



# Linguistic Magic Bullets in the Making of a Modernist Anthropology

**ABSTRACT** This article engages current debates about concepts of culture in U.S. anthropology by examining how assumptions about language shape them. Characterizing linguistic patterns as particularly inaccessible to conscious introspection, Franz Boas suggested that culture is similarly automatic and unconscious—except for anthropologists. He used this notion in attempting to position the discipline as the obligatory passage point for academic and public debate about difference. Unfortunately, this mode of inserting linguistics in the discipline, which has long outlived Boas, reifies language ideologies by promoting simplistic models that belie the cultural complexity of human communication. By pointing to the way that recent work in linguistic anthropology has questioned key assumptions that shaped Boas's concept of culture, the article urges other anthropologists to stop asking their linguistic colleagues for magic bullets and to appreciate the critical role that examining linguistic ideologies and practices can play in discussions of the politics of culture. [Keywords: Franz Boas, culture concept, linguistic anthropology, language ideologies, scientific authority]

The concept of culture, as it is handled by the cultural anthropologist, is necessarily something of a statistical fiction. . . . It is not the concept of culture which is subtly misleading but the metaphysical locus to which culture is generally assigned.

—Edward Sapir 1949a:516

Where did so problematic, so self-defeating a concept [culture], one vulnerable to so many "fairly obvious" objections, one which leads in practice to such dubious scientific results—where did such a concept originate, and in obedience to what influences?

—Christopher Herbert 1991:21

**I**N THE LATE-19TH- and early-20th-century, competition to establish and institutionalize scientific disciplines, candidates needed to carve out a distinct discursive terrain and undermine all opposing territorial claims. Promoters likewise needed to propose schemas for identifying the principal landmarks and procedures for institutionalizing this cartographic process. "Culture," as analytic tool and research object, provided anthropology in the United States with an important source of symbolic capital. As George Stocking (1968, 1992) has argued, Franz Boas advanced the culture concept, even though he did not always invoke the term or use it consistently, to establish anthropology as a distinct discipline in the United States and to challenge the scientific authority of evolutionary perspectives on race. From these

Boasian beginnings, constructions of language have informed rhetorics of culture, defining cultural difference in particular ways and locating anthropology in relationship to modern and scientific projects in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

From the 1970s to the present, however, it would seem that many anthropologists have sought to deflate the value of their disciplinary currency. The epistemological and political underpinnings of the culture concept have figured importantly in the decentering impact of poststructuralist, postmodern, postcolonial, feminist, Marxist, and other perspectives on anthropology. Johannes Fabian (1983) argues that anthropological constructions of culture and cultural relativity have helped foster a "denial of coevalness" that has legitimated colonialism and imperialism by locating other cultures outside the temporal sphere of modernity. The ambivalence of James Clifford's often quoted admission that "culture is a deeply compromised idea I cannot yet do without" (1988:10) expresses a process of critical scrutiny that has, for many anthropologists, repositioned notions of culture as research objects rather than as tools of discovery, analysis, and exposition (see also Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Yengoyan 1986).

Some anthropologists have declared that "culture" is dead or dying—or that it should "be quietly laid to rest" (Kahn 1989:17). Lila Abu-Lughod suggests that use of the term *culture* necessarily places in operation processes of separating selves and others that continue to elevate Western elites and subordinate subaltern subjects; she argues that it is

thus necessary to develop "strategies for writing *against* culture" (1991:138). Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1991) notes that anthropological critiques of culture have sustained the value of "the savage slot" in Western society by maintaining the illusion of anthropology's epistemological autonomy from the symbolic and material processes that created the West. In adumbrating the broad range of ways that the concept has been critiqued, Robert Brightman (1995) argues that critics commit the very sin that they ascribe to "culture"—it gets constructed as homogeneous, bounded, and stable in the process. While he seems to subscribe to some dimensions of the critique, he gives the impression that the end result has been more a renaming game than an epistemological transformation. Herbert Lewis (1998) goes further, suggesting that culture's critics are guilty of "the misrepresentation of anthropology" and the distortion of its history. Marshall Sahlins (1999) accuses postmodernists (largely unnamed) of having invented the notion that Boas and his students saw cultures as bound, stable, and self-contained. Brightman, Lewis, and Sahlins point to work by the Boasians that presents culture as a dynamic and historical entity, internally differentiated, and often contested by its "bearers."

Threats to the usefulness of culture as U.S. anthropology's symbolic capital have certainly not emanated from within the discipline alone. Both Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) and Clifford Geertz (1973) were so successful in promoting their differing models of culture that their formulations were appropriated by literary critics, historians, sociologists, political scientists, and others. Anthropologists lost their monopoly on ethnography and cultural analysis as a "cultural turn"—which paralleled a "linguistic turn"—gained proponents in a range of disciplines (see Bonnell and Hunt 1999). Even as notions of "multiculturalism" have essentialized and homogenized notions of culture taken from anthropological reasoning (see Segal and Handler 1995), anthropologists have seldom played central roles in shaping popular and institutional multicultural projects.

Practitioners in cultural and literary studies, postcolonial studies, ethnic and women's studies, American studies, and other fields have often claimed the authority to define culture in ways that they see as countering the perceived complicity of anthropological constructions in consolidating hegemony. In their introduction to a collection entitled *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, for example, Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd argue for "a conception of culture as emerging in economic and political processes of modernization" rather than Orientalist and anthropological notions that characterize "premodern cultures" as simple and undifferentiated, that aestheticize culture, and that extract it from economic and political forces (1997:23). If culture "constitutes a site in which the reproduction of contemporary capitalist social relations may be continually contested" (Lowe and Lloyd 1997:26), *anthropology* becomes, for many scholars, a synonym for locations in which hegemonic notions of culture and attempts to reproduce inequality themselves get reproduced.

Scholars have often characterized the way in which Boas and his students related questions of language and culture as "the linguistic analogy" or "the linguistic relativity hypothesis." What is at stake here is more than a simple analogy or some sort of simplistic idea that linguistic categories determine culture (a position that neither Boas nor his students adopted); rather, constructions of language and linguistics shaped Boas's imaginings of culture in a range of crucial ways. I argue here that some of the most problematic aspects of anthropological conceptions of culture emerge from the particular imaginings of language and linguistics used in articulating them. These so-called linguistic analogies emerged at key junctures—when cultural reasoning got defined and its scientific parameters were delimited. Although Sahlins and other critics are right, *mutatis mutandis*, in asserting that the Boasians did not see culture as bounded, homogeneous, and stable, this defense is largely beside the point. The problems with the culture concept lie elsewhere, particularly in the way that it helps produce unequal distributions of consciousness, authority, agency, and power. By exploring these imaginings of language, I hope to open up more room for reconfiguring culture.

A second goal is to read this process of co-constructing language and culture in attempting to grasp the problematic location of linguistics in U.S. anthropology. Ironically, the models of language that get canonized by other anthropologists are probably the least similar to cultural processes and certainly the least suited to building more sophisticated notions of culture. By pointing to recent work on language that scrutinizes anthropological contributions to modernity and colonialism, I ask anthropologists to stop limiting linguistic research to a role that destines it for marginalization and to recognize its contributions to the ongoing thinking of fundamental anthropological concepts and practices.

#### THE LEGACY OF FRANZ BOAS

Dell Hymes (1983:143–144) and George Stocking (1992:64) have argued that it was not his academic training but the encounter with Native American nations that interested Boas in linguistics. He met Heyman Steinthal, the influential follower of Alexander von Humboldt, during the course of his studies in Germany (see Bauman and Briggs in press; Bunz 1996 on the influence of Herder and Humboldt on Boas's view of language and culture). But Boas told Roman Jakobson (1944:188) that he regretted having failed to attend any of Steinthal's lectures. Boas did not study Indo-European comparative and historical linguistics, and he did not use it to analyze Native American languages. Rather, as Michael Silverstein (1979) suggests, Boas's rhetorical strategy in his discussions of language is largely negative, constructing language by way of demonstrating the failure of Indo-European categories as points of reference. He challenges a prime conceit of Euro-American elites in arguing that the grammatical subtleties of many "primitive languages" can make that epitome of linguistic precision and elegance, Latin, "seem crude."

Beyond providing the clearest challenge to evolutionary schemas, linguistics afforded Boas a means of mapping the core and the boundaries of a broader "ethnological" inquiry. Boas suggested that linguistics is of "practical" significance for anthropology in providing a means of circumventing the distorting influence of *lingua franca*s, translators, and the mediation of "intelligent natives" who embed their theories of culture—and their perceptions of what the scientist wants to hear—in the way they cross cultural and linguistic borders. Boas also privileged the "theoretical" contribution that linguistics can make to ethnology. Language occupied a particularly privileged place in Boas's efforts to demonstrate both that human mental processes are fundamentally the same everywhere and that individual languages and cultures shape thought in unique ways; it thus enabled Boas to present a broad outline of human universals and specificities—a model of culture.

By editing the *Handbook of American Indian Languages*, Boas attempted to shape how language would be perceived through an anthropological lens, what role it would play in the discipline, and how researchers would study Native American languages and entextualize their analyses (see Stocking 1974a). His famous "Introduction" (1911) lays out the theoretical charter. Boas pressed a number of his students into contributing chapters and following the blueprint he imposed—which called for the inclusion of phonetic, grammatical, and lexical analyses as well as text collections. Notably, Sapir's (1922) much more extensive grammar of Takelma was published only in the second volume, which appeared 11 years later. Sapir's more structural and humanistic view of linguistics made him reluctant to accept Boas's more atomistic approach to grammatical categories.<sup>2</sup>

A fascinating and productive tension shapes the influence of Boas's view of language on the way he constructs culture. On the one hand, a crucial element of his attack on racism is the notion that language, culture, and race do not form a single package but, rather, each element pursues a different historical trajectory. Communities with similar cultural patterns may, he argues (1965), speak unrelated languages. On the other hand, Boas uses this characterization of language as a crucial means of constructing and legitimizing notions of culture and in providing models for how it should be studied. Silverstein (2000b) argues that linguistics (especially phonology) is incorporated into research on culture in the form of metaphorical "calques," creating point-for-point correspondences that treat cultural data like linguistic data and/or transpose linguistic modes of analysis onto cultural ones. Rather than a single analogy, Boas's constructions of language vis-à-vis culture pursue a number of lines.

1. *Languages and cultures do not develop along simple, unilinear evolutionary sequences.* In seeking to undermine evolutionist arguments for the increasing sophistication of all human institutions in a linear progression from primitive to civilized, Boas argues that "it is perhaps easiest to make this clear by the example of language, which in many respects is one of the most

important evidences of the history of human development" (1965:160). Venturing forth with a broad generalization regarding linguistic change, Boas argues that language seems to reverse the evolutionists' historical cartography, moving, on the whole, from more complex to simpler forms. In a host of works, including his publications on art (1927, 1940b), Boas extends this argument to cultural forms. As we shall see, the rejection of evolutionism did not entail the conviction that no universal framework for comparison could be discerned. As Hill and Mannheim (1992) point out, widespread accounts of Boasian "relativism" fail to appreciate that he saw cultural and linguistic particulars as systematically related to universals.

2. *All humans have language and culture, but all languages and cultures are unique.* For Boas, language and culture constitute what is uniquely and fundamentally human. He argues that animals also have patterned ways of relating to nature and to each other. What is distinctively human is variability—behavior is learned through the internalization of "local tradition" rather than determined by environmental conditions or instinct (Boas 1965:152). Boas asserts that "language is also a trait common to all mankind, and one that must have its roots in earliest times" (1965:156). In the introduction to the *Handbook* and elsewhere, Boas argues that each language is distinct on phonological, lexical, and grammatical grounds. Thus, the scientific study of what is most characteristically human lies not in discovering biological, cultural, or linguistic universals alone but in the empirical study of variability. Linguistics provided a privileged model for locating and comparing difference, in that it seemed to be the most universal—all societies possess the ability to communicate through language—and the most variable at the same time, given the range of linguistic diversity.
3. *Membership in linguistic and cultural communities involves the sharing of modes of classification.* One of the most crucial and widely explored dimensions of the linguistic analogy pertains to Boas's emphasis on the centrality of categories in social life. He suggests that "our whole sense experience is classified according to linguistic principles and our thought is deeply influenced by the classification of our experience" (1962: 54). The centrality of classification for Boas follows from a fundamental divergence between experience and the means available to encode it linguistically: "Since the total range of personal experience which language serves to express is infinitely varied and its whole scope must be expressed by a limited number of word-stems, an extended classification of experiences must necessarily underlie all articulate speech" (1965:189). Cultural categories channel social life and relations with the natural environment in particular customary or traditional ways. Boas moves in *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1965:189) from acoustic

articulations to the way that lexical and grammatical units categorize unique sense impressions and emotional states. Arguing that "in various cultures these classifications may be founded on fundamentally distinct principles," he uses color perception, food categories, the terminology of consanguinity and affinity, and ways of perceiving illness and nature as examples (1965:190-192).

4. *The principle of selectivity in languages and cultures.* A crucial dimension of Boas's attack on ethnocentrism involves the principle of selection. He argues that "if in a language the number of articulations were unlimited the necessary accuracy of movements needed for rapid speech and the quick recognition of sound complexes would probably never develop" (1965:188). Languages must select a limited number of "movements of articulation" from the vast range of possibilities, and the possibilities for combining them must be restricted as well (Boas 1965:189). The question is not just one of which elements are chosen—each phonetic element is patterned in ways that contrast substantially with how similar sounds are embedded in other languages (Boas 1911:18-19). Each culture similarly represents a unique selection from the vast range of human possibilities and a particular type of "structure" that links them (Boas 1965:149).<sup>3</sup>

5. *The operation of categories is automatized and unconscious.* Constant repetitions of this limited number of articulations "bring it about that these accurate adjustments become automatic," resulting in firm associations between articulations and their corresponding sounds (Boas 1965:189) that are utilized "automatically and without reflection at any given moment" (Boas 1911:25). This quality limits speakers' ability to represent their own language: "The use of language is automatic, so that before the development of a science of language the fundamental ideas never rise into consciousness" (Boas 1965:192-193). Language is thus free from the "secondary explanations"—distortions of the historical basis of the development of categories through rationalization—that so plague the study of culture. Herein lies an important basis for advancing what Stocking (1968) calls Boas's displacement of biological or racial determinism by cultural determinism; the very possibility of communication and social order was based on surrender to categories over which the individual lacks both control and awareness.

In the case of cultural forms, the constant repetition of actions also increases their emotional hold. Violations of accepted behavior and the need to transmit customs to children, who often misbehave or question the basis of accepted norms, create a need for explanations. Boas thus argues that adults generate secondary explanations that spring from the context in which cultural forms are lodged in society at that

moment, thereby obscuring their historical basis. Folklore stands alongside language as a privileged example in this context. In Boas's view, it springs from the emergence into consciousness of unconscious processes; by attempting to explain custom, these secondary explanations serve to legitimate cultural forms and processes. Language provides a privileged site in which to study categories and their operation, in that cultural data tend to get mixed up with secondary explanations. As Stocking notes, these notions of unconscious patterns and secondary explanations "implied a conception of man not as a *rational* so much as a *rationalizing being*" (1968:232).

6. *The constant danger of distortion in cross-cultural research.* Particularly in his famous article "On Alternating Sounds" (1889), Boas argues that fieldworkers are not exempt from the distortions that arise when one set of unconscious patterns is projected onto another. He begins with experimental evidence that smacks of his earlier career in psychophysics, suggesting that "we learn to pronounce the sounds of our language by long usage" (1889:48). Other sound patterns are thus misperceived through the process of fitting them into familiar patterns. After reporting his own experiments on perceptions of the length of lines, Boas presents the now familiar argument that color terms shape the perception of color; an individual whose language lacks a term for "green" will perceive some green samples as yellow and others as blue, "the limit of both divisions being doubtful" (Boas 1889:50). Boas asserts, however, that cross-cultural research produces more authoritative examples than conventional psychology.

In a classic move, Boas suggests that claims to the effect that "alternating sounds," perceived fluctuations in how particular sounds in Inuit and Native American languages are pronounced, provide "a sign of the primitiveness of the speech in which they are said to occur" (1889:52) are evidence of bad science, not faulty languages. He argues that "the nationality even of well-trained observers" shapes how they perceive the sounds of a non-Indo-European language, reducing them to phonological patterns with which they are familiar (1889:51). Moreover, "the first studies of a language may form the strong bias for later researchers" (Boas 1889:52), imbuing the misperception with scientific authority. Boas brilliantly critiques evolutionism, demoting its central claim regarding the greater simplicity and mutability of "primitive" forms, their presumed status as defective copies of European institutions, into a predictable form of laic distortion. In doing so, he appropriated the scientific authority formerly enjoyed by evolutionists for his own emerging anthropological perspective. Phonetic misperception and the misreading of Native American grammatical categories provided a model for thinking about the way that "the bias of the European observer" (Boas 1935:v) could distort the recording and interpretation of cultural material as well.

TABLE 1. Boas's consonant chart.

	Stops.			Spirants.		Nasals.		Trill.	
	Sonant.	Surd.	Fortis.	Sonant.	Surd.	Sonant.	Surd.	Sonant.	Surd.
Bilabial.....	b	p	pʰ	v	f	m	ɱ		
Labio-dental.....				v	f				
Linguo-labial.....	d	t	tʰ	ɸ	ɸ	n	ɳ		
Linguo-dental.....	d	t	tʰ	ɸ	ɸ	n	ɳ		
Dental.....				l	c				
Lingual—									
Apical.....	d	t	tʰ	z	s	n	ɳ	r	ʀ
Cerebral.....									
Dorsal—									
Medial.....	g	k	kʰ	ɣ	χ	ŋ	ɳ̠	ɾ	ʀ
Velar.....	g	q	qʰ	ɣ	x	ŋ	ɳ̠	ɾ	ʀ
Lateral.....	l	L	Lʰ	l	ɭ				
Glottal.....	ʔ								
Nasal.....	N								

Semi-vowels y, w. Breath, 'h. Hiatus'.

7. *Charting the vast spectrum of human possibility.* Boas mapped the vast phonetic spectrum of human possibility on two axes, the location of articulation (where the airstream is obstructed in the mouth and throat) and the manner in which air is impeded. Boas captures the cartography of human possibility for consonants in a single chart (see Table 1), thereby representing it abstractly, visually, and scientifically. This universal, objective phonetic grid has helped transcend nationalistic and scientific biases evident in evolutionary research by locating languages spoken by observers simply as different sets of points on the same grid.

Boas goes on to extend the model of difference he developed for phonetics to words and grammatical patterns. Because cultural phenomena are encoded grammatically, anthropologists could transcend the limits imposed by Euro-American categories by analyzing Native American languages. The closest grammatical equivalent to a universal phonetic grid for Boas lay in what he describes as the universal encoding of time, space, and form and distinctions between the person who is speaking, is being spoken to, or is spoken about. With regard to culture, it is "the great variability of behavior in regard to his relations to nature and to his fellow men" that separates "man" from animals (Boas 1965:152). Some of Boas's most interesting examples are evident in his comparisons of stylistic and symbolic dimensions

of plastic arts. In his discussion of expressive art, he suggests that "the contents of primitive narrative, poetry and song are as varied as the cultural interests of the singers" (1927:325).

8. *The need for a "purely analytic" method of description and analysis.* Boas argues that previous students of Native American languages lacked a rigorous research methodology, and the *Handbook* offers a model for systematic fieldwork and analysis guided by scientific principles. Boas taught his students how texts should be written phonetically, and he argues for "a presentation of the essential traits of the grammar as they would naturally develop if an Eskimo, without any knowledge of any other language, should present the essential notions of his own grammar" (in Stocking 1992:81). In this "purely analytic" technique, the unconscious categories of language thus become not only the central research object but the central methodological tool as well, thereby avoiding the distorting effects of Indo-European categories.

The goal in exploring customs and traditions is similarly to identify the categories that shape not only how people behave but how they perceive their actions. With respect to a collection of texts, Boas asserts, "I give a description of the mode of life, customs, and ideas of the Tsimshian, so far as these are expressed in the myths" (1916:393). "They present," he remarks, "in a way an autobiography of the tribe" (1916:393). Hymes points out that these categories serve not

only as tools for discovery and analysis but as "neat qualitative pigeon-holes for ordering ethnological data" (1983:28), both on the page and on the museum shelf (Boas 1974). If texts are based on Native American categories, their organization should iconically capture not only cultural patterns but people's implicit understandings of them, just as linguistic analyses should reflect native speakers' "essential notions" of their grammar. Conducting research in a "purely analytic" fashion thus enables anthropologists to bracket their special awareness of the universal framework and the biasing effects of the categories they learned as children and render their texts and analyses authoritative.

9. *Linguistic and cultural research as textual enterprises.* As Stocking (1992:91) suggests, Boas viewed linguistics largely as the study of written texts. He argued that the major problem that students of Native American groups have had to face in linguistics—as in historical study—is the lack of a corpus of texts. At the same time that he built on the efforts of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in creating a market for Native American texts (see Bauman 1995), Boas fashioned this project into a scientific enterprise and tried to place it at the core of the emerging discipline of anthropology in the United States. Boas feared the subordination of anthropologists who did not learn "native" languages to more established scholars: A classicist who did not know Greek would hardly be taken seriously (1906). On the other hand, learning the languages and teaching Native Americans to write texts in their own languages provide anthropologists with a means of generating a textual corpus to rival that of the classicists and imbuing it with authenticity and authority—in Derrida's (1974) terms, with a metaphysics of presence. Such texts constitute "the foundation of all future researches" (Boas, July 24, 1905, in Stocking 1974b:123).

#### SCIENCE AND MODERNITY IN U.S. ANTHROPOLOGY

The importance of these links between constructions of language and culture is most clearly apparent when we place Boas's culture theory within his larger project. Stocking (1968:149) points to the roots of Boas's liberalism in the lasting impact of the ideals of the Revolution of 1848 on many German intellectuals. Personal, scientific, and political goals merged in the form of a quest for truth that would ideally free humanity from the shackles of dogma. The humanistic impulse to fight for equality of opportunity for all went hand in hand, Stocking notes, with a commitment to progress, the infusion of science and rationality into social life, and a commitment to act as "a member of humanity as a whole" rather than as a national subject (1968:149).

In the United States, Boas encountered many fin-de-siècle social scientists and social thinkers who were concerned with the effects of modernity and industrial capitalism on contemporary society (see Ross 1991). Industrialization was often seen as disrupting close-knit communities and pressing

workers into impoverished urban quarters. Speaking as a public intellectual, Boas argues that "no amount of eugenic selection will overcome those social conditions that have raised a poverty- and disease-stricken proletariat—which will be reborn from even the best stock, so long as the social conditions persist that remorselessly push human beings into helpless and hopeless misery" (1962:118). Pointing to the tremendous gap between rich and poor, Boas argues that a truly democratic society would have to undertake "a program of justice" for poor children that would include huge expenditures in clothing, housing, and food in order to overcome the physiological effects of poverty in thwarting education (1945:184, 193). At the same time that he embraced many goals articulated by socialist movements, Boas worried about "conflicts between the inertia of conservative tradition and the radicalism which has no respect for the past but attempts to reconstruct the future on the basis of rational considerations intended to further its ideals" (1962:136–137). Constructions of language and culture enabled Boas to place anthropology as a key site for building a third way of charting the future, a regime of knowledge that could help circumvent racism, fascism, and international conflict and, simultaneously, place the discipline in a prominent position.

For Boas, culture is the natural enemy of a rational and internationalist perspective. In his view, to use Arjun Appadurai's (1988) notion, all people are incarcerated by culture. Linguistic analogies provided Boas with a basis for developing three dimensions of the distorting effects of culture: First, human beings lack a universal perspective that would enable them to understand critically the forces that shape their behavior and consider possible alternatives to their own cultural norms. The selectivity principle (listed above as #4) has deprived people of awareness of linguistic and cultural elements not incorporated into their own systems, and the principle of automaticity and unconsciousness (#5) conflates unique patterns with what is "universally human," thereby preventing us from grasping our failure to perceive this broader spectrum.

Second, Boas posits that people lack awareness of even that part of the arc of human possibilities that constitutes their language and culture. Linguistic and cultural patterns are acquired in childhood by imitation and then internalized through repetition; afterward, "our behavior in later years is determined by what we learn as infants and children" (Boas 1962:56). The principle of shared categories (#3) suggests that group membership fundamentally involves this sort of unquestioned, unreasoned sharing of culture. Because our relationship to cultural patterns is primarily emotional, attempts at conscious introspection simply produce secondary reasoning. Language plays a dual rhetorical role here. On the one hand, linguistic patterns provide a means of demonstrating that native consultants do not need conscious awareness in order to provide anthropologists with scientific data—indeed, such attempts at conscious analysis only get in the way. On the other hand, because "habitual speech causes conformity of our actions and thought" (Boas 1962:149), exploring these linguistic labels can enable anthropologists to

replay the process in reverse, thereby discovering the nature and historical genesis of cultural categories.

In both his scientific writings and those aimed at more general audiences, Boas points to the political dangers latent in this process of cultural distortion. He argues in *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1965) that unconscious categories join disparate entities so powerfully that we fail to perceive their heterogeneity or the arbitrariness of the connection; this process is "one of the fundamental causes of error and the diversity of opinion" (1911:70). The secondary reasoning invoked in explaining and justifying (erroneously) the nature and application of categories has even more pernicious effects:

These tendencies are also the basis of the success of fanatics and of skillfully directed propaganda. The fanatic who plays on the emotions of the masses and supports his teachings by fictitious reasons, and the unscrupulous demagogue who arouses slumbering hatreds and designedly invents reasons that give to the gullible mass a plausible excuse to yield to the excited passions make use of the desire of man to give a rational excuse for actions that are fundamentally based on unconscious emotion. [Boas 1965:210]

The 1938 edition of *The Mind of Primitive Man* cites Hitler as a prime example.

Third, if people cannot grasp the broad range of human possibilities or their own linguistic and cultural systems, they are certainly not capable of grasping the relationship between the two. Just as speakers of a language cannot locate their phonetic elements on a cross-linguistic grid or specify how they contrast with other systems, bearers of a culture are unable to see how their categories relate to other possibilities. Because people take their own cultural patterns for universals, their attempts to look beyond their own cultural borders become value-laden judgments of good and bad or colonialist projections of one set of categories onto another society. Boas thus, in essence, deems racism and xenophobia to be natural products of people's misrecognition of the nature of their cultural categories and their inability to see how they relate to what is "universally human." In *Race and Democratic Society* (1945) and *Anthropology and Modern Life* (1962), Boas argues that racism, colonialism, imperialism, and classism provide evidence of the political stakes for people's inability to identify the full spectrum of cultural expressions, to discern the nature of the categories they use, and to be able to relate the two. Boas's theoretical move thus opens the door to dehistoricizing imperialism by reducing it to general effects of a universal process of reifying unconscious categories when applied to cross-linguistic and cross-cultural encounters. Balibar (1991) argues that this sort of reasoning provides neoracists with a cultural logic that naturalizes racism. Although he seems to suggest that this trope constitutes a neoracist distortion of anthropological constructions, I would argue that it follows directly from Boas's own culture theory.

Boas's reference to "the gullible mass" suggests that these processes of distortion and their political effects are differentially distributed. "Primitives" are the most gullible because "their" traditional ideas are based on "crude, automatically developed categories" that are derived from experience. Boas

provides two examples: "A sudden explosion will associate itself in his mind, perhaps, with tales which he has heard in regard to the mythical history of the world, and consequently will be accompanied by superstitious fear. The new, unknown epidemic may be explained by the belief in demons that persecute mankind" (1965:200). Note that Boas locates folklore and mythology, whose study he so strongly advocated and effectively institutionalized, as modernity's opposite, a source of conclusions that led entire populations to react irrationally. On the other hand, speaking for the civilized world, Boas suggests that "we have succeeded by reasoning to develop from the crude, automatically developed categories a better system of the whole field of knowledge, a step which the primitives have not made" (1965:198). Although primitives' categories are derived from "the crude experience of generations," modern knowledge springs from "centuries of experimentation" (Boas 1965:199-200) and "the abstract thought of philosophers" (Boas 1965:198). The "advance of civilization" has enabled "us" "to gain a clearer and clearer insight into the hypothetical basis of our reasoning" through increasing elimination of "the traditional element" (1965:201; see also 1965:196). Paul Radin, it should be noted, was later to turn this argument on its head in *Primitive Man as Philosopher*.<sup>4</sup> Boas similarly asserts "primitive man, when conversing with his fellow man, is not in the habit of discussing abstract ideas" (1911).

It would be wrong to suggest, however, that Boas saw "modern" thought as having been thoroughly transformed by science and rationality. In a classicist rhetoric, Boas distinguishes the "lay public," "average man," and the "popular mind" from the educated. "The less educated" have benefited less from the eradication of "traditional elements" (Boas 1965:201). Indeed, the "primitive" versus "civilized" opposition is projected into the midst of "modern society": Boas points to the "excessive" gap in "cultural status" between "the poor rural population of many parts of Europe and America and even more so of the lowest strata of the proletariat" as opposed to "the active minds representative of modern culture" (1965:180). It is precisely the failure of "linguistic classifications" to "rise into consciousness" that links "primitive" and "uneducated" people (Boas 1965:190): "The average man . . . first acts, and then justifies or explains his acts by such secondary considerations as are current among us" (Boas 1965:214). For this reason, Boas suggests that just as "the educated classes" had to develop a nationalist spirit among "the masses" (1945:118), it is "the educated groups of all nations" that must teach others how to overcome cultural provincialism and develop an international perspective (1945:149). Abstract, rationally based thought that transcends concrete local contexts is, of course, the definition of the modern subject; Boas therefore confirms a two-centuries-old relegation of "primitives" and the working class to the premodern world, thereby helping to sustain the legitimacy of modern schemes for creating and naturalizing social inequality that he himself criticized. Nevertheless, even civilized individuals who try to free themselves from "the fetters of tradition" are still "controlled by custom" to a great extent

within "the field of habitual activities" (Boas 1965:201, 224-225).

In a number of passages, however, Boas begins to turn the relationship among traditionality, rationality, and consciousness with class on its head. He argues that in societies with rigid class segregation, elites are guided by class self-interest and unquestioned traditions transmitted from past generations. The "masses," on the other hand, have had little chance to develop an emotional contact with tradition because of irregular attendance or little interest in school (Boas 1962:197). He concludes:

For this reason I should always be more inclined to accept, in regard to fundamental human problems, the judgment of the masses rather than the judgment of the intellectuals, which is much more certain to be warped by unconscious control of traditional ideas. [1962:199]

Expert knowledge similarly came in for criticism; scientists, like the nobility, artists, and clergy, can be bound by traditional modes of thought and their embodiment in catch phrases that "motivate people to action without thought" (Boas 1945:183). Boas is quick to contain the effects of this reversal, however, suggesting that science can render intellectuals less dogmatic. In any case, he says, these remarks pertain only to "fundamental concepts of right and wrong," and he suggests that the masses lack the experience and knowledge to discern "the right way of attaining the realization of their ideals" (1945:139).

If culture necessarily involves incarceration, there is one class of players that is uniquely qualified to break out of jail—anthropologists. For each of the three spheres that render people subject to tradition, Boas proposes a theoretical and methodological basis for developing the reasoned and critical perspective that he deemed necessary for production of free and enlightened citizens. First, identifying the broader framework of human possibilities constitutes a major goal of anthropological endeavor. Boas argues that "a critical examination of what is generally valid for all humanity and what is specifically valid for different cultural types comes to be a matter of great concern to students of society" (1940c:261). Learning which attitudes are "universally human" prepares anthropologists for determining which "specific forms" they take in each society (Boas 1940c:262). Anthropological training pushes students to overcome the universal tendency "to consider the behavior in which we are bred as natural for all mankind" (Boas 1962:206).

A "purely analytic" approach to the study of particular languages and cultures enables anthropologists to circumvent the natural tendency to project one's own categories onto others. Boas argues that "the scientific study of generalized social forms requires, therefore, that the investigator free himself from all valuations based on our culture. An objective, strictly scientific inquiry can be made only if we succeed in entering into each culture on its own basis" (1962:204-205). Culture becomes an object of knowledge for anthropologists and their means of developing epistemological and political freedom at the same time that it constitutes the principal obstacle to objective knowledge, rationality, and

freedom from traditional dogma for all others. To be sure, even the adoption of a "purely analytic" approach does not fully shield anthropologists from the principle of distortion (#6), but it does provide them with unique access to objective knowledge of particular cultures, thereby complementing their unique access to the domain of "the common property of mankind." This ability to penetrate alien cultural worlds apparently knows no limits, for it can include everything from art, to kinship, to religion, to cooking.

Having established unique access to universal and culturally specific domains, anthropologists enjoy privileged access to the sphere of cross-cultural comparison. By virtue of its ability to compare a range of types of formal patterns in relatively abstract principles, linguistics makes unique elements and patterns seem to be naturally comparable to other unique phenomena. Native American lexical and grammatical features could be compared with Greek, Sanskrit, and English, just as the social position of "chiefs of Polynesian Islands, kings of Africa, [and] medicine men of many countries" (1962:192) could be compared with the New York elites with whom Boas interacted.

Having discredited the cross-cultural forays of laypersons, evolutionists, and others as projections of one set of categories and values onto others, Boas could assert that anthropologists are uniquely qualified to compare systems and generalize about linguistic and cultural difference. Objective and analytic study prepares anthropologists to place a particular culture vis-à-vis others and in relationship to the universal framework on the basis of a "mind relatively uninfluenced by the emotions elicited by the automatically regulated behavior in which he participates as a member of our society" (Boas 1962:207). Classicists, Orientalists, philologists, and historians lack a sufficiently broad basis of comparison to achieve this perspective, for what is needed is "the objective study of types of culture that have developed on historically independent lines or that have grown to be fundamentally distinct" (Boas 1962:207). Differences between "Europeans and their descendants" are slight because a common basis in Greek and Roman culture suggests that "the essential cultural background is the same for all of these" (Boas 1962:206). Anthropologists may invite psychologists, sociologists, and other colleagues into the comparative enterprise of determining what is "universally human," but it will be on anthropological terms and using anthropological data.

To borrow a term from Bruno Latour (1988), Boas attempted to fashion anthropology into an obligatory passage point for academic and popular debates regarding the politics of difference and human nature. Admitting that anthropologists could not predict what was going to happen or engage in experimentation (1962:215), Boas did not try to make anthropology into an "exact" or "experimental" science. On a number of occasions, he similarly expressed doubt that cultural phenomena could be reduced to laws or "to a formula which may be applied to every case, explaining its past and predicting its future" (1940a:257). Rather than limiting the scope of anthropological authority, however, this move expanded it. If anthropological expertise were



reduced to a formula, it could be easily decontextualized and used by other specialists or laypersons, persons who had not been transformed by anthropological training and fieldwork.

Boas suggests in a number of popular works that the unique ability of the anthropologist to reach "a standpoint that enables him to view our own civilization critically . . . and to enter into a comparative study of value" (1962:207) is needed to counter racism and war and to secure democracy from majoritarian and state censorship. Rather than providing laws or formulas, the anthropologist's duty is "to watch and judge day by day what we are doing, to understand what is happening in the light of what we have learned and to shape our steps accordingly" (Boas 1962:245). He states in the introduction to *Race and Democratic Society* that "a new duty arises. No longer can we keep the search for truth a privilege of the scientist. We must see to it that the hard task of subordinating the love of traditional lore to clear thinking be shared with us by the larger and larger masses of our people" (1945:1-2). Teaching the masses was clearly a primary mission of the anthropological museum (Boas 1907). Boas argues that "the task of weaning the people from a complacent yielding to prejudice" (1945:2) involves a process of resocialization in which unquestioned emotional attachment to tradition is replaced during childhood by a critical weighing of cultural alternatives. Anthropologists thus need to guide what takes place in homes and schools as well as in domestic and foreign policy decisions, providing knowledge that can move societies beyond racism, xenophobia, and war.

### CULTURAL LIMITS TO ANTHROPOLOGICAL CRITIQUES OF MODERN SOCIETY

Boas should be lauded for sounding a brave internationalist voice that challenged privileges of race, nation, and class. His courage in standing up to censorship in the academy and beyond and in pushing a pacifist agenda during two world wars is remarkable. As many anthropologists seek to become public intellectuals and give anthropology a much stronger voice in policy and media debates, we still have a lot to learn from Boas. As many progressive academics are attempting to foster a critical cosmopolitan stance, Boas's attempt to fashion anthropology as a cosmopolitan discipline deserves broader appreciation.<sup>5</sup> Some anthropologists demand that we end the story here, assailing those who dare to critically assess his oeuvre as attempting to denigrate the reputation of U.S. anthropology's most distinguished ancestor. Richard Bauman and I were recently attacked in the *American Anthropologist* by Herbert Lewis (2001) for publishing a reassessment of Boas's text-making practices (Briggs and Bauman 1999). Lewis claims that our assessment of the Boas-Hunt texts is "harsh" and that we regard the corpus as "truly harmful" (2001:448). (This is hardly the way we read our argument.)

It seems worthwhile to point out that the main thrust of Boas's work is a penetratingly critical—one might even say "harsh"—reassessment of extant anthropological approaches. Given his clear and consistent commitment to academic freedom and the spirit of critical inquiry, attempts to silence

criticism violate the very spirit of Boas's academic and popular contributions. Indeed, Boas believed that intellectual freedom and democracy require each generation to reflect critically on what they have been bequeathed: "It is our task not only to free ourselves of traditional prejudice, but also to search in the heritage of the past for what is useful and right, and to endeavor to free the mind of future generations so that they may not cling to our mistakes, but may be ready to correct them" (1962:200-201). Therefore, suggesting ways that Boas's linguistic and cultural modeling have dulled the effectiveness of his critical tools and proposing avenues for recasting these theoretical principles seem to me to constitute a more productive relationship to anthropological scholarship than attempting to place Boas beyond criticism.

Particularly in his popular work, Boas helps us imagine culture as historical, constructed, and interested. The project of analyzing it rested, however, on a pre- or extracultural domain that is not constructed or deconstructable. He says that "it is, therefore, one of the fundamental aims of scientific anthropology to learn which traits of behavior, if any, are organically determined and are, therefore the common property of mankind, and which are due to the culture in which we live" (1962:206). Language and culture seem ultimately to respond to external organic requirements. His phonetic model suggests that the spectrum of possible sounds is determined by the physiology of the vocal apparatus and that the universal classification of sound is based on its landscape (lips, tongue, teeth, alveolar ridge, etc.) and the range of its movements. The phonetic chart, descendants of which are still widely used, seems to embody what Foucault (1970) identified as a major drive of modern science, the search for an exhaustive ordering of the world, as embodied in the discovery of simple elements and the way they enter into combinations; at the center of this quest, particularly in the 17th and 18th centuries, lay the table. Boas also uses the example of walking in linking these two domains: That humans walk on their feet is organically determined, but how people in a particular community walk is cultural (1962:138). He generalizes: "In all these cases the *faculty* of developing a certain motor habit is organically determined. The particular *form* of movement is automatic, acquired by constant, habitual use" (1962:139). Awareness of this universal grounding for human experiences is open only to members of "educated groups" in modern society, and it is not susceptible to deconstruction. Boas thus imposes a fundamental limit to U.S. anthropology's deconstructive moves as a price for asserting its own authority and scientific status. If Boas had started with religion or mythology rather than linguistics, finding this universal basis—and particularly its physiological underpinnings—might have been more of a challenge.

If U.S. anthropology's special domain is culture, it is remarkable that Boas constructs it in largely negative terms. If anthropology's job is to break "the fetters of tradition," it advances the process of constructing modern subjects laid out by John Locke (1959) and others in the 17th century and reinvigorated by Immanuel Kant (1956) in the late 18th. Anthropology's value for critiquing notions of modernity and

rationality and for disrupting their use in creating and naturalizing schemes of social inequality is thus severely compromised. If subaltern subjects cannot develop awareness of the historical genesis of either "civilized" or "primitive" categories, their critical insights cannot be used in developing anthropological challenges to colonialism. The doors of Columbia and other universities were rather more easily accessible to "the educated groups" than to "the masses"; access to anthropological enlightenment was accordingly shaped by class-based gatekeeping mechanisms. Rather than challenging privilege and social inequality, this conception of culture thus opens the door to new modes of producing power and knowledge.

Herein lies a central contradiction in Boas's epistemology. Languages and cultures are historically shaped and constantly changing. Nevertheless, rather than emerging as heterogeneous dimensions of social practices that themselves become objects of scrutiny and contention, languages are constructed arrangements of sounds, words, and grammatical forms that are neatly stuck in each child's head in a place that is inaccessible to the conscious mind. Silverstein suggests that the point-for-point correspondences created between phonological and cultural data and analysis constitute "at best a misleading calque in the first place" (2000b:14). As Hymes (1983:25) suggests, this model of language leaves little room for interactive and social dimensions. Early in life, each individual assimilates one—and only one—language, and, Boas told us, it is virtually impossible to fully assimilate a second one later in life.

The view of languages and cultures as entities that come "one to a customer" fails to come to terms with the possibility of living in a linguistically and culturally complex society that provides individuals and communities with multiple allegiances. It is remarkable that Boas's ethnographic success could depend for more than three decades on the multilingual and multicultural abilities of George Hunt, who was raised with overlapping English Canadian, Tlingit, and Kwakwaka'wakw memberships, without creating a theoretical space for such diversity. It is similarly remarkable that a German immigrant of Jewish ancestry did not recognize travel as fostering critical comparisons of culture and a blurring of borders (see Clifford 1997). Boas keenly recognized that national languages and their use in legitimizing nationalist projects are recent inventions (1962:91–92), but he could not see that his own notion of languages and their speakers is similarly constructed and that it erases other perspectives. Boas writes that the existence of multiple perspectives helps children to think critically and reflexively about their own culture, but he saw the assimilation of immigrants and the disappearance of Native Americans as the natural course of U.S. society. Differences of power are erased as all forms of chauvinism and intolerance are traced to a single primitive source. In the end, it is *anthropological* border crossing that must guide people toward a more enlightened, less bigoted, and more tolerant and international world.

Zygmunt Bauman (1987) argues that modernity has created pervasive asymmetries of knowledge and power: Intel-

lectuals have assumed the task of "legislators" who exercise surveillance and control over the projected transformation of premodern to modern subjects through the production and dissemination of new forms of knowledge. In the 19th century, these legislators were increasingly professionalized and specialized, claiming exclusive rights to determine what counts as knowledge in a particular domain. Boasian anthropology could truly become a science, possessing a distinct object of investigation, methods, and theoretical postulates; the phonological analogy hedged bets by making sure that its principal source of symbolic capital had the formal, abstract, general, and quasi-mathematical features to make it look like science.

Herein lies, I think, the source of the the crucial lingering problems with anthropological constructions of culture. Sahlins (1999) and other critics of culture's critics are right in arguing that Boas and his students do not simply portray culture as bounded, stable, self-contained, and homogeneous. (I will attest some crucial linguistic evidence along these lines shortly.) But Boas does suggest that the primordial foundation of social life is the socialization of each individual vis-à-vis one language and one culture. The idea that individuals cannot understand or deal sympathetically with people socialized in other cultures does construct culture as rather cohesive and bounded. Thus, although Boas describes specific cultures as heterogeneous, shifting, and porous, his characterizations of cross-cultural encounters tend to present a rather less complex view of culture. But the basic problem here is not the nature of culture but, rather, who possesses knowledge of culture and who is authorized to represent it. Culture, for Boas, operates unconsciously; when its bearers attempt to grasp or represent it, they produce distortions. Some of these, like folklore, may be of academic interest as objects of study (but not tools for analyzing culture). But, Boas told us, most are not, and anthropologists must learn to set native representations aside and come up with their own analyses. Sahlins remains true to Boas in asserting that structure holds the key to culture. And "structure," he tells us, "is the organization of conscious experience that is not itself consciously experienced" (1999:413). Models of culture that make anthropological authority over culture contingent on denying it to others are not just politically problematic—they fail to take into account the degree to which Boasian notions of culture have become social facts that shape individual and collective identities and practices of the nation-state.

I would like to propose my own analogy in order to clarify the place of linguistics in this project. One of the most provocative works in science studies scholarship is Shapin and Schaffer's (1985) analysis of the role of Robert Boyle's air pump in shaping science and society during the 17th century. Rather than tying scientific authority to grand deductive systems, Boyle located its nexus in the artificial context of actions performed in a transparent glass container located at the top of an apparatus capable of producing a vacuum. The production of scientific facts was tied to what took place in the container, the concurrence of credible witnesses to

these events, and their abstraction and decontextualization as general principles that could explain how nature works everywhere and anytime. The air pump thus placed those who controlled it in the position of an obligatory passage point for the production of scientific knowledge, and it enabled them to make huge leaps of scale between the particular contexts that they dominated and the world at large.

In thinking about the place of linguistic models in Boas's model of culture, this analogy is as interesting for where it fails as for where it succeeds. The fieldwork encounter became for anthropology what the air pump was for 17th-century mechanical philosophy—a means of displacing grand deductive schemes (particularly those of the evolutionists) in favor of a mode of producing facts through observation. Fieldwork became a complex set of practices that had to be mastered through professional training; like owning an air pump, controlling access to this pedagogical process enabled Boas and those he trained to regulate the obligatory passage points that provided access to cultural knowledge. The analogy begins to break down, however, in that the air pump was designed to produce *public* knowledge, to open scientific work to scrutiny by groups of observers. Fieldwork placed the locus of observation far away from the center. Because “natives” were not credible witnesses, being unable to gain conscious and objective perspectives on what they knew, the lone fieldworker was responsible for making scientific observations.

Convincing skeptical colleagues that these unusual encounters between strangers produce substantive, reliable information still seems to be a never-ending task. Linguistics lent an aura of science and credibility to these interactions. The phonetic table helped ensure that fieldworkers would record accurately exactly what was said. Fieldwork produced observations of facts, not speculations about historical or psychological origins. Their publication, which constituted a major component of the Boasian program, transformed them into stable, publicly accessible observations that could be subjected to scrutiny, analysis, and comparison, like the collective observations on what took place in the glass container. Herein lies, I think, the solution to a question that seems to have puzzled many readers of Boas: Why did he spend so much time collecting texts, and why did he see them as so central to anthropological research? Texts could turn a unique, private encounter into something public and permanent, and they could transform what had been the purview of missionaries, colonial civil servants, and other amateurs into a science.

Linguistics modeled the way that anthropologists could overcome the immense problems of scale presented by fieldwork. Sounds extracted from particular utterances and interactions could be compared with those found in any language in the world, potentially filling in spaces in the grid along the way. The same process could be applied to lexical and grammatical categories and, as Boas repeatedly suggests, to cultural information. Linguistics—as a fieldwork technology—provided Boas with a means of overcoming the issues of objectivity and public accessibility that confronted his efforts to

place fieldwork at the heart of anthropology. It transformed the perception of anthropology as “a collection of curious facts, telling us about the peculiar appearance of exotic people and describing their strange customs and beliefs” into a “science of man” that “illuminates the social processes of our own times” (Boas 1962:11).

## MAGIC BULLETS AND THE ERASURE OF NONCANONICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Boas was hardly the last practitioner to use the linguistic air pump in attempting to construct and legitimate a new cultural theory. Beginning in the 1950s, Kenneth Pike drew on the distinction between phonetics and phonemics in proposing “a unified theory of the structure of human behavior,” to quote from the title of his book, based on “etic” and “emic” approaches to language and culture (1967). Ward Goodenough (1956) and Floyd Lounsbury (1956) drew on the etic/emic distinction in proposing a theory of culture and a methodology for describing it that “takes one’s audience into the culture of another people and allows it to experience that culture and to learn something of it from the insider’s (the sophisticate’s) point of view” (Goodenough 1970:110).<sup>6</sup> Lévi-Strauss’s (1966) appropriation of the Jakobson–Halle (1956) model of phonology and of Saussure’s (1959) scientific re-writing of Locke’s (1959) linguistic theory similarly placed anthropology in the academic limelight. In each case, a phonological model is used in infusing analyses in cultural anthropology with greater formal elegance and scientific rigor.

Being assigned to this task has, however, bequeathed linguistics a rather uncertain status in the discipline. Anthropologists often still look to their linguistic colleagues for magic bullets when they seek to establish, extend, or restore the discipline’s claim to a central place in modernity.<sup>7</sup> When linguists can perform this task, a “linguistic turn”—and enhanced intellectual authority and institutional resources—is the reward. But when magic bullets do not seem to be needed—or linguistic anthropologists are judged to be unable to produce them—they are banished to the fringe of the discipline.

This mode of inserting linguistics in U.S. anthropology has created three fundamental problems. One is that modernity is constantly in flux with respect to how it is defined and the degree to which it generates authority. So booms tend to be transient, and changes in definitions of *modernity* render these shifting targets hard to hit with new magical bullets. Second, many anthropologists are less interested in serving as legislators for the reform projects of modernity than in scrutinizing how anthropology has helped construct modernity. If linguistic anthropology’s status is limited to producing magic bullets capable of scientizing the discipline and placing it at the center of modernist projects, its stock projections are bleak. A third problem lies in the way this process seriously thwarts the integration of linguistically informed thinking within the discipline. Fortunately, linguistic anthropologists do not always find it necessary these days to generate decontextualized, abstract, ahistorical, and apolitical

models of bounded, discrete bundles of linguistic patterns in order to succeed in the anthropological marketplace, even if there are still a lot of practitioners who look to their linguistic colleagues for formal models. When they produce nuanced, complex, historically, and politically grounded understandings that are based on detailed examinations of discourse, linguistic anthropologists tend to get labeled as too empiricist, atheoretical, and particularistic—or their work is simply overlooked.

Other dimensions of the work of Boas, Whorf, and particularly Sapir are most illuminating in this regard. I list above some of the most commonly cited features of Boas's approach to language. But he also created other sorts of analogies between language and culture, ones that line up much more squarely with contemporary theory. Boas writes, "It should be borne in mind that the vague term 'culture' as used here is not a unit which signifies that all aspects of culture must have had the same historical fates" (1965: 145–146). He suggests that technical inventions, social organization, art, and religion have separate historical trajectories and that there is no reason to believe that they "develop in precisely the same way or are organically and indissolubly connected" (1965:146). Boas extends the analogy from culture to language, suggesting that "not even language can be treated as a unit, for its phonetic, grammatical and lexicographic materials are not indissolubly connected, for by assimilation different languages may become alike in some features" (1965:146). If this analogy had become the cornerstone of anthropological theorizing, M. M. Bakhtin's (1981) view of language as a heteroglossic, heterogeneous, fragmented, and fundamentally historical object or Arjun Appadurai's (1996) image of the semiautonomous circulation of cultural forms through "ethnoscapes," "technoscapes," "financescapes," "mediascapes," and "ideoscapes" might not have seemed so novel. Boas critiqued the use of language in nationalist projects more than half a century before Benedict Anderson (1991) pointed to the "imagined" character of the language–nation connection.

In the case of Benjamin Lee Whorf, Gumperz (Gumperz and Levinson 1996), Hill and Mannheim (1992), Lucy (1992), and Silverstein (1979, 2000a) have suggested that Whorf's more nuanced, original, and prescient ideas were generally missed as anthropologists and others assimilated them to a so-called linguistic relativity hypothesis. The tension between scientific and literary points of view in Whorf's writing (see Schultz 1990) fosters both its productivity and the difficulty readers have had in making sense of it. Whorf argued that concepts are constructed through "fashions of speaking," including normative contexts in which certain issues are discussed, the conventionalization of particular terms and phrases, the discursive practices used in constituting them, and the adoption of ideologies that purport to make particular ranges of phenomena intelligible. Whorf was interested in the way in which clocks and the cultural practices that surround them interacted with tense and aspect categories in shaping how time is perceived. If this line of thinking had been incorporated into anthropological con-

ceptions of culture, then the sorts of questions regarding power, authority, technology, and elite control over discursive practices and the way they structure perception—in short, Bourdieu's (1991) notion of symbolic capital—might have become part of the way that culture was commonly investigated in the 1930s and 1940s.

The range and richness of the linguistic thinking that got left on the cutting-room floor of anthropology are perhaps most notable in the case of Edward Sapir. Sapir's linguistics helped him develop a theory of culture that Handler refers to as "iconoclastic" (1983:210). Handler (1983, 1986) and Darnell (1990) detail the way in which Sapir's thinking about language and culture was informed by his pursuits as a poet and musician and by his interest in psychiatry. Sapir's article "Speech as a Personality Trait" (1949g) explores the construction of voice and its role in shaping personal identities. For him, the similarity between language and culture lies in their heterogeneity and historical fragmentation or layering: "Language, like culture, is a composite of elements of very different age, some of its features reaching back into the mists of an impenetrable past, others being the product of a development or need of yesterday" (1949i:432). Sapir deems "so-called culture" to be "necessarily something of a statistical fiction," suggesting that the "metaphysical locus to which culture is generally assigned" is "subtly misleading" (1949b:515–516). He (1949c) sometimes rhetorically juggles between competing definitions of culture in the same article, juxtaposing the "technical" definition used by the ethnologist with other varieties.

Rather than viewing human communities as relatively homogeneous, unified, and bounded entities, Sapir was interested in units ranging from a crowd that gathered after an automobile accident to transnational links between scientists, and he (1949e:15–16) draws our attention to the crucial role that language plays in constituting groups and regulating membership in them. He defines "society" as "a cultural construct which is employed by individuals who stand in significant relations to each other in order to help them in the interpretation of their behavior" (1949b:515). The real world, including notions of culture and society, had become a powerful fiction that is "to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group" (Sapir 1949h:162); unlike Boas, he does not seem to have privileged anthropologists' constructions.

Sapir contrasts the cultural anthropologist's notion of culture, "essentially a systematic list of all the socially inherited patterns of behavior which may be illustrated in the actual behavior of all or most of the individuals of the group," with the ways that individuals understand their relations with other human beings (1949b:515). Individuals participate in multiple subcultures that are internally heterogeneous. Constructing languages as "cultural deposits" did lead Sapir to follow Boas in suggesting that "the culture of these primitive folk has not advanced to the point where it is of interest to them to form abstract conceptions of a philosophical order" (1949d:154). Nevertheless, it also prompted him to challenge Boas's celebration of the role of philosophy and

science in rationalizing Western society by arguing that philosophers become dupes as they project the linguistic molds in which they operate as "cosmic absolutes" (1949d:157), a critique that Whorf further developed (Carroll 1956).

Languages could be shaped by competing structural principles that wage constant battles, fought out in millions of individual utterances.<sup>8</sup> Sapir's classic article "Male and Female Forms in Yana" describes how a special set of forms is used when men speak only to men, going on to conclude that "possibly" these patterns provide a means of subordinating women (1949e:212). His article "Abnormal Types of Speech in Nootka" describes an elaborate grammatical and phonological machinery used in implicitly depicting (often in derogatory ways) the physical characteristics of the person spoken to or of; Sapir uses this case in suggesting that speech is widely used to implicitly construct "status, sex, age, or other characteristics" (1949a), that is, both difference and differential power.

My point is not that Sapir anticipated all of poststructuralist or postmodern theory. Nor do I wish to point a know-it-all finger at nonlinguistic anthropologists. As Leonard Bloomfield's (1933) blend of Saussurean structuralism, Vienna positivism, and American behaviorism swept through the United States, linguists failed to respond to the radical challenge offered by Sapir's theory of language, just as cultural anthropologists failed to take his cultural iconoclasm to heart. The work of Noam Chomsky (1965) and Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) did not improve the situation. But Roman Jakobson (1960) and Dell Hymes (1962) drew on the suppressed insights of Boas, Sapir, and others in inducing many linguistically oriented practitioners to adopt poetic and sociolinguistic vantage points and to see languages as loci of heterogeneity, agency, and creativity. Some social and cultural anthropologists have paid close attention to these more complex ways of thinking about language, as Pierre Bourdieu's (1991) and Emily Martin's (1994) highly productive re-readings of sociolinguistics and the ethnography of communication suggest. Unfortunately, other anthropologists sometimes still look to their linguistic colleagues for the sorts of formal, reductionist models of language that are *least* compatible with an understanding of culture as constructed, heterogeneous, polyglossic, and hybrid and as both a product and a producer of difference and inequality. Linguistic anthropologists are often still asked to come up with magic bullets,

#### REINSERTING LINGUISTICS INTO A CRITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

This reductionism has exerted institutional effects. Many departments of anthropology in the United States that claim to be four field often end up having one or more of their quadrants missing, and linguistics is most likely to be the lost terrain. A decade ago, chairs folded as linguistic anthropologists were often replaced with other types of practitioners—or were not replaced at all.<sup>9</sup> But recent work is beginning to change perceptions of what linguistic anthropologists do and

the value of their work for other areas of inquiry. My goal is not to survey that research here, but I would like to point out a few of the most compelling contributions of this work toward reconceptualizing language and culture.<sup>10</sup>

Linguistic anthropologists and other practitioners have radically questioned the assumptions that form the conceptual and methodological foundations of the "linguistic analogy." Language has come to be seen less as an object that exists prior to and independently of efforts to study it and more as an ideological field that shapes academic, social, and political projects. In a number of publications, Michael Silverstein (1979, 1981, 1985) points to the language ideologies that shape how people—including linguists—think about and use language. A number of collections have outlined the power of language ideologies in generating and legitimizing schemes of governmentality and structuring everyday life (see Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin et al. 1998; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). Bauman and Briggs (in press) argue that defining language as a distinct epistemological domain in the 17th century provided no less important a basis for launching new projects of knowledge and inequality than fashioning separate domains of nature/science and society/politics (see Latour 1987).

When the frame of reference shifts from the contents of linguistic and cultural models to their ideological production, the idea that anthropologists can discern common linguistic and cultural patterns that are "universally human" fits neatly into what Chakrabarty (2000) refers to as the "deprovincialization" of Europe, the projection of a particular set of elite categories as valid for all peoples and times. The notion of a universal linguistic framework, as defined by phonetic, lexical, and grammatical commonalities, is based on the idea that language can be neatly separated from that which is nonlinguistic, supposedly including culture and society (see Hill and Mannheim 1992). Hymes's (1974) "ethnography of speaking" and Silverstein's (1976) "metapragmatics" point to the ideological work that needs to be done to reduce vast arrays of sign types and ideological representations to the Lockean vision of language as sets of referentially defined signs, that is, stable pairings of forms and referents. Hymes has suggested that "it is only in our own century, through the decisive work of Boas, Sapir, and other anthropologically oriented linguists, that every form of human speech has gained the 'right,' as it were, to contribute on equal footing to the general theory of human language" (1980:55). But, although Boas may have incorporated Native American content, he deprovincialized a familiar Euro-American ideology of language.

Recent work in linguistic anthropology similarly challenges the assumptions that shored up Boas's notion of a "purely analytic" approach to individual languages and cultures. Practitioners have detailed the role that Herderian assumptions regarding the shaping of each individual and collective identity through a single linguistic and cultural system have played in creating nation-states and colonial societies and other projects for producing and managing social inequality.<sup>11</sup> Beyond disproving the notion that multilingualism is

unusual or pathological, they have explored the contemporary uses of Herderian ideologies in public policies and everyday practices that subordinate or exclude people with multiple linguistic and cultural identifications.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the ideologies and power relations that underlie the notion that other people's linguistic and cultural worlds can be penetrated, ordered, and rendered transparent for scholarly audiences have been scrutinized. Briggs (1986, 2002b) and Cicourel (1982) point to the power that interviews afford researchers for constructing discourse in ways that maximize their insertability into academic publications.

Transforming Derrida's (1974) insights into ethnographic studies of the multiplicity of actually observed literacies and their diverse social functions, linguistic anthropologists have detailed the political power that follows from the construction of such practices as dictation, transcription, and the entextualization of ethnographic knowledge as transparent and neutral (see Collins 1995; Samarin 1984). As Schieffelin suggests, the social effects of literacy practices "take on power by virtue of those who control the resources and set the participant structure" (2000:321); the content of texts is thus inseparable from the contexts of their production. Hill (1999) points out that anthropologists' textual ideologies and practices have often conflicted with those of the communities in which they worked. As Boas's example suggests, our entextualization procedures render our control of the process and its resistance by our collaborators largely invisible (see Berman 1996; Briggs and Bauman 1999; Maud 2000). And Bakhtin's (1981) work has inspired great interest in the discursive complexity and the social and political power that accrue to techniques for decontextualizing and recontextualizing texts (see Bauman and Briggs 1990; Shuman 1986; Silverstein and Urban 1996). These contributions enable us to see the complex ideological work that Boas performed in re-presenting Hunt's and other texts in published collections and in making them seem comparable to other textual corpora—that is, in enabling anthropologists to make cultures and make them seem both analogous to—and utterly distinct from—other cultures.

## CONCLUSION

My point is not that Boas got language wrong and that we have now got it right. I am, rather, interested in the question with which I begin this article—the problems associated with concepts of culture and how they are used in the academy, state institutions, and everyday life. Some of the most problematic dimensions of constructions of culture—as bounded, unitary, placed in the head, unconscious, deterministic, and the like—were shaped and legitimized, in part, through particular constructions of language. The ideological work that these notions perform helps sustain nation-states, colonial regimes, and relations of inequality. Boas, of course, was a strident critic of nationalism and imperialism, and his socialistic leanings and sense of social justice led him to criticize some forms of social inequality. The political conservatism and Eurocentrism of the language ideologies that helped

shape his conceptions of both what is "universally human" and what is culturally specific have limited the ability of his culture theory to do the critical antiracist and postnationalist work he cut out for it.

Franz Boas was certainly not alone in using language in constructing culture, all the while asserting the autonomy of language and culture. Scientific cartographies of genetic and familial relationships between languages shaped constructions of "tribes" and "races" in colonial situations, thereby creating social and territorial bases for domination and control.<sup>13</sup> As Irvine (1995) points out, these mappings of linguistic patterns naturalized European notions of gender, sexuality, and family as well as racial ideologies of social and linguistic pathology. Representations of linguistic difference have shaped racializations of African Americans from 19th-century minstrelsy to the "moral panic" that erupted when the Oakland School Board voted to recognize the importance of Ebonics among segments of its student population (see Hill 1998; Morgan 1994; Perry and Delpit 1998). Naturalized ideas about Spanish and its speakers in the United States—along with the old notion that language is an autonomous domain that has to do with communication rather than politics—provide ideological bases for everyday acts of racism and anti-Latino policies (Hill 1998; Urciuoli 1996; Woolard 1989).<sup>14</sup> In short, constructions of linguistic difference are just as useful for neoracist projects (Balibar 1991) as projections of cultural difference, and the two are deeply imbricated.

When other anthropologists reject research on language as purely formal, technical, positivistic, and unrelated to social and cultural issues, they perform their identification with these timeworn modernist assumptions. At the same time that it protects scholars from having to reassess their own assumptions about language, marginalizing linguistic anthropology hobbles efforts to extricate cultural theory from some of its most problematic foundations. If constructions of language are profoundly embedded in constructions of culture, then critical linguistic anthropology is at least as much about culture as anthropological research that eschews any recourse to linguistic inquiry. As professional anthropology in the United States enters its second century, it seems high time to stop asking its linguistically oriented practitioners for magic bullets and to recognize the full range of their critical contributions to devising new takes on the politics of culture.

**CHARLES L. BRIGGS** Department of Ethnic Studies, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093

## NOTES

*Acknowledgments.* I would like to thank Don Brenneis, Regna Darnell, Jane Hill, Michael Silverstein, Greg Urban, and two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments. This project is informed by a long-standing collaboration with Richard Bauman, who also offered a number of suggestions.

1. I would like to make it clear from the outset that I am arguing specifically about anthropology in the United States. The concept

of culture has not been central to the development of, for example, British or French anthropology. Interestingly, a major difference might seem to lie in the central role of linguistic work in shaping foundational concepts of U.S.

2. See Darnell 1990, 1998, 2001; Hymes 1983; Hymes and Fought 1981; and Stocking 1992.

3. Note that this trope is replayed prominently in Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934). After stating the principle of selectivity in phonology, she argues that "in culture too we must imagine a great arc" of possibilities; a culture would be "unintelligible" if it failed to make quite limited selections from among them (1934:24). See Aberle 1960 for a critique of this and other dimensions of the extension of linguistic models to cultural analysis.

4. I owe this observation to Regna Darnell (personal communication, 2001).

5. For recent assessments of cosmopolitanism, see Cheah and Robbins 1998 and Breckenridge et al. 2000. For a fascinating history of Boas's place among New York cosmopolitans, see Liss 1990. For discussion of Boas's cosmopolitan charge for anthropology, see Briggs 2002a.

6. I am grateful to Richard Bauman for pointing out this connection (personal communication, 2001).

7. I owe this notion to Susan Gal. She reports (personal communication, 1999) that she was asked to give a presentation on linguistic anthropology at a leading private university whose faculty did not include a linguistic anthropologist. In the question period, she was asked if linguistic anthropology could provide a "magic bullet," the implication being that such a magic act would be necessary in order to secure for it a legitimate role in the discipline.

8. See the discussion of "drift" in Sapir's *Language* (1921). Also see Silverstein 1986.

9. I (Briggs 2000) surveyed universities in Canada and the United States on behalf of the Society for Linguistic Anthropology (SLA). All departments listed in the *AAA Guide to Departments of Anthropology* were sent questionnaires in late 1998. One hundred fifty completed forms were received. I found that the mean size of anthropology departments was 9.3 but that the mean number of linguistic anthropologists they employed was 0.66. Slightly more linguistic anthropologists (0.7) worked in other departments or programs. Although 55 percent of departments required at least one course in linguistic anthropology (as opposed to 97 percent for sociocultural anthropology, 80.5 percent for archaeology, and 73 percent for physical anthropology), only 7 percent of courses focused on linguistic anthropology. The project was assisted by then SLA President Alessandro Duranti and the other members of the Committee of the State of the Profession in Linguistic Anthropology, Donald Brenneis, Susan Gal, Victor Golla, Norma Mendoza-Denton, and Richard Senghas.

10. I can only point in the direction of the wealth of sources that deserve mention, apologizing in advance for the need to omit many relevant publications.

11. See Blommaert 1999; Errington 2001; Fabian 1986; Herzfeld 1982, 1987; Irvine and Gal 2000; Mannheim 1991; and Urla 1993.

12. For examples, see Adams and Brink 1990, Hill 1998, Mendoza-Denton 1999, Morgan 1994, Urciuoli 1996, Woolard 1989, and Zentella 1997.

13. For a recent survey of this literature, see Errington 2001.

14. In Europe, "critical discourse analysis" focuses a range of linguistic approaches on the study of racism. See Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000, Fairclough 1992, van Dijk 1993, and Wodak and Reisigl 1999.

## REFERENCES CITED

Aberle, David F.

1960 The Influence on Linguistics on Early Culture and Personality Theory. In *Essays in the Science of Culture in Honor of Leslie A. White*, Gertrude E. Dole and Robert L. Carmelo, eds. Pp. 1-29. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell.

Abu-Lughod, Lila

1991 Writing against Culture. In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Richard G. Fox, ed. Pp. 137-162. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Adams, Karen L., and Daniel T. Brink, eds.

1990 Perspectives on Official English: The Campaign for English as the Official Language of the USA. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Anderson, Benedict

1991[1983] *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition. London: Verso.

Appadurai, Arjun

1988 Putting Hierarchy in Its Place. *Cultural Anthropology* 3(1):36-49.

1996 *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bakhtin, M. M.

1981 *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Michael Holquist, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Balibar, Etienne

1991 Is There a "Neo-Racism"? In *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds. Pp. 17-28. London: Verso.

Bauman, Richard

1995 Representing Native American Oral Narrative: The Textual Practices of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. *Pragmatics* 5(2):167-183.

Bauman, Richard, and Charles L. Briggs

1990 Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19:59-88. In press *Language, Modernity, and the Politics of Inequality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt

1987 *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Postmodernity and Intellectuals*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Benedict, Ruth

1934 *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Berman, Judith

1996 "The Culture as It Appears to the Indian Himself": Boas, George Hunt, and the Methods of Ethnography. In *Volkgeist as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition*. George W. Stocking Jr., ed. Pp. 215-256. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Blommaert, Jan

1999 State Ideology and Language in Tanzania. Kohn, Germany: Rudiger Koppe.

Blommaert, Jan, and Chris Bulcaen

2000 Critical Discourse Analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29:447-466.

Bloomfield, Leonard

1933 *Language*. New York: H. Holt.

Boas, Franz

1889 On Alternating Sounds. *American Anthropologist* 2:47-53.

1906 Some Philological Aspects of Anthropological Research. *Science* (n.s.) 23(591):641-645.

1907 Some Principles of Museum Administration. *Science* 25:921-933.

1911 Introduction. In *Handbook of American Indian Languages*, pt. 1. Franz Boas, ed. Pp. 5-83. Bureau of American Ethnology. Smithsonian Institution Bulletin, 40. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

1916 *Tsimshian Mythology*. Thirty-First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

1920 *The Methods of Ethnology*. *American Anthropologist* 22(4):311-321.

1927 *Primitive Art*. Oslo: H. Aschehoug.

1935 *Kwakiutl Culture as Reflected in Mythology*. New York: American Folk-Lore Society.

1940a[1932] The Aims of Anthropological Research. In *Race, Language and Culture*. Pp. 243-259. New York: Free Press.

1940b[1908] Decorative Designs of Alaskan Needlecases. A Study in the History of Conventional Designs, Based on Materials in the U.S. National Museum. In *Race, Language and Culture*. Pp. 564-592. New York: Free Press.

- 1940c[1930] Some Problems of Methodology in the Social Sciences. In *Race, Language and Culture*. Pp. 260–269. New York: Free Press.
- 1945 *Race and Democratic Society*. New York: J. J. Augustin.
- 1962[1928] *Anthropology and Modern Life*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- 1965[1911] *The Mind of Primitive Man*. New York: Free Press.
- 1974[1905] The Educational Functions of Anthropological Museums. In *The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883–1911: A Franz Boas Reader*. George W. Stocking Jr., ed. Pp. 297–300. New York: Basic Books.
- Bonnell, Victoria E., and Lynn Hunt, eds.  
1999 *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre  
1991 *Language and Symbolic Power*. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, trans. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Breckenridge, Carol A., Sheldon Pollock, Homi Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, eds.  
2000 Cosmopolitanism. Theme issue, *Public Culture* 12(3).
- Briggs, Charles L.  
1986 *Learning How to Ask: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
2000 Results of Survey of Departments of Anthropology. *Anthropology News*.  
2002a Franz Boas's Cosmopolitan Charter for Anthropology. Unpublished MS.  
2002b Interviewing, Power/Knowledge, and Social Inequality. In *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method*. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, eds. Pp. 911–922. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Briggs, Charles L., and Richard Bauman  
1999 "The Foundation of All Future Researches": Franz Boas, George Hunt, and the Textual Construction of Modernity. *American Quarterly* 51(3):479–528.
- Brightman, Robert  
1995 Forget Culture: Replacement, Transcendence, Relexification. *Cultural Anthropology* 10(4):509–546.
- Bunzl, Matti  
1996 Franz Boas and the Humboldtian Tradition: From *Volksgeist* and *Nationalcharakter* to an Anthropological Concept of Culture. In *Volksgeist and Method and Ethic*. History of Anthropology 8. George W. Stocking, Jr., ed. Pp. 17–78. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Carroll, John B., ed.  
1956 *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh  
2000 Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Cheah, Pheng, and Bruce Robbins, eds.  
1998 *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Chomsky, Noam  
1965 *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Cicourel, Aaron V.  
1982 Interviews, Surveys, and the Problem of Ecological Validity. *American Sociologist* 17:11–20.
- Clifford, James  
1988 *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.  
1997 *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Clifford, James, and George E. Marcus, eds.  
1986 *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Collins, James  
1995 Literacy and Literacies. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:75–93.
- Daniell, Regna  
1990 *Edward Sapir: Linguist, Anthropologist, Humanist*. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1998 *And Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- 2001 *Invisible Genealogies: A History of Americanist Anthropology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Derrida, Jacques  
1974[1967] *Of Grammatology*. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, trans. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Errington, Joseph  
2001 Colonial Linguistics. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30:19–39.
- Fabian, Johannes  
1983 *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.  
1986 *Language and Colonial Power: The Appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo, 1880–1938*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fairclough, Norman  
1992 *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Foucault, Michel  
1970[1966] *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage.
- Geertz, Clifford  
1973 *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic.  
Goodenough, Ward H.  
1956 Componential Analysis and the Study of Meaning. *Language* 32:195–216.  
1970 *Description and Comparison in Cultural Anthropology*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Gumperz, John, and Stephen Levinson, eds.  
1996 *Rethinking Linguistic Relativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Handler, Richard  
1983 *The Dainty and the Hungry Man: Literature and Anthropology in the Work of Edward Sapir*. In *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*. History of Anthropology, vol. 1. George W. Stocking Jr., ed. Pp. 208–231. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.  
1986 *The Aesthetics of Sapir's Language*. In *New Perspectives in Language, Culture, and Personality: Proceedings of the Edward Sapir Centenary Conference (Ottawa, 1–3 October 1984)*. William Cowan, Michael K. Foster, and Konrad Koerner, eds. Pp. 433–451. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Herbert, Christopher  
1991 *Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Herzfeld, Michael  
1982 *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*. Austin: University of Texas Press.  
1987 *Anthropology through the Looking-Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, Jane  
1998 *Language, Race, and White Public Space*. *American Anthropologist* 100(3):680–689.  
1999 *The Meaning of Writing and Text in a Changing Americanist Tradition*. In *Theorizing the Americanist Tradition*. Lisa Philips Valentine and Regna Darnell, eds. Pp. 181–194. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Hill, Jane, and Bruce Mannheim  
1992 *Language and World View*. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21:381–406.
- Hymes, Dell H.  
1962 *The Ethnography of Speaking*. In *Anthropology and Human Behavior*. Thomas Gladwin and William C. Sturtevant, eds. Pp. 13–53. Washington, DC: Anthropological Society of Washington.  
1974 *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Perspective*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.  
1980 *Language in Education: Ethnographic Essays*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.  
1983 *Essays in the History of Linguistic Anthropology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hymes, Dell H., and John Fought  
1981[1975] *American Structuralism*. The Hague: Mouton.



- Irvine, Judith T.  
1995 The Family Romance of Colonial Linguistics: Gender and Family in Nineteenth-Century Representations of African Languages. *Pragmatics* 5(2):139-153.
- Irvine, Judith T., and Susan Gal  
2000 Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation. In *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*. Paul V. Kroskrity, ed. Pp. 35-83. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Jakobson, Roman  
1944 Franz Boas' Approach to Language. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 10:188-197.  
1960 Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics. In *Style in Language*. Thomas A. Sebeok, ed. Pp. 350-377. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Jakobson, Roman, and Morris Halle  
1956 *Fundamentals of Language*. 's-Gravenhage: Mouton.
- Kahn, Joel  
1989 Culture: Demise or Resurrection? Critique of Anthropology 9(2):5-25.
- Kant, Immanuel  
1956 Critique of Pure Reason. Norman Kemp Smith, trans. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Kroskrity, Paul V., ed.  
2000 Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Latour, Bruno  
1987 Science in Action. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.  
1988 The Pasteurization of France. Alan Sheridan and John Law, trans. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude  
1966 The Savage Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lewis, Herbert S.  
1998 The Misrepresentation of Anthropology and Its Consequences. *American Anthropologist* 100(3):716-731.  
2001 The Passion of Franz Boas. *American Anthropologist* 103(2):447-467.
- Liss, Julia Elizabeth  
1990 The Cosmopolitan Imagination: Franz Boas and the Development of American Anthropology. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- Locke, John  
1959[1690] An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. 2 vols. New York: Dover.
- Lounsbury, Floyd G.  
1956 A Semantic Analysis of the Pawnee Kinship Usage. *Language* 32:158-194.
- Lowe, Lisa, and David Lloyd  
1997 Introduction. In *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*. Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds. Pp. 23-26. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Lucy, John  
1992 Language Diversity and Thought: A Reformulation of the Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mannheim, Bruce  
1991 The Language of the Inka since the European Invasion. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Marcus, George E., and Michael M. J. Fischer  
1986 Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Martin, Emily  
1994 Flexible Bodies: Tracking Immunity in American Culture from the Days of Polio to the Age of AIDS. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Maud, Ralph  
2000 Transmission Difficulties: Franz Boas and Tsimshian Mythology. Burnaby, Canada: Talonbooks.
- Mendoza-Denton, Norma  
1999 Sociolinguistics and Linguistic Anthropology of US Latinos. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28:375-395.
- Morgan, Marcyllena  
1994 Theories and Politics in African American English. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23:325-345.
- Perry, Theresa, and Lisa Delpit, eds.  
1998 The Real Ebonics Debate: Power, Language, and the Education of African-American Children. Boston: Beacon.
- Pike, Kenneth Lee  
1967 Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior. 2nd rev. edition. The Hague: Mouton.
- Radin, Paul  
1927 Primitive Man as Philosopher. New York: D. Appleton.
- Ross, Dorothy  
1991 The Origins of American Social Science. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sahlins, Marshall  
1999 Two or Three Things That I Know about Culture. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5:399-421.
- Samarin, William J.  
1984 The Linguistic World of Field Colonialism. *Language and Society* 13:435-453.
- Sapir, Edward  
1921 Language. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.  
1922 The Takelma Language of Southwestern Oregon. In *Handbook of American Indian Languages*, pt. 2. Franz Boas, ed. Pp. 1-296. Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution Bulletin, 40. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.  
1949a[1915] Abnormal Types of Speech in Nootka. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 179-196. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949b[1932] Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 509-521. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949c[1924] Culture, Genuine and Spurious. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 308-331. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949d[1924] The Grammarian and His Language. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 150-159. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949e[1933] Language. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 7-32. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949f[1929] Male and Female Forms in Yana. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 206-212. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949g[1927] Speech as a Personality Trait. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 533-543. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949h[1929] The Status of Linguistics as a Science. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 160-166. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
1949i[1916] Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture: A Study in Method. In *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Pp. 389-462. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de  
1959[1916] A Course in General Linguistics. Wade Baskin, trans. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- Schieffelin, Bambi B.  
2000 Introducing Kaluli Literacy: A Chronology of Influences. In *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*. Paul V. Kroskrity, ed. Pp. 293-327. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Schieffelin, Bambi B., Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity, eds.  
1998 Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schultz, Emily  
1990 Dialogue at the Margins: Whorf, Bakhtin, and Linguistic Relativity. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Segal, Daniel, and Richard Handler  
1995 U.S. Multiculturalism and the Concept of Culture. *Identities* 1(4):391-407.

- Shapin, Steven, and Simon Schaffer  
1985 *Leviathan and the Air-Pump*: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Shuman, Amy  
1986 *Storytelling Rights: The Uses of Oral and Written Texts by Urban Adolescents*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Silverstein, Michael  
1976 Shifters, Linguistic Categories, and Cultural Description. In *Meaning in Anthropology*. Keith Basso and Henry Selby, eds. Pp. 11–55. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- 1979 Language Structure and Linguistic Ideology. In *The Elements: A Parasection on Linguistic Units and Levels*. Paul R. Clyne, William Hanks, and Carol L. Hofbauer, eds. Pp. 193–247. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.
- 1981 The Limits of Awareness. Sociolinguistic Working Paper, 84. Austin: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- 1985 Language and the Culture of Gender: At the Intersection of Structure, Usage and Ideology. In *Semiotic Mediation: Sociocultural and Psychological Perspectives*. Elizabeth Mertz and Richard Parmentier, eds. Pp. 219–259. Orlando: Academic Press.
- 1986 The Diachrony of Sapir's Synchronic Linguistic Description. In *New Perspectives in Language, Culture, and Personality: Proceedings of the Edward Sapir Centenary Conference* (Ottawa, 1–3 October 1984). William Cowan, Michael K. Foster, and Konrad Koerner, eds. Pp. 67–110. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- 2000a Whorfianism and the Linguistic Imagination of Nationality. In *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*. Paul V. Kroskrity, ed. Pp. 85–138. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- 2000b Languages/Cultures are Dead! Long Live the Linguistic-Cultural! Paper presented at the 98th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. San Francisco, November 15–19.
- Silverstein, Michael, and Greg Urban, eds.  
1996 *Natural Histories of Discourse*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stocking, George W., Jr.  
1968 *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology*. New York: Free Press.
- 1974 The Boas Plan for the Study of American Indian Languages. In *Studies in the History of Linguistics: Traditions and Paradigms*. Dell H. Hymes, ed. Pp. 454–484. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 1992 *The Ethnographer's Magic and Other Essays in the History of Anthropology*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Stocking, George W., Jr., ed.  
1974b *The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883–1911: A Franz Boas Reader*. New York: Basic Books.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph  
1991 Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness. In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Richard G. Fox, ed. Pp. 17–44. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Urciuoli, Bonnie  
1996 *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Urla, Jacqueline  
1993 Contesting Modernities: Language Standardization and the Production of an Ancient Modern Basque Culture. *Critique of Anthropology* 13(2):101–118.
- van Dijk, Teun  
1993 *Elite Discourse and Racism*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Wodak, R., and M. Reisigl  
1999 Discourse and Racism: European Perspectives. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28:175–199.
- Woolard, Kathryn A.  
1989 Sentences in the Language Prison. *American Ethnologist* 16:268–278.
- Woolard, Kathryn A., and Bambi B. Schieffelin  
1994 Language Ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23:55–82.
- Yengoyan, Aram  
1986 Theory in Anthropology: On the Demise of the Concept of Culture. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24(2):368–374.
- Zentella, Ana Celia  
1997 *Growing Up Bilingual: Puerto Rican Children in New York*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.