Summaries

RINEKE VAN DAALEN

The introduction of child allowances in the Netherlands: breadwinning and status consciousness

This article reports on the results of research on the sociogenesis of child allowances in the Netherlands between 1900 and 1940. It deals with the tensions between family life and the political domain, with the lengthening of childhood in an industrializing society as social scenery. During industrialization adults came to invest more energy, money and time in the future of their children, in families and in society in general: as parents they started to use birth control, while the fate of coming generations became more and more a collective concern. As the variety in families with regard to the number of children increased and small families became the norm, the provision for large families became a problem for breadwinning fathers. At the outset, this problem was negotiated between employees and employers, and the result was a typical employers' arrangement, articulated according to a male-breadwinner logic. The regulation of labour relations was the main issue, promoting the interests of children was of minor importance, and child allowances did not have the function of reducing the inequality between social classes.

In the history of child allowances in the Netherlands one can distinguish three periods. Starting in the second decade in the twentieth century, child allowances were the result of local initiatives, at the level of private enterprises, municipalities and provinces. In 1939 child allowances were regulated at a national level, in the *Kinderbijslagwet*. This law applied to all employees and was financed by employers and employees. In both periods the regulations for child allowances held that families received more as fathers earned more. In 1963 the *Algemene KinderBijslagwet* was accepted, a national insurance benefit (*volksverzekering*), financed by general taxes. The connection between the amount of the allowance and the level of the wage of fathers was broken: rich and poor parents got the same amount of money for their children, dependent on parity and age of the child.

SEAN CHABOT

Transnational ties that bind:
The Gandhian repertoire's passage from India to the American civil rights movement

How did the Gandhian repertoire of collective action travel from the Indian independence movement to the American civil rights movement? Why did it take more than three decades before African-American activists adopted and implemented Gandhi's style of protest? Since neither historians nor social scientists have developed convincing answers to these questions, this article proposes a new theoretical framework for studying transnational diffusion between social movements. It argues that: (1) diffusion items may be dynamic and malleable rather than finished products; (2) receiving critical communities face interpretive obstacles produced by mainstream opinion leaders and media; (3) receiving critical communities can overcome these obstacles through mental dislocation and physical relocation of the diffusion item; and (4) dislocation and relocation take place in the context of two diffusion mechanisms: brokerage and collective appropriation. This theoretical framework not only allows for better answers to the two specific questions above, but should also enable more sophisticated explanations for other cases of transnational diffusion between social movements.

KOEN VAN EIJCK

Lifestyles within the new middle class:differentiation between job sectors

In this article, the lifestyles of civil servants, private sector employees, and self-employed workers within the new middle class, are compared using the Dutch Time Budget Studies from 1990, 1995, and 2000. On the basis of the work of Bourdieu, Savage et al., and Martin, it was hypothesized that civil servants would be most active in highbrow culture and serious reading and least interested in popular outdoor entertainment. Private sector employees were expected to be more engaged in pop culture and rather frequent visitors of bars and restaurants. For the self-employed workers, we predicted a mixture of these lifestyles; culture and sociability were both expected to be important to them. By and large, these results were confirmed, and remained essentially stable during the 1990s, indicating that the self-employed are the most typical exponents of a postmodern NMC-lifestyle.

CHRISTINE DELHAYE

Modernization, consumption culture and feminine individualisation

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the subject of 'individualisation' has been a central theme in sociological and anthropological thought. It is striking how, even now, leading commentators debate the issue in gender-blind terms. Feminist scholars have therefore criticised the mainstream debate about individualisation, arguing that women have been excluded from the western development of individualisation. In this article, the point of view is advocated that, while being excluded by 'masculine' logics of individualisation, women have at the same time been subjected in multiple ways to 'other' – and indeed often trivialised – logics of individualisation. It is argued that the emergence of modern phenomena such as consumption culture and fashion were important arenas of female individualisation, although of course not the only ones. The arguments are underpinned by an analysis of Dutch fashion magazines at the turn of the nineteenth century (1880-1920). The analysis highlights how the editorials taught women to conceive of themselves as 'modern' individuals. Fashion discourse educated women as self-defining beings, increasingly aware of themselves and their unique outward appearance.

MARCEL OOSTERWIJK

The invasion of cyberspace

As it is we are barely hanging on to objective reality, daily dragged down by the accumulated weight of the unrealities we consume, and therefore in no condition to absorb the shock of a new generation of illusion-making technologies that threaten to send us straight through the looking glass. But are we really the poor victims of reality-generating technology that invades our private lives as techno-pessimists claim?

The author argues that people can still tell the difference between real and virtual life. This article focuses specifically on the internet as a personal communication tool, especially as a provider of chat rooms, the most commonly used manifestation of cyberspace. It is in these chat rooms that people interact in virtual space. The author has tried to investigate the role and meaning people attach to this form of interaction, finding that cyberspace offers no credible alternative for real space, at least not yet. Cyberspace is no more than a supplement, an easy to reach port of refuge where one can find, in most cases, only superficial contact with other individuals in absolute anonymity. It is the anonymity that causes paranoia among the visitors to

cyberspace. This paranoia, the consequential fluidity of identity, as well as the superficial nature of the interaction keep cyberspace from actually competing with the real world.