And in "Comments to the Editor," Omar Lizardo had this to say.

In a fascinating study, Wilson and Nisbett (1978:123–124) report an intriguing finding: when asked to judge the quality of objects which unbeknownst to the person are identical, individuals are disproportionately more likely to choose the object that is located towards the *right* over that which is located towards the *left*. In an unrelated study, Meier and Robinson (2004) show that subjects are significantly quicker in processing the meaning of words with positive moral and affective connotations when these words are presented toward the *top* of a computer screen than when they are presented towards the *bottom* and vice versa. On the surface, it might appear as if these results have nothing to do with the topic of the role of culture in action. That is, until we remember the classical studies in the tradition of Durkheim and Mauss' *Primitive Classification* regarding the pervasive role of left and the right hand in political, religious and moral cosmologies (Hertz, 1973), and the ubiquity of spatial positioning in the vertical axis in the formation of moral and social judgments of worth and power (Schwartz, 1981). That is if we think of the linkage between moral and spatial categories as they influence choice and judgment as a bona fide example of the operation "culture in action," then culture as here defined is certainly playing a role in action. However, none of the participants when asked would have a clue that "culture" was in fact playing a role in their choices (Wilson and Nisbett, 1978).

I believe that these studies provide strong support for Vaisey's claim that studying actors' *accounts* of the reasons for their action will not get us very far in understanding the role of culture in action. These results demonstrate that culture and meaning may be located where you least expect it: orientations in space grounded in the body (Bourdieu, 1971). I am also convinced that it would be a mistake to conclude from the chronic failure to find *explicit, linguistically articulated* culture not matching up with action and judgment that therefore "culture" has *no role* to play in action and judgment (and thus that the vacuum opened up by rejecting culture should be filled by such usually under-theorized entities as "networks," "institutions" or "context" by default). Instead, I believe that we need to rethink what we count as culture (and partially what we count as "action"). In this respect it is important to move beyond the habitual tendency to reduce "culture" to that which can be expressed through language or symbolized linguistically (for promising starts see Sewell [1998] and Biernacki [2000]). As noted by anthropologist Maurice Bloch (1991) most culture is simply non-linguistic: it is stored in *procedural* rather than *declarative* memory and it is certainly not "symbolic" in the way that language is (it does not consist in arbitrary couplings of meaning and physical form).

Finally, I think it is useful to think for a moment about the "default setting" (Eliasoph and Lichterman, 2003) in which this "culture using people" effect appears to be most likely to be observed: rapid-fire decision-making or *judgment* (in the original Kantian sense) under time (or other social) constraints. This is precisely the type of default setting that is *least* studied in the sociology of culture today. Yet when it comes to many of the outcomes that we care about, especially those at the intersection of culture and stratification, the implicit role of culture in framing and driving choices (of friends, romantic partners, of interaction settings, of meaning-bearing goods) are crucial, and I would argue more important than the traditional Weberian concern with the role of explicit culture as a "legitimation tool" (and the associated study of "repertoires" of such tools) for current social position. Thus, one of the primary

problems in the sociology of culture today, is not only that culture may be staring us in the face without our recognizing it, but that by relying on retrospective linguistic reports of action, we may not have much of a footing to begin to theorize the second term of culture-action couplet in the first place.

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Want to enter the debate on these essays or respond to previous exchanges in ''The Forum''? Send your comments to me (500 words maximum) at cerulo@rci.rutgers.edu.

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