



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Black Citizenship and Authenticity in the Civil Rights Movement* by Randolph Hohle

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ties solely to questions about the technology and risks associated with it, but with larger concerns over the rights and sovereignty of smallholders subject to a global food system increasingly controlled by a few multinational corporate interests. These concerns in turn help to explain the diversity of activities engaged in by Confédération Paysanne, including demonstrations against McDonald's franchises in France (led by the iconic leader José Bové) and the group's participation in the 1999 protests against the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle. Ultimately, Confédération Paysanne's resistance to GMOs is part of a larger effort to protect the food sovereignty of smallholders in France and beyond.

The key strength of Heller's book is the depth of her ethnographic material. Heller served as a translator for Bové and the delegation that Confédération Paysanne sent to the United States during the 1999 Seattle protests, and she had first-hand access to key personnel and the documents of the organization. These rich data allow Heller to show the ways that Confédération Paysanne is uniquely French, especially in its use of discourses of food and power informed by French history and politics. These understandings help illustrate the promise and also the great challenges that exist for organizations like Confédération Paysanne when attempting to build global alliances. Of course, distance is a defining issue, but Heller carefully shows how deeply discursive barriers trouble easy connections between Confédération Paysanne and partners with diverse political and cultural traditions. This is where Heller's ethnographic approach yields its richest results, as in a fascinating scene where Heller describes a deep misunderstanding between a delegation from Confédération Paysanne and a group of American farmers, centered around a gift of Roquefort cheese. The cheese is invested with significant and layered meanings for the French, but was utterly disregarded by the Americans, leading to frustration and missed opportunities (pp. 211–217).

Conversely, the downside to Heller's approach is that she is not able to track in fuller detail the way that discourses between Confédération Paysanne and their allies overlap and diverge. For example, the

Roquefort cheese incident shows the depth of meanings that members of Confédération Paysanne attributed to it and their larger cause, but the American farmers are much flatter in how they are represented. Of course, Heller's main focus is on the French case and especially her close work with Confédération Paysanne; however, Heller also claims to present a multi-site ethnographic approach in *Food, Farms, and Solidarity*, and a deeper understanding of how Confédération Paysanne compares with other cases would help to illuminate the relationships and contrasts with other groups. For instance, Heller claims that there is no equivalent of Confédération Paysanne in the United States (p. 209), but the history of agrarian Populism in the nineteenth century, including especially the Grange movement, provides some interesting parallels.

In sum, *Food, Farms, and Solidarity* provides a deep and fascinating case study of Confédération Paysanne and contemporary struggles over agricultural biotechnology and food sovereignty. Despite a few organizational quirks, Heller's ethnographic approach makes for a compelling and accessible read, and the book would be appropriate for a topical course on food studies or social movements at the advanced undergraduate or graduate level.

Black Citizenship and Authenticity in the Civil Rights Movement, by **Randolph Hohle**. New York: Routledge, 2013. 178 pp. \$125.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780415819343.

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I started reading Randolph Hohle's new book on the weekend break before the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, and finished it a couple of weeks later in the middle of February. The reason it took that long to read was not that the book is particularly long or difficult but, rather, that I savored working my way through Hohle's account of the emergence and evolution of the mid-twentieth-century fight for racial freedom and justice during the month that we Americans typically devote to African American heritage,

history, and culture. With its emphasis on what might be described as the more cultural and agentic aspects of social movements—identity and cultural norms, gendered expectations, ethics, emotions, and embodiment, the importance of education and understanding as well as performativity and the presentation of self—the book provided some fresh angles and food for thought on historical ground that can sometimes feel a bit too familiar and overdetermined.

Black Citizenship and Authenticity in the Civil Rights Movement begins by explaining how King and other “liberals” overcame the race/class debates that fractured the movement in the first half of the century by reconceptualizing African American activism as a legitimate expression of American citizenship and belonging. Some of Hohle’s earliest and most basic contributions involve his descriptions of how the new vision of protest was constructed and what it required of participants. Hohle’s treatment of the normative presentations of self and use of non-violence is not brand new. However, it was refreshing to be reminded of all of the energy and understanding that had to be built—largely through “citizenship schools” and other related projects—to cultivate the understanding, emotional control, mastery of bodily pain, and self-restraint necessary to carry out these tactics. Moreover, Hohle’s account, especially his attention to the ethics of coalition-building, constantly situates this mobilization in a larger structural context that helps us understand why it was so effective. Not only did this citizenship-oriented approach win recognition and respect from white moderates and liberals in the South and all over the nation; it called into question the otherwise taken-for-granted relationship between whiteness and citizenship because of the racist, violent, and extremist responses in the South.

Hohle also explains the limits of this emphasis on citizen-oriented activism, both with respect to how reactionary white authorities came to manage it and in terms of African American activists who understood the need to push for ever more radical structural and institutional change. This is where and why the more radical wing of the movement for African American equality

and justice began to take center stage. The second half of the book traces the cultural evolution of what Hohle calls the “normative shift” in black political mobilization to the more radical orientations we typically associate with Malcolm X and black power nationalism in the 1960s. Hohle describes this phase or face of black mobilization as being rooted in an “ethics of autonomy” that not only privileged more collectivist and structural concerns but that brought with it a corresponding transformation in cultural style and presentation of self. Though scholars in some fields may not see this framing as entirely novel, few sociologists who have studied African American mobilization in the 1960s have focused more intently on the new and distinctive visions of African American culture and identity that emerged, both as a means for mobilization and as ends in themselves.

That said, I will be cautious about positing too stark an opposition between black citizenship and African American authenticity. Partly, I am not convinced that these two dimensions of the movement were always as historically distinctive or competing as this framing suggests, either in terms of political strategy or at the level of more grounded experience. However, my deeper concern is that this framing may construct the notion of authenticity as a less useful and sophisticated construct than it actually is. On the one hand, liberal citizenship itself may have been an authentic identity and ethical commitment for many African American activists back in the day (as it is for many in our time). On the other, my own historical research and reading lead me to believe that black radicalism may have been more strategic and less essentialist than Hohle’s characterizations seem to imply.

Perhaps Hohle would disagree. Perhaps these issues will be clarified as Hohle situates his history and theoretical framing in relation to the various theories of identity, culture, and politics that have emerged in cultural studies and critical race scholarship in recent years. His concluding chapter, which sketches the implications for racial politics in the post-civil rights era focusing on white citizenship and neoliberalism, certainly offers some glimpses. Suffice to say, I can’t wait to see how this promising and

passionate young scholar develops and applies his ideas to new research on social movements, culture, and racial change in the years to come.

Education in Prison: Studying Through Distance Learning, by **Emma Hughes**. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012. 198 pp. \$99.95 cloth. ISBN: 9781409409939.

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Emma Hughes presents an excellent contribution to research in the area of prison education with her recent book. Her clear thesis is founded upon a solid methodological approach that examines prisoner motivations and barriers to pursuing a college education through distance learning, as well as an exploration of the effects for prisoners who pursue such an endeavor. In particular, there are two areas that significantly enhance the contribution and quality of this book.

First, Hughes avoids a narrow focus on the question: does prison education reduce recidivism? The preponderance of research on prison education tends to overemphasize this area by exploring the post-release successes and failures of prisoners who completed educational programs during their imprisonment. Certainly, as the author suggests, these are important questions that deserve investigation. But these quasi-experimental approaches that compare prisoners who completed education programs to those who did not leave many questions unexplored. Hughes poses such questions and attempts to provide insight into these relatively unexplored areas. She asks questions relating to the motivations of these prisoners and asks whether or not the process of earning an education while incarcerated (specifically, a college education via distance learning) can help change a prisoner's sense of self. Specifically, she explores how earning a college education may help transform their social identity from a "prisoner" to a "student," and as a result, how this change may, in part, produce the decreased chances of recidivism often discovered in these former studies.

It is unsurprising that Hughes chose to use a grounded theoretical approach in an attempt to identify explanatory themes within her data. After all, there really is no established theory that offers an explanation for what Hughes is exploring. While Hughes has not presented enough data to confirm the theoretical ideas that she presents relating to the transformation of the self, she has clearly provided a springboard for further analysis in these important areas. Her theoretical ideas may be the beginning of the construction of such a theory. Subsequent research could explore these areas in further detail and in additional settings, in attempts to confirm or deny the empirical ideas that she poses.

Second, the methodological approach that Hughes utilized is clearly consistent with and appropriate for this type of exploration. The use of semi-structured and in-depth interviews of prisoners who have been or are involved in distance learning college courses allowed her to place her analytical emphasis on the voices and narratives that were provided by the "prisoner-students." Throughout the book, we hear these voices clearly. Within these narratives, we learn of the issues that motivate and dissuade prisoners to pursue an education during incarceration and how they may come to think of themselves as students rather than simply prisoners. With this qualitative approach, Hughes first explores how and why prisoners become interested in pursuing a college education via distance learning. Then, she turns her analysis to exploring the consequences of this decision.

The author discovers a variety of variables that "push" prisoners into these educational pursuits, as well as numerous factors that "pull" prisoners from these pursuits. Through an examination of their life histories, she shows how personal and past experiences with education set the stage for some prisoners to pursue an education during imprisonment while others, due to their past negative educational experiences, are pulled away. As one might expect, prisoners with more successful past educational experiences tended to be more interested in pursuing a college education through distance learning.

Hughes' data also show how a prison environment that supports prisoner educational