

UC SANTA BARBARA

# *THE Current*

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## **UCSB Conference To Examine Institutions, Social Organization in Business, Families, Government and Culture**

Institutions are ways of organizing, understanding, and, indeed, creating social reality. But we live at a time when institutions and their limits are no longer always accepted without question. Instead, we want to know what are the limits of the market, the state, the religion, the family. There is conflict and controversy about these issues today. And it is an opportune time to rethink the institution, its nature, its construction, its operation, and its deconstruction.

Scholars from the social sciences and the humanities will share their unique perspectives on these issues during

"Cultural Turn IV: Instituting and Institutions," a conference Friday and Saturday, March 7 and 8 at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Friday's session is free and open to the public. Saturday's events and seminars require registration. A conference schedule and registration information are available at the conference web site, [www.soc.ucsb.edu/ct4/](http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/ct4/).

The Cultural Turn conference series is a biennial effort of the Department of Sociology at UCSB aimed at exploring the intersections of the social sciences and humanities. Campus sponsors include the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts David Marshall, Acting Dean of Social Sciences John Woolley, and the Department of Philosophy.

This year's program includes six main speakers and 10 seminars. Friday's open session (3 p.m., Corwin Pavilion) will feature talks by humanists John R. Searle, the Mills Professor of Philosophy at UC Berkeley, and Elisabeth Weber, a professor of German at UCSB. Internationally known for his arguments against the possibility of artificial intelligence in computers, Searle will discuss "Language, Social Ontology, and Political Power." He is the author of many books, including "Speech Acts" (1969) and "Expression and Meaning" (1979), highly influential works which have laid out a unique approach to the study of language and its relation to the mind. Weber, a distinguished scholar of contemporary French philosophy and social theory, psychoanalytic theory, and German Judaism, will discuss "Being Called to Testify: Sciences of Symbolic Identity and the Ethics of Singularity." Her remarks will be based on the work of Derrida, Lacan and authors from the German Jewish tradition and will discuss the constitutive excess of institutions.

Saturday's sessions begin at 9 a.m. in the McCune Conference Room (Room 6020) of the Humanities and Social Sciences Building with speakers Trevor Pinch and JoAnne Yates. Pinch, a professor of science and technology studies and a professor of sociology at Cornell University, will discuss "Technologies as Institutions: What the Social Studies of Technology Can Tell Us." Yates, a professor of communication, information, and organization studies at MIT, will discuss "Organizing the Modern Firm: the Emergence of Internal Information Systems in U.S. Firms, 1850-1920."

Roundtable seminars run from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at various sites. (See schedule at conference web site.)

The final two talks begin at 3:45 p.m. Saturday in the McCune Conference Room with "Markets, Identities, and Institutions" by Harrison White, the Giddings Professor of Sociology at Columbia University. White is one of the founders of mathematical sociology. His talk will be followed by "Sources of Institutional Change," by W. Richard Scott, one of the founders of institutional theory in organizational studies and a professor of sociology at Stanford University.

Related Links

[Conference Web Site](#)

Tags

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.