

support herself and another person, is offered as one possible solution to the usual inequalities.

Scott draws upon a variety of theoretical explanations in her review of the research on the effects of technological change on the position of women in the work force. She suggests that women will continue to be negatively affected by technological change as long as current ideologies remain unchanged. For example, Sweden (a country which is in the forefront in its efforts to eliminate job discrimination) is reported to have one of the most job segregated labor forces in Europe.

Scott offers critical discussions of the worldwide situation of women and the economic theories which purport to explain the continued inequalities. She demonstrates that regardless of the political or theoretical perspective used, women's reality is seldom addressed.

Working Your Way to the Bottom is a brief, but thought-provoking book that is simply and clearly written. Scott's feminist challenges to current thinking are important and necessary if significant changes are to ever occur in industrial and developing societies. Academics will find this a useful book in their efforts to challenge the traditional thinking of students, and to maintain a sensitivity to the realities of one-half of the world's population.

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Janet Wolff, *Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art* (Controversies in Sociology No. 14), London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983. 120 pp. \$8.95 (paper).

In this compactly written and generally accessible monograph, Janet Wolff outlines the contours of reductionism and ideology as central issues in the sociology of art. She provides a thorough critique of contemporary sociological practice, surgically identifying sloppy logic and intellectual imperialism in nearly every recent attempt to solve the "problem" of aesthetics sociologically. Upon completing the book, the reader will no doubt feel greatly informed about a wide range of epistemological, methodological, and ideological issues. At the same time, the reader may feel perplexed in his/her attempt to frame an answer to the question, "What's the next step?" Hence, the monograph would probably give admirable service as a short "kick off" to an undergraduate honors course or a graduate seminar in the sociology of art and aesthetics.

Wolff easily fends off art critics and aestheticians who would reserve "art" exclusively for the province of aesthetics. Any art, she argues, is embedded in a particular historic and social milieu. Art is institutionally situated in a material world. In short, art *and* art criticism are social products. No doubt most sociologists, this reviewer included, will agree with Wolff that art and art criticism are quite properly within the realm of sociological investigation.

Herein lies the problem of "reduction." If art and art criticism fall within the sociological purview, is there anything of consequence left over for aesthetics to salvage as its own? Wolff clearly thinks there is. To make this case, however, she must contend directly with myriad critiques to the effect that art (and the aesthetics which give it meaning and interpretation) are little if anything more than ideology. A substantial portion of the monograph is thus given over to the task of explicating a variety of "art is ideology" positions. Wolff's synopses are literate, pointed, and frequently sympathetic.

Wolff's generally appreciative attitude toward advocates of "art is ideology" is rooted—obviously, it seems to this reviewer—in their clear and not overdrawn demonstration that art is a social product. Nonetheless, this position claims too much for Wolff.

Mid-American Review of Sociology

There must be, in her view, an understanding of the aesthetic which is not totally buried in sociological reductionism or ideological critique. Sociology, in addressing art, has an aesthetic of its own which needs to be explicated. The search for this aesthetic leads Wolff to seek and argue for the "specificity" of art.

Several meanings of "specificity" are reviewed by Wolff, but the fundamental assumption is that art is irreducible simply to economics, history, politics, etc. Although Wolff champions the specificity of art, she is unyielding in her critical analyses of theorists who have so far offered suggestions as to its nature and constitution. She states:

to date the strongest contenders for this task are beset by serious weaknesses which make it difficult to see how their theoretical contributions can either solve the problem of the aesthetic or be incorporated into a sociological approach (108).

On this note, Wolfe leaves her readers to ponder and perhaps construct "solutions" of their own.

This is a useful book for students of the sociology of art in particular and for those interested in the project of cultural production generally. Wolff outlines the major positions of Foucault, Gadamer, Lacan, Lukacs, Marcuse and a host of others having lesser name recognition but no less stimulating ideas. The eight-page bibliography is a mine of relevant material. The only reservation this reviewer has is the price. Why should a book which could, theoretically, be photocopied for under \$3.00 cost three times as much to buy?

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Michael R. Hill

Jennie Keith, *Old People as People: Social and Cultural Influences on Aging and Old Age*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982. 130 pp. \$7.95 (paper).

As the title indicates, the major theme of this book is the commonality of social existence between old people and all other age groups. This is not to say that Keith argues the content of the experiences are the same, but rather that the manner of dealing with the human condition has great continuity across all ages. For example, she notes: “[o]ld people, by choosing other old people as friends are, of course, acting just like young people” (79).

Although not necessarily connotated in the title, *Old People as People* has a strong anthropological tenor. Much of the data set forth in the book are drawn from ethnographic studies of small “primitive” tribal societies. This anthropological flavor adds to the importance of the book on a number of levels. First, the wide variety of examples of various aging patterns can be used as a fairly good data resource for the undergraduate student interested in the aging phenomenon. Second, because of the broad variety of examples, the social nature of the aging experience is illustrated. Finally, although not a major focus of the book, Keith’s anthropological eye notices many of the potentially biasing features of contemporary western research in aging, e.g.: (1) researchers may be ethnocentric, (2) there tends to be a male bias in gathering data, (3) she implies a potential for a middle-age bias by the researcher, and (4) the narrowness of focusing only on linearity in generational alignments as a limiting factor.

Keith covers a wide array of topics associated with the cultural approach to aging and some which might even be considered more tied to the social structure—social organization perspective. The book focuses on aspects of the (1) cognitive, (2) normative, (3) ideological/expectational, and (4) formal and informal association features of growing old in a social context.

With respect to the cognitive dimension of aging, Keith sets forth numerous factors related to the subjective creation of age grades/boundaries which help to highlight the psychosocial features of aging. In her discussion of the normative aspects of aging she points out that due to the vacancy of norm structures