less tenuous than in-depth psychoanalysis, though the former is possibly burdened with fewer preconceptions. Her analysis does provide an approach to the study of American culture that seems at least as direct as through the study of behavior in limited contexts, and it is more comprehensive. Again, however, the lack of historical depth may vitiate the validity of what her analysis reveals as a statement about American culture. Her analysis centers on a time (the mid-1970s) when expansion in home ownership was at its peak and everyone was being urged to invest in real estate. It was a period of low interest rates and high profit. Conditions will never be precisely the same again and they were not that way before then.

This review has so far concentrated on what anthropologists study when they turn their attention to American society and culture. We have discussed several kinds of study that use the community as a point of departure but end with very different constructions. We have discussed special contexts as windows into a wider cultural landscape, and we have made an argument for expanding synchronic analysis with a time dimension, an argument for history. Our next

step will be to consider the possibility that there are features of American culture that are characteristic of the whole and about which there is consensus on the part of those who have studied it. And we will examine the possibility that these features are of long standing.

CONSENSUS AND CONTINUITY

An analysis of all of the global earlier works on American culture, such as those by Mead (80), Kluckhohn (60), Gorer (31), Ruesch & Bateson (109), Hsu (45), Spindler (120, 121), and Gillin (29)—and there are others—reveals certain commonalities in their characterizations. Though each author phrases the qualities of the culture being analyzed somewhat differently, these observations converge into a fairly coherent list of features. The precise nature of these features, as concepts, is more difficult to define than their content. We will furnish them as descriptive statements of belief and value in presumably pivotal areas of American culture. They are a kind of statement of cultural ideology. They include:

Individualism The individual is the basic unit of society. Individuals are self-reliant and compete with other individuals for success.

Achievement orientation Everyone is concerned with achievement. Achievement, when recognized as success, is a measure of one's intrinsic worth.

Equality Though born with different attributes and abilities, everyone stands equal before the law and should have equal opportunity to achieve, utilizing one's individual ability and energy in a self-reliant manner.

Conformity Everyone is expected to conform to the norms of the community or group. Conformity and equality are closely related in that equal can be translated as "the same as."

Sociability Friendliness and the ability to get along well with others, to make friends easily, to be open to others are desirable qualities.

Honesty Keeping contracts is moral. It is also good for business. It is the "best policy."

Competence One should be able to do things well in order to succeed, but one should also be able to take care of oneself and those dependent upon one . . . to be independent.

Optimism The future is hopeful. Things will work out for the best. Improvement is possible, even inevitable if one works hard and is competent.

Work Work is good, not just a necessary evil. Idleness is bad and leads to dissolute behavior. Working hard is the key to success, even more than ability.

Authority Authority, from within a hierarchy or as represented by external power or even expertise, has negative value excepting under special conditions.

In 1952 we began administering a simple open-ended sentence "values test" to Stanford students in our classes that was organized around these points of consensus. We have continued to do so intermittently since that time and have published interpretive summaries of the results in 1955 and 1974 (122, 124). We regard the responses from our now rather large sample as expressions of cultural ideology. Over the now 30-year period for which we have data, certain response modalities have exhibited a high degree of consistency. Others have exhibited significant shifts.

Those features exhibiting the most continuity through time are: equality; honesty (as the best policy); the value of work coupled with clear goals; the significance of the self-reliant individual; and sociability—getting along well with others and being sensitive to their needs and appraisals. Those features exhibiting the greatest shifts in meaning and value are: optimism about the future; tolerance of nonconformity; and the value of material success.

The changes in response modalities over time exhibit a trend that can be described as progressively less traditional, if we take the statement of cultural ideology furnished above as our starting point. More tolerance for nonconformity, more interest in self-development than rugged individualism, more concern for other people and their needs, a more relativistic conception of order and morality, less certainty that the time-honored formula of work to get ahead will indeed work at all, more suspicion of authority—the changes have been consistently in these directions. That is, they were until the late 1970s and early 1980s. Now there is a swing back to the traditional formulas. Work, success, achievement, and individualism are stated in the 1979–1982 sample in ways very similar to the 1952 sample.

That the modalities of responses we have collected from Stanford students are not as biased by that provenience as one might expect is indicated by large samples from elsewhere in California and the east coast, and selective samples of minority groups. It is interesting that the latter in general, both at Stanford and elsewhere, express a more traditional profile than do mainstream students. The results of a survey of 200,000 freshmen at 350 colleges by the American Council of Education support our Stanford data (124). Though the eliciting device is not the same, many of the categories of belief and value overlap.

The Stanford data appear to tell us something about American culture, or at least its ideology. We may hypothesize that the core features of this profile are those that have exhibited the greatest continuity. But even the changes that have occurred over this 30-year period have occurred around pivotal areas defined by the list of consensi furnished above. This is not surprising, since the eliciting frames were set up around them, but we also asked respondents to describe in one paragraph their ideal person. Their responses in this sector are also phrased around the cultural pivots of the consensus list. The results of this research (originally intended as a teaching device, not a research) appear to correlate

well with the insights of the earlier anthropological workers. For whatever reason, these anthropological observers and interpreters of the American scene seem to not only to have agreed with each other but to have hit upon some significant features.

Our next step in the search for global cultural continuities will be to examine some of the observations made by both foreign and native interpreters of the American scene well before there was an anthropology. We will not be able to linger over their very interesting observations and the wonderful prose they were expressed in, but will summarize briefly the essence of some of their interpretations.

The best known of these observers is undoubtedly Alexis de Toqueville, who wrote about the Americans in 1831 (139a) when we were 24 states and 13 million people. He saw our ancestors as independent, resistive of authority, dedicated to justice, preoccupied with material success, and worried about being different than one's neighbors. Though de Toqueville admired much of what he saw in Americans, he was uncompromisingly critical of what he interpreted as our need to conform and believed that it was so pervasive that it threatened two other values that Americans held dear—individuality and freedom.

An earlier observer, M. G. St. Jean de Crevecoeur, wrote about America before there were states, when the colonies were at the point of revolution (12, 13). His observations were made during his tenure as a farmer in Orange county, New York, from 1765 to the outbreak of the war against domination by the British crown. He described the Americans of that time as deeply egalitarian, patriotic and very identified with being American, freedom-loving and independent, industrious, valuing competence, and agrarian.

Harriet Martineau, an English reformer, traveled in the United States for 2 years beginning in 1834. She, like de Tocqueville, perceived elements of both individualism and conformity, though she saw them less as universal American attributes and more as regional, the easterners being more the conformists. She saw "the workings of opinion" as the "established religion" of the United States, taking precedence over even the pursuit of wealth and overshadowing even the love of freedom and the regard for the individual (76a).

We cannot leave the historical dimension behind us without a glance into Frederick Jackson Turner's famous frontier hypothesis (141). The hypothesis, somewhat simplified, is that the opportunities and imperatives of the frontier, constant to the time of his writings (beginning in 1893), were the cause of individualism, intolerance of restraints, inquisitiveness, masterful grasp of material things, buoyancy and exuberance marking the American character. Among the factors most important was the availability of free land, which supported incessant expansion and constant movement. This "hypothesis," at least the characterizations of the American character it was purported to

explain, relates well to the profile of attributes delineated, though it emphasizes individualism, optimism, and materialism (and material success) and de-emphasizes conformity.

There were other earlier observers that one would cite in a more extended sampling of interpretations, including Thomas Jefferson, who saw America as a country of farmers and wanted to keep it that way (54), and Baron J. A. Graf von Hübnner, who saw our individualism as a not unqualified success (147). The three summarized are sufficient for our purposes. It is clear that what they describe for the America they knew, now 100 to more than 200 years past, does not sound unfamiliar in the framework of pivotal attributes that anthropologists writing in the 1940s and 1950s produced, or that we were able to delineate with our Stanford and related samples.

INDIVIDUALISM AND CONFORMITY: A KEY OPPOSITION

A key concept which emerges from the writings of both the anthropologists of the earlier period and historical observers such as de Toqueville is that of individualism. Turner was only one of the last of the historical observers to focus upon this attribute. In one way or another, individualism figures largely in the formulations of Crevecoeur and Martineau as well as de Toqueville and is never absent from the interpretations of any of these historical observers.

Individualism is still a major focus in many current writings. Hsu, both in his earlier publications (45) and in his chapter in the Smithsonian volume, *Kin and Communities* (48), as well as in his extensively rewritten and expanded third edition of *Americans and Chinese* (49), makes individualism a key factor in American life, past and present (46, 47). In fact, he sees most of our major problems such as juvenile delinquency and corruption in government, racial tensions, prejudice, and preoccupation with sex as consequences, of "rugged individualism." The American version of individualism stresses "militant" self-reliance, competition, and rejection of authority. The individual becomes isolated and, as a consequence, insecure. This insecurity in turn leads to preoccupation with sex, because sexual contact is at least some form of communication and involves some cooperation. Insecurity also leads to conformity, for the isolated individual can only be reassured by being like others, even though this may not lead to meaningful communication.

Hsu's analyses are notable both for their extensive and complex interweaving of seemingly unrelated patterns of behavior and belief and also for the fact that they are comparative. He contrasts American and traditional Chinese cultural foci. American culture is individual-centered while the Chinese culture is situation-centered. Individual achievement, with consequent isolation, is valued in the first, whereas mutual dependence that produces collective

achievement is valued in the latter. It is a lesson in integrative analysis to read Hsu's works and observe how he weaves these key constructs into interpretations of art, sex, homelife, school, social class, marriage, heroes, government, religion, old age, crime, violence, economics, and industry.

Hsu's comparative stance is productive, whether or not one accepts all of his interpretations and particularly his single-mindedness with respect to "rugged individualism" as the root of all evil. Much of the literature by anthropologists, in fact, suffers from a lack of comparison to any other culture or situation. This is true in all sectors of the anthropological attempt to make sense of our culture, from the global interpretive essays on American culture or national character to the limited context studies of the "new" anthropology. There are exceptions, to be sure (121, 140, 143, 146), and the social histories such as Hatch's and Wallace's suffer less because a historical analysis is inherently comparative through time.

The opposition between individualism and conformity in American culture and character has been a preoccupation with many writers other than anthropologists. We have declared this review to be limited to anthropological writings, but we cannot consider individualism and conformity without mentioning David Riesman. His constructs of inner- and outer-directed character types are the most complete single "theory" of individualism and conformity (104, 105). His analysis, cast as it is in character types, is likely to be rejected by most contemporary anthropologists who want to limit their analyses to cultural phenomena in the form of symbols and signs and social meaning, largely through analysis of language, as in the work of Varenne, Perin, and in a somewhat different way, Spradley. The material determinism of a Marvin Harris will also eschew characterological approaches. Nevertheless, there is probably no single work by a contemporary social scientist on American culture that has been so influential as Riesman et al's *The Lonely Crowd*, first published in 1950 (105). Riesman, however, was not solely character-oriented, for he was also much concerned with the kind of society and institutional settings that called for these kinds of characterological attributes. *Individualism and Conformity in the American Character*, edited by Rapson (103), is particularly valuable as an integrative collection and interpretation of major writings on the topic up to the publication date, 1967. David Potter, the historian, Francis Hsu, and the sociologists Seymour Lipset and David Riesman, as well as the early observers of the American scene that we have mentioned, are included.

In the first analysis of the data from Stanford students in the mid-1950s (122), a movement in American culture from "traditional" to "emergent" value orientations was posited. Traditional orientations centered upon hard work, success, individual achievement, future orientation, and absolute morality. Emergent orientations centered upon conformity to the group, sociability,

hedonistic present orientation, sensitivity to others, and relativistic, situation-centered morality. These clusters were not unlike Reisman's constructs but centered more on social contexts.

Over the years of continuing data collection and reflection, however, it has seemed more likely that the "traditional" and "emergent" constructs are not so much a statement of change as a statement of strain within the American cultural system. The same can be said of Riesman's constructs and in fact of the whole individualism/conformity dialogue. If our culture is as loosely bounded as Merelman suggests (81), furnishing no firmly bounded contexts in which roles can be played, membership had, and stable identities formed, we would expect individualism to become a creed and conformity to immediate social pressure to be its companion. There would not be much else with which people might do their social work and character building. When we examine carefully what the observers said in the early period of our history, we are led to the conclusion that America has always been loosely bounded. The traditional boundaries of European society were what people coming to America were trying to escape from, and the expanding society (not necessarily simply the frontier society) in which they found themselves never recreated the bounded societies from which they originated.

The most recent anthropological analysis of the individual/conformity duality is contained within Varenne's discussion of Appleton (142). Varenne does not directly discuss conformity, but rather community—symbolized and reaffirmed in governmental and administrative activities and meaningful to individuals as a relationship created by love. Individuals are, however, rarely committed to community, and when individual satisfaction, free choice, or particularly "happiness" is threatened by commitment or membership, the individual withdraws to find new alignments. The emic concept of individualism is the ability to make free choices. There is, therefore, a constant opposition between individual and community, even though the existence of one depends upon the other. Both the individual and the community are considered from the native's viewpoint. In this sense, neither may exist in structural terms with which Lloyd Warner would be comfortable. On the other hand, Warner, believing himself that social classes existed and had clear boundaries, may have in part created them.

G. Spindler found essentially the same individual vs community (broadly interpreted) relationship in a controlled comparison of German and American GIs as they responded to the hierarchical structures of the Wehrmacht and the U.S. Army respectively in World War II (120, 121). The American G.I. persistently asserted his individualism and resisted submersion in the hierarchical order by rejecting authority and engaging in activities that were declared court-martial offenses. German soldiers were much more incorporated in the structure and resisted authority less. American G.I.s also withdrew their love of

the group more quickly under combat conditions than did the Germans when the survival of ego was threatened.

However phrased, it appears that individualism, and the opposition (and complementarity) of the individualism/conformity duality, is a central feature of American culture. The recognition of it has been surprisingly constant for about two centuries. Although modes of interpretation have changed, there is considerable continuity. If we did not have the writings of the early historical observers and the analyses of a few anthropologists whose natal culture was not American (Gorer, Hsu, Varenne), we might question whether this emphasis was not a projection of our own "imbeddedness" in our culture, since American analysts, it is said, tend to reduce all social phenomena to individual psychology (110). We need both history and cultural variety on the part of observers to make social interpretation work.

DIVERSITY, CONFLICT, AND ACCOMMODATION

So far in this review we have used broad and undifferentiated terms, such as "American culture" to refer to what we are discussing and what anthropologists have addressed themselves to, even when they were working in limited contexts or communities. The only diversity we have encountered is the diversity of individual choices. But the United States of America is considered to be diverse regionally, structurally, and culturally. Yet as one crosses the country by auto and stops in small towns, uses roadside conveniences, and samples local affairs via newspaper and radio, one is impressed with the uniformity of the American scene.

Diversity in the USA may be less ethnic or regionally cultural, although to be sure there is some significant variation, than it is interactional. That is, various groups conflict with and make various accommodations to the "establishment," or "mainstream," or the "power structure," or "the man," or "the white man," or their parents, and in so doing create a certain shallow, often transient diversity.

There is ample evidence to support the perception of diversity in American culture. Strickon and Lewis, for example, in their work on ethnicity in rural populations in Wisconsin, establish a convincing thesis that ethnicity in this state at least has depth (71, 135, 136). Ethnicity is expressed in trust relationships, intermarriage, celebrations, and in economic activity, and has played a significant role in the development of the region up to the present. Meyerhoff (87) tells poignantly how a California coast community of Jewish retirees celebrates its culture. Yinger (159) reviews and interprets countercultures as confrontations with established norms. Yanagisako (158a) shows how Japanese-American Nisei preserve certain aspects of Japanese kinship and combine them with mainstream American elements so that the cultural struc-

ture of Japanese-American kinship "is pervaded at all levels by people's conceptions of their social (ethnic) identity." Her analysis is presented as a challenge to Schneider's assertion (114) that at one level of analysis, that is, in the system of distinct features that define a person as a relative, the cultural order, there is uniformity (he acknowledges variation at other levels).

Similar analyses of differences in the ordering of kin at the cultural level for other ethnic groups in America might well show significant variation. Ethnicity, however, much less this kind of study of ethnic variation, has not been the major focus of anthropological work in this country. Examination of a current, seemingly well-balanced textbook on American ethnicity shows the anthropological contribution to be relatively small compared to that of other social scientists (5).

The interpretation of American kinship and culture by Schneider (113–115) sheds light on both diversity and uniformity. He early characterized American kinship as diverse but centering on basic unity, and he has enlarged upon this core position in a succession of papers and books. No review of his comprehensive writings can be attempted here. While other analysts have produced interesting works on American kinship, they have relatively infrequently attended to the larger cultural arena of which kinship is a part. Schneider's works, in contrast, have been much involved with the larger problem. Particularly interesting is his delineation of cultural "galaxies," such as kinship, nationality, ethnicity, and religion, defined by a common cultural code for conduct—in this instance diffuse, enduring solidarity. The variability is in the "substance" for each unit in the galaxy, so kinship is distinguished by blood, community by locality, etc. This galaxy in turn is contrasted to one constituted of work, commerce, and industry, with a cultural code of enlightened self-interest, personal advantage, and dominant rationality. Schneider's model of kinship in American culture has not gone unchallenged, as Scheffler's (112) and Yanagisako's (158a) arguments demonstrate.

It is interesting that the individual/conformity-community poles we discussed previously can fit within the structural opposition of these two galaxies. Some interpretive orientation of this general type appears to be cast up in attempts to analyze the core features of American culture. The uniformity of American culture may extend well beyond the surface features one so easily observes, and in fact may even pervade the dialogue of diversity. It is interesting that Henry produced a similar interpretation when he distinguished a cluster of features centering around "drive," such as achievement, competition, profit, mobility, and expansion, and another cluster centering on "love," such as kindness, quietness, simplicity, etc (37). The continuity of interpretations, in variable terminology and with different analytic models, is impressive.

The problem of greatest interest is not whether there is diversity or uniformity in American culture. Surely there are both. There are discernible variations

in behavior and symbol for each of the approximately 30 ethnic groups in the USA. There are also variations, often of more significance, in region and social class and age group despite impressive uniformity at the level of commercial and pop culture, mass media, clothing, highway strip culture, and possibly even core values. Religious cults, sexual habits and preferences, and family culture add to the diversity.

The problem is, to what are variations attributable, and how deep do they go? No single factor explanation will suffice because most of the core problems of sociocultural dynamics are involved. However, there are at least two seemingly useful models that we term the residual and interactional. The first assumes that cultural patterns, including phenomena that range from highly specific behaviors to very diffuse symbols such as "love" and solidarity, are simply inherited from a past when the differentiation was greater, whatever it is. The other deals with variation, particularly in ethnic, religious, and social class components, as produced and reinforced as various elements in society interact with each other.

The two processes are apparent in our analysis of contemporary Menomini Indian culture, as they are in other studies of Indian-white confrontation and adaptation (8, 33, 39, 40, 53, 117, 160). Our data, collected over a period of some years, show that there are several major adaptive components among the Menomini (126-128). These components have psychocultural as well as sociocultural depth. Each of these components is a product of long-term interaction with the mainstream American power structure, economy, churches and religious orders, the education establishment, world view, and prejudice. The underlying processes of contemporary Menomini adaptation may be described as reaffirmative, compensatory, syncretic, anomic, marginally constructive, segmentalized, and so forth. These processes are stabilized in the form of actual groups such as a native-oriented enclave, a peyote cult, etc. Similar adaptive responses appear in various contexts, not only in studies of American Indians, but in studies of other ethnic groups (18, 19, 155, 157). The same general line of interpretation can also be applied to religious movements, sects and cults (14, 56, 66, 101, 154, 161), and to the flux and flow of political behavior (81).

Taken from this point of view, diversity in American culture is a product of confrontation, conflict, and accommodation between populations such as ethnic and mainstream elements initially marked off by historically derived distinctions. Though some groups or movements such as hippie communes, Moonies, Jonestown, the Birch Society, etc have little specific historic depth, they do have historical antecedents in American society. Conflicts and accommodations appear, and then are stabilized in various institutional and cultural forms. The processes of interaction reinforce initial differences selectively, and then add new ones. There is, in fact, the possibility that the long-term and

continuing process of conflict and accommodation is necessary to the maintenance of the American cultural system. Only by a contrast to diversity and cultural "disorder" can American order and unanimity be recognized and defended.

When ethnic discourse is examined, as Ruskin and Varenne have done for Puerto Rican Americans (110), the focus on interaction may be taken yet further. They acknowledge ethnicity in the USA as a factor contributing to diversity and point out that immigration is continuing and that ethnic enclaves are being replenished. What they are interested in, however, is the possibility that the experience of ethnicity "particularly as it is mediated by the structural discourse people must use to express it," is in fact a "fully melted" American experience. The American ethnic discourse is similar to discourses Americans will use in other contexts such as religion and politics. It will center on individualization, psychologization, the need for unanimity, and conformity. Ruskin and Varenne take off in their analysis from the seminal work of Schneider (114), who points to the possibility that such homologies would be found between cultural content domains. Their results so far have been inconclusive, but the model is congruent with what we have termed an interactionist explanation of American cultural diversity. If ethnicity is indeed mediated by a structural discourse that is culturally American, the experience of ethnicity itself is decidedly American even though differences are recognized, and in fact exist.

THE PROBLEM OF WOMEN

Though the literature on sex roles in the USA is now extensive, there are few interpretive analyses and even fewer empirical studies by anthropologists. There are some studies of minority women, but not even the most recent and major collected volumes or texts include serious attention to mainstream American culture, although suggestions for the improvement of women's status in this country and elsewhere are not lacking. The task of anthropologists working with sex roles is apparently self-defined as cross-cultural. Naomi Quinn has provided a knowledgeable review of such studies (102). The *Wilson Quarterly* provides a useful though nonprofessional review essay on some of the research on "Men and Women" (86). Though research in other cultures by anthropologists is cited, there is no identifiable piece by anthropologists cited on any part of the USA. In the influential Rosaldo-Lamphere collection (106), there is only one of 16 chapters devoted to an American population.

How does Woman, the "other" or the "second" sex, fit into American culture (17)? The "problem" of women may be considered a subset of the problem of diversity in American culture. Anthropologists have until recently neglected women in their research (106). Because the majority of anthropologists have

been males, it is not surprising that they have attended to the highly visible public roles played by males in most societies (107). And in classic analyses of American culture by sociologists and historians, it has been assumed that since American men have been dominant status-wise, the characteristics of American men were the characteristics of the American people, including women (100). In his frontier hypothesis, Turner (141) was referring only to male values. Riesman's concept of a shift from inner to outer orientation (105) is quite inapplicable to women, who have always been "outer-oriented" to children and family. At best, the woman's world is difficult for a male to research. Now that female anthropologists are focusing on women in cross-cultural studies and are therefore calling attention to the infrastructures of society instrumented mainly by women, we can expect eventually to reexamine role relationships in American society from a cross-cultural viewpoint. Jane Collier, for example, views women as political strategists who use resources available to them in support of interests often opposed to those of men (11). Women's strategies, she claims, are important components of the processes by which social life proceeds. This kind of approach could well be the focus of some anthropological work on American women, particularly because they have, in part, moved out of infrastructural roles.

Florence Kluckhohn, a sociologist with strong anthropological leanings, has presented one of the few organized macromodels of differences in male and female roles in mainstream American culture (62). Using her "Values Orientation" schema, she showed that women's roles historically have expressed "variant" rather than "dominant" values in American culture. She posited that individualism—with man as autonomous free agent—was a dominant male value, while women as wives and mothers were oriented toward group goals. Where the valued personality type for males was the "Person of Action," the "Doing Personality," for women it was the philanthropist type, dedicated to community improvement and family morality. And while the time orientation for males has been the future, for practical reasons for women it has been the present. Some such form of cultural analysis, with appropriate modifications, might be applicable to the contemporary scene.

Some of the best work by anthropologists on women's roles in American society has been done on black women. Carol Stack's *All Our Kin* presents a vivid, cutting analysis of urban black domestic relationships (134). Stack suggests that the characterization of urban black families as matrifocal is static and misleading. She views black women as strategists, coping with problems of poverty, unemployment, and oppression in a resilient manner. She illustrates with personal histories the ways women form alliances, relying on an enduring network of kin among whom goods and services are exchanged. Other studies also illustrate the resiliency and creative aspects of the strategies used by black

women in rural as well as urban settings (4, 21). American Indian women as members of a minority group have also received a share of anthropological attention (78, 128, 129). Estelle Smith's study of Portuguese-Americans (118, 119) and Agnes Aamodt's study of neighboring among Norwegian-American women (1) extend our knowledge of ethnicity and women's roles. Sylvia Yanagisako's analysis of women-centered kin networks shows that Japanese-American centrality of women in kinship is similar to that of other middle-class Americans (158).

Women's adaptations to culture change have occupied some attention. A published symposium chaired by Ann McElroy and Carolyn Mathiasen (78) includes chapters on changing sex roles among the Oglala Sioux, Native American women in the city, Mexican-American women in the midwest, the Eskimo, and on the Iroquois as well as on women in Africa, Sri Lanka, and Iran. In our own research, starting with the Blood, Menomini, and Cree Indians, and in our recent studies on urbanizing villages in southern Germany, we have been careful to include matched samples of both sexes in our research design and data collection. Females are less tradition-oriented, less reserve- or village-oriented, and more outside- and urban-oriented than are males in all four samples (129). Sex was the single most significant antecedent variable in our quantified data analysis. Some parallel results might be expected were the same research design applied to other American minorities and to selected mainstream groups. The two sexes apparently do respond to culture change, urbanization, and modernization differently, and some features of their difference may well be generalizable transculturally. Such generalization would have practical as well as theoretical significance.

Elizabeth Moen and co-workers (84), in their study of women and economic development in two Colorado mining towns, show that the social and ultimately economic costs of ignoring women in development planning are substantial. As the two case studies reveal, the parallels between the effect of economic development on women in the Third World and in these two western American towns are striking. Most development planning has been conceptualized and applied as though women did not exist, or were like men (52).

A community study of southwestern Saskatchewan women by Seena Kohl (63) offers a useful model for studies needed on American women. Kohl provides the rich historical background of the community and traces the key roles women have played in its formation and maintenance. She describes three generations of development. Kohl regards the view taken of women in agricultural enterprises as "crypto-servants" as misleading. She found that women were full participants in the developments which laid the base for contemporary agriculture in the area. Women were the most important components of the developing social order and were highly valued as such. They were and are, as

household managers, the “gatekeepers” for consumption wants. The situation among agrarian communities in the western United States seems similar enough to warrant some generalization.

Beyond empirical studies of ethnic and particularly mainstream sex roles there is a strong need for an ethnography of the feminist movement itself in the United States. This study should be done by researchers with both the traditional social science perspective and by those involved in feminist studies, where a sense of oppression and a deep concern for change are integral to their work (58). A more interactive and sharing pattern than is usually the case might be required in the research role in a change-oriented feminist setting, as Light and Kleiber’s study of women’s health collective suggests (72).

In such an ethnography of the movement there would also have to be attention to working-class and minority women who tend to identify more strongly along class and race lines than on the basis of sex. Many feel little in common with affluent housewives and professional women and students in the liberation movement. They feel that their men need rights as much as the “already privileged feminists” (50). Working-class women often feel that men are put down as much as women, and black women insist that their own emancipation cannot be separated from that of their men.

Studies of women’s roles and especially their roles in change in the USA may lead to some surprises. Most anthropologists who dared to predict the course of sex role changes in the future of the USA have predicted more identity, or sameness, in sex roles for men and women, more public roles for women, and more domestic engagement for men (76). As Spiro’s revisit to the Kibbutzim of Israel shows (130), a return, in some unpredictable degree, to more traditional sex roles may occur when some as yet undifferentiated point is reached in liberation. Our own most recent work in Germany shows something of the kind occurring there as well. The current conservative swing in the USA already seems to be carrying sex roles along with it to some extent. One thing is clear, the differences between men and women go deep in culture and social contextualization, however deep they may or may not be in biology. How these major forces come together and separate in sex-linked behavior will continue to be a major focus of study by all the disciplines for a long time to come.

LANGUAGES IN THE USA

The title of this brief section is taken from a recent collection edited by Ferguson & Heath (24). We offer the following comments as a reminder that language is an integral part of culture and can be treated as a significant dimension of American culture. Of five recent edited collections on American culture discussed in the next section, however, only two include explicit

attention to language. Possibly this is the case because the greater part of the work on language in the USA has been done by nonanthropological linguists.

American English appears to be an expression of a loosely bounded or open culture. Tendencies to eliminate the past tense in conversation, disregard distinctions between adjectives and adverbs, absorb words and phrases from Black English, Italian, Jewish, etc, use exaggerated terms, abbreviate extensively in both writing and speaking, compound parts of words into new words, and use contact words extensively characterize current mainstream language use (81).

There is, however, little solid evidence of language homogenization in the USA. In fact, variety in social dialects may be on the increase as special groups and life styles have developed in urban contexts. Though regional and social class distinctions in language are much less than in Great Britain, dialectic diversification is continuing (24, 81).

In addition to life styles and interest groups, ethnicity is a major source of diversification. Much more work has been done on the speech usages of ethnic minorities; this is appropriate, since some 28 million Americans have a language other than English as a mother tongue or live in households where some other language is spoken. Ethnic diversity is currently being renewed with the influx of refugees and migrant workers as well as the many thousands from Great Britain and Europe seeking improvements in material well-being. Only a small portion of this study had been carried out, however, by anthropological linguists. Black English has received the most attention (9, 67, 68, 83, 149, 153).

Anthropological linguists have long been interested in the classification of and relationships among American Indian languages, but few have been concerned with the social significance of contemporary Native American language use (70). Some work, however, has been done recently on the social contexts of speech acts (10, 96, 97).

Some recent studies in the special languages of occupational groups suggests that this is a rich field that can profitably be worked further and will contribute to our understanding of increasing diversification (90, 98).

It seems apparent that all dimensions of the study of language should be studied as a part of a larger concern with American culture. Some of the questions raised in this review concerning uniformity and diversity can be pursued profitably in studies of language usage.

COLLECTIONS AND CASE STUDIES

Courses on American culture, devised and taught by anthropologists, have apparently proliferated on American campuses, to judge from the appearance of several major collected volumes and texts for class use, starting with Jorgenson & Truzzi's *Anthropology and American Life* in 1974 (55), the first to

appear since the special issue of the AAA in 1955 (2). Montague & Arens' *The American Dimension* (85) has already appeared in two editions (1976 and 1981). Others include Spradley & Rynkiewicz's *The Nacirema* (133). Holmes' *The American Tribe* (42), and most recently Kottak's *Researching American Culture* (64). Each of these volumes except the latter contains a sample of published articles and some original pieces. Several include material researched and written by undergraduate students. This trend was pioneered by Spradley and McCurdy with a 1972 text (132) that outlines an approach to ethnographic research employing an ethnoscientific model and includes twelve mini ethnographies by undergraduate students.

The range of topics and approaches subsumed by the collected volumes prohibits coherent review in short compass. Though many of the pieces included in each of the collected volumes are of first class quality, some lack enough depth to be taken seriously by undergraduate users. There is a tendency at times to produce scintillating observations without much hard evidence to support them. Anthropologists still seem prone to take American culture less seriously than they do those of others. Doubtless some of this can be traced to an attempt to titillate and stimulate student interest and probably some of it is successful in so doing. In our experience in a course at Stanford on American culture that we initiated in 1973 and that has enjoyed a growing undergraduate enrollment, the more in-depth analyses with substantial evidence to support them are the most effective. We find also, with other instructors, that students thrive on instruction in and application of ethnographic methods to their own surroundings in field studies they can carry out themselves.

The other major indication of a growing interest in anthropology at home for instructional use is the appearance of case studies on various segments of American culture. The most recent include Applebaum's study of construction workers (3), Gamst's on locomotive engineers (26), Williams' of a black urban neighborhood (155), and Wong's of the New York Chinatown (157). The first American culture case study in the series edited by the Spindlers appeared in 1969 with Keiser's first edition of *Vice Lords* (57). The first studies of a segment of the mainstream appeared in 1972, with the publication of Pilcher on longshoremen (99) and Partridge on a hippie ghetto (92). Other widely used case studies on segments of American culture include Madsen & Guerrero on Mexican Americans in South Texas (75), Hostetler & Huntington on the Hutterites (44) and on the Amish (43), Hicks on an Appalachian community (38), Daner on the Hare Krsna (14), Jacob's on a retirement community (51), Rosenfeld on a slum school (108), Wolcott on an elementary school principal (156), Davidson on Chicano prisoners (15), Aschenbrenner on black families in Chicago (4), Dougherty on rural black women (21), Kunkel on a rural black community (65), Safa on the poor of Puerto Rico (111), and Sugarman on a drug therapy center (137).

A number of the case studies published on American Indians are explicitly oriented to interaction with the mainstream American culture, including Garbarino on the Seminole (27), McFee on the Blackfeet (79), Hoebel on the Cheyennes (41), Spindlers on the Menomini (126), Downs on the Washo (22) and the Navajo (23), and most recently Grobsmith on the Lakota Sioux (32).

Thirty case studies on segments of American culture appeared in the series between 1969 and 1983. Though their publication by a major commercial publisher is evidence that academic concern with American culture by anthropologists has been taken seriously, it is noteworthy that the sales of these studies have never approximated the volume of sales of other studies in the series devoted to remote non-Western cultures. The wisdom of their publication from a profit-oriented point of view has always been questionable, however useful they may have been to instructors in the emerging curricula of anthropological American studies. Because of their marginality in this framework, many of these studies will shortly become unavailable for multiple class use. In our experience, case studies are essential instructional materials. They provide a relatively in-depth look into the phenomenal variety of American culture(s). They exemplify the cross-cultural view, but within the boundaries of American culture and society, that anthropologists have claimed as their special advantage in examining behavior elsewhere.

CLOSING REMARKS

We have not attempted in this review to cover everything written on American culture by anthropologists and have touched on very little written by others. Nevertheless, 161 references have been cited. American anthropologists have made a significant effort to study their own culture. The pace of such efforts has increased of late and will probably continue to accelerate. The boundaries between "foreign," "overseas," "exotic," or even "primitive" or "nonliterate" and "at home" or "in our own culture" are disappearing as the world culture becomes more uniform at one level and more diverse at another. Within the USA the diversification is particularly impressive. All of the skills and insights gained by anthropologists in cultures away from home can be used to good advantage at home. Anthropologists attend to symbols, ceremonies, rituals, communities, language and thought, beliefs, dialects, sex roles and sexuality, subsistence and ecology, kinship, and a multitude of other topics in ways that historians, sociologists, political scientists, and psychologists will not, because of the heritage of experience with "other" cultures from primitive to peasant to urban away from home.

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