Concerned Anthropologists pledges to boycott counterinsurgency. *Anthropology News* 48(December): 4-5.

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on pre-war fieldwork relations in relative safety. Still, the limitations on prolonged fieldwork and risks to research participants are considerable, a state of affairs that is not helped by the cloud of suspicion hanging over specialist anthropologists in this region, linked as they are with a discipline that is making far too many concessions to unaccountable government and private military contractors.

We must find ways to engage issues concerning Iraq objectively and independently, without being railroaded into a partisan security agenda. Now that we have blogs and online communities, teach-ins and university protests are no longer the only instruments of opposition. And even if fieldwork were impossible, we can surely weigh up and analyse the fragmentary information available and draw on a comparative anthropology of violence and social suffering to help make sense of current events in Iraq. Anthropologists such as Nadje Al-Ali, Keith Brown, Steven Caton, Matthew Gutmann, Allen Feldman and Catherine Lutz have done so.

The incoming Obama administration seeks to withdraw combat troops from Iraq. However, this will likely mean redeployment of troops and an escalation of the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The adversarial and partisan agendas of Minerva and the Human Terrain initiatives must not be the central focus of our professional engagement at our annual conferences, for they are recipes for creating security-speak elites with an interest in perpetuating war rather than finding solutions. We must now strive to engage and disseminate our own independent anthropological studies of the military campaigns undertaken as part of the global 'war on terror'. The teach-in remains a relevant option today, especially now that we have social networking sites such as Facebook to help. ●

The teach-ins: Anti-war protest in the Old Stoned Age

Guest editorial by Marshall Sahlins

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Marshall Sahlins is credited with the imaginative innovation, in the 1960s, of the teach-in which, unlike the strike, is a constructive process in which participants bring all their knowledge of a critical issue of public concern to the university, with the aim of generating publicity and action. Anthropology, because of its expertise in other communities, may be perceived by policy-makers as a useful tool in the 'war on terror'. But there is another role for anthropology, one in which each practitioner feels the pulse of and acts in concert with public opinion in both other communities and our own, independent of government. The teach-in became a powerful instrument in this sense, helping to shift public opinion and eventually to change government policy on the Vietnam war. Here, Sahlins offers a vignette from the past and ends with a question relevant to all of us: do anthropologists still have the will and ability to inform public opinion independently from government on issues that matter today? [Ed.]

The rough music of the counterculture

From the mid-1950s to the early 1960s, Elvis Presley, rock-and-roll and the Beatles erupted on the US scene like a national charivari, except that this cacophony of the American youth signified a disavowal rather than a defence of the conventional morality. People of a certain age can remember when there was only one 'popular music', universally appreciated by young and old alike. In the decade following World War II, we all tuned our radios on Saturday nights to 'Your Hit Parade', following the ratings of the ten best-selling records almost as faithfully as we followed the baseball and football standings. Joseph Epstein reminisces:

> In the America of the 1940s and 1950s, when I was growing up, popular music was everywhere; and it was not of interest only to the young, as popular music is today. Singers were great heroes, bandleaders famous personages. At a neighborhood delicatessen in Rogers Park called Ashkenaz, there was a sandwich call the Lou Breese, named after the bandleader at the Chicago Theater. (Epstein 1999: 41)

Well before the wise Epstein, Plato and Confucius warned that departure from the established musical norms signified the beginning of a social discord (dis-chord?) that could only end in the corruption of the state. Both sages developed a political philosophy of music – which seems underappreciated today – whose positive complement was the Orpheus-like notion that distinct and emotionally appropriate musical forms, especially as accompaniments of ceremony, could tame the savage beasts. But the guardians of Plato's *Republic* must then be on watch against 'lawlessness in music', for though it begins in innovations that seem harmless, it gradually penetrates the character and pursuits of men, issuing forth to attack their business dealings, 'and from these relations it proceeds against the laws and constitution with wanton license […] till it finally overthrows all things public and private' (*Republic* IV, 424d-e; cf. Confucius, *Book of rites*, Book XVII).

Just so Adam Garfinkle, in his dyspeptic study of the anti-Vietnam War movement, writes of the musical preamble:

> The music of the 1950s had a brash, rebellious side to it, and it was political at least in the sense it defined an early generation gap. When Elvis Presley shook his hips and pouted out his music, teens swooned and their parents blanched. Once popular music acquired such an image, it was a fairly short step to the increasingly politicized lyrics of the 1960s, which spread antiwar and antiauthority messages far and wide. (1995: 42-43)

We are talking about the beginnings of a generational counterculture – which, I will argue, was a condition of the possibility of a massive anti-war movement. Beside music, another such sign was the change in college students' dress and hair styles. Until the 60s, students had maintained the appearance of bourgeois adults-in-training, which they now began to subvert by affecting the utilitarian clothing of the working class. Donning blue jeans, they marked a binary opposition to the parents-that-be that was worthy of Lévi-Strauss the books as well as the jeans.

There is no space here to describe the multifarious counterculture of the 60s. Instead I will reprise a common anthropological pedagogy of the same era by simply listing some characteristic culture traits of the Old Stoned Age: the sexual revolution, verbal obscenity in public places, marijuana, LSD, beatniks, long hair, folk rock, acid rock, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Jerry Rubin, 'let's rap' college classes, back-to-nature, Black Panthers,

hippies, etc., etc. (For a revelatory odyssey through the counterculture, see Stone 2007.) Sociologists tell us that 'youth' as a differentiated social category – vaguely situated between late adolescence and the people over 30 not to be trusted – emerged in this context of generational opposition and cultural critique. Ironically, the anti-bourgeois sentiments of the youth were then objectified and magnified by an aggressive capitalism eager to open a new market niche by commodifying the countercultural lifestyle.

The hotspots of the cultural rebellion were on the east and west coasts, primarily New York and San Francisco. Engaged in a kind of Batesonian schismogenesis, Greenwich Village and the Haight competed to outdo each other in countercultural eccentricities. The map of the counterculture thus resembled the New Yorker's map of US culture in general, marked by the trend-setting cities rising on the east and west coasts and a vast flat landscape of nothing inbetween. Yet it was in the peripheral centre of the country, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on 24 March 1965, that the first teach-in was held – thus launching the counterculture into the national political life. Later Carl Oglesby, the president of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), would recall 'the stroke of genius out there in Michigan that put debate on the map for the whole academic community' (quoted in Wells 1994: 24). Oglesby didn't mention that SDS also effectively came from 'out there' (with the Port Huron Statement). It may have been a cultural hinterland, but being 'out there' afforded Michigan 'the privilege of historic backwardness' (as Trotsky put it). Relatively uncommitted to the existing forms of dissent, the anti-war activists at Michigan were free to surpass them.

The political and the countercultural

Initially, they were rebels without a cause. The counterculture was not political, not a mass movement mobilized around a programme of civil action. True, the cultural rebels were pacifist by sentiment and pro-civil rights by sympathy. Moreover, they thought they could change the world – but they did not organize to do so. Probably they thought they could change the world because they were changing the self, which would be the same solipsist reason they didn't make it a political project. In 1965, Ken Kesey told the crowd at a Berkeley rally that they ought to turn their backs on the war and say 'fuck it'.

Until the teach-ins of 1965, then, political activism and the counterculture were running on separate tracks, in terms of both generational participation and actionable causes. The left and left-liberals of the older generation were largely focused on nuclear disarmament and pacifism. There were some Vietnam War protests in the tried-and-true forms of rallies, vigils and petitions, but they attracted little popular support and less media attention.

The civil rights movement, however, did actively engage some college students: the Student National Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), of course, and also SDS, whose first 'new left' efforts were devoted to community organizing in northern cities. Besides mobilizing students politically, the civil rights struggle offered exemplary tactics, particularly the sit-ins, that were later adapted to the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley as well as the teach-in at Ann Arbor.

Adding to this developing structure of the conjuncture was a certain pre-political consciousness among the university professoriate, induced by their academic experience of the Cold War. Since Sputnik especially, considerations of national security had been influencing the character of research and coursework from nuclear physics to the social sciences and humanities. For geo-political reasons the discipline of history, for example, until then virtually limited to the European and American pasts, was progressively globalized by a variety of 'exotic' histories; by contrast anthropology, until then cosmopolitan, was increasingly parochialized – it was useless to try to get a Fulbright for the Fiji Islands.

The newly-established area studies programmes likewise reflected the strategic interests of the state, as did a growing number of foreign language courses subsidized by the Department of Defense. Reverberations were felt through the humanities, if only in the way of push-back, for as a general rule the further the discipline from the positive sciences, the more the relation to the Cold War took the dialectical form of offing the power. Although at the time of the teach-ins, the activist professors were criticized for politicizing the university, it is worth noting that for years the university, heavily funded by government, had been politicizing the professors. Many of the theoretical consequences in the human sciences are still with us – notably 'power functionalism', the explanation of all manner of cultural forms and historical processes by reference to their power-effects. The Cold War having been insinuated into every cranny of the academy and practically every subject matter, thus putting power everywhere on the intellectual agenda, Foucault was an idea whose time had come.

By the spring of 1965, the time of the teach-in had come, and with it the joining of anti-war politics to countercultural dissent. As Carl Oglesby observed, the old left had failed to understand the relation between political and cultural rebellion. 'Our approach was to make the connection happen', he said, 'to bring the cultural and the political into the most intimate interplay' (quoted in Farber 1988: 12). ('Intimate interplay' – make love, not war: Oglesby, a poet, knew how to turn an iconic phrase.) In connecting with the counterculture, the teach-in movement thus gained the mass, energy and scale of the anti-establishment generation.

Perhaps the class struggle of the young was only middle-class struggle, but they comprised the one critically-disposed demographic of the 1960s. Within weeks of the first teach-in at Michigan, there were over 100 such events in colleges and universities across the country, culminating in mid-May with an all-day National Teach-In in Washington, DC. The Washington teach-in was covered in part by American and foreign TV networks and in whole by national public television, as well as being broadcast by radio to over 200 campus stations. Beyond anything that traditional politics had accomplished, the teach-ins *nationalized* the anti-war protest. They raised a latent anti-war consciousness to an extent that no received form of protest had been able to do.

The invention of the teach-in

The problem here is how the general correlations of social forces and political causes are realized in a particular form through contingent events involving specific actors. The move from structure to history entails a double reduction: a reduction in temporality from the longer term to the conjuncture, and a reduction in the determination of the acting subjects from collective social agents and forces to the particular persons who instantiate them.

It is only a measure of the obscurity of 'out there in Michigan' that 30 years after the event Adam Garfinkle could still write: 'No one knows who came up with the word "teach-in".' (1995: 72). In fact, a Senate Judiciary subcommittee on national security already knew who came up with the name by October 1965, when an accurate description of the event appeared in a footnote on page 32 of their report *The anti-Vietnam agitation and the teach-in movement: The problem of Communist infiltration and exploitation*. The note reads:

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Fig. 1. A teach-in organized at the University of Michigan.

Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws 1965. *The anti-Vietnam agitation and the teach-in movement: The problem of Communist infiltration and exploitation*. Staff Report. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Epstein, J. 1999. *Narcissus leaves the pool: Familiar essays*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Farber, D. 1988. *Chicago '68*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Garfinkle, A. 1995. *Telltale hearts: The origins and impact of the Vietnam antiwar movement*. New York: St. Martin's.

Stone, R. 2007. *Prime green: Remembering the sixties*. New York: Harper.

Wells, T. 1994. *The war within: America's battle over Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

The teach-in movement was born at the University of Michigan after heavy criticism of an original plan for a 1-day faculty 'work moratorium' to protest U.S. policies in Vietnam. The notion of a 'strike,' while sufficiently dramatic, was so controversial that it diverted attention away from the basic aim of the protest group. During a meeting on the night of March 17 they were batting around alternative ideas […] when Anthropologist Sahlins suddenly interrupted the discussion: 'I've got it. They say we're neglecting our responsibilities as teachers. Let's show them how responsible we feel. Instead of teaching out, we'll teach in – all night.'

That's just about how it happened (who was the informer?). But as an anthropologist I am compelled to reduce my role to something less than a footnote in history by speaking to the complex of circumstances and persons in play.

Prominent among the immediate circumstances was the developing competition in political activism between Ann Arbor and Berkeley – another schismogenesis. Cynics said at the time that the Michigan people had 'riot envy'. However, as the Senate subcommittee report implied, 'strike envy' might be a better term: a response to the massive demonstrations pulled off in December 1964 by the Free Speech Movement (FSM). The FSM had been initiated by the students reclaiming rights of free speech in and around the Berkeley campus. They demanded the freedom to advocate a variety of causes, civil rights prominent among them, but in contrast to Ann Arbor, the Vietnam War was not the main issue at Berkeley. Besides, in Ann Arbor the faculty took the lead – though mostly younger faculty, many without tenure.

Here something needs be said about the immediate political context of this faculty initiative. For many academics, the escalation of US involvement in Vietnam announced by President Johnson in February 1965 came as a personal as well as a political betrayal. They could take it personally because just three months before they had been campaigning to an unprecedented extent in the presidential election for the so-called peace candidate, Mr Johnson – and all the more urgently because his jingoist opponent Barry Goldwater was running on a pro-escalation

platform. Now they found themselves double-crossed by Operation Rolling Thunder, the massive bombing of North Vietnam. How then to respond? The small group that gathered at Ann Arbor initially called for a strike or moratorium for 24 March. We intended to cancel our classes and instead hold off-campus discussions on Vietnam.

The short version of what followed is that when opposition mounted among faculty colleagues and the university administration, not to mention the local newspapers and Governor George Romney, a few of us met one night to reconsider the strike tactic. Out popped the idea of 'teach-in' instead of 'teaching out'. This was definitely Lévi-Strauss the books, not the jeans. Besides, one of our number, Fritjof Bergmann, had been giving us lessons on Hegel, and teach-in had the virtue of preserving the original 'teach-out' while negating and transcending it. Or perhaps it was a near-perfect synthesis of being in the system and out of it, of academic responsibility and civic dissent, liberalism and radicalism. Of course, 'teach-in' responded most immediately to the sit-ins of the civil rights movement, and more distantly to the great sit-down action of 1936-37 at the Ford plant in Flint, Michigan – the most celebrated strike in American labour history.

Aftermath/beginning

The academic competition continued when Berkeley trumped Ann Arbor with a teach-in of 30,000 in March, and Michigan overtopped that by organizing the National Teach-In – but by then, this regional schismogenesis was a minor sub-plot. In raising anti-war consciousness in the nation as a whole, far beyond the academic community, the teach-ins were an historic turning point in the politics of the Vietnam War. In principle, in a democracy where the people are sovereign and policy is referred to the ballot, raising consciousness is direct political action.

This liberal bias of the teach-in movement, however, was one of the too-many-reasons-to-recount-here why the academic community lost its leadership role as fast as it had gained it. Part of the problem was that as soon as the teach-in movement politicized the counterculture, the latter began to counterculturalize the politics. Hence the tension between the political and the carnival in the student left as it moved from liberal protest to radical resistance and campus violence, spinning off such factions along the way as the 'Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers' and the Weathermen.

Alienated by the left students' tactics, the largely liberal anti-war public reverted to traditional modes of protest, although the marches and demonstrations were now massive in scale, varied in social composition and increasingly joined by establishment politicians. A general strike or moratorium in October 1969 brought out more than a million people, and co-ordinated marches the following month involved 500,000 in Washington and 350,000 in San Francisco. Back to the old cultural map.

* * *

Why is there not the same anti-war agitation today? The absence of a national military draft is often given as the major reason. Certainly the draft lottery generated unrest about the war, though it might be noted that virtually all male college students in the 1960s got II-S deferments, and women were not conscripted. Among the other significant differences between then and now, consider only the striking fact that at present business courses constitute by far the most popular subject matter of the higher learning in America. Where the mobilization against the Vietnam War drew on a large cadre of already existing rebels without a cause, the Iraq war came upon us as a cause without the rebels. (That's James Dean the movie, crossed with Lévi-Strauss the books.) ●