

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The current fascination with urban life has encouraged a growing interest in the Chicago School of sociology by students of sociological history. It is generally accepted that the field research practised by the Chicago sociologists during the 1920s – the ‘Golden Age of Chicago sociology’ – used methods borrowed from anthropology. However, Rolf Lindner also argues convincingly that the orientation of urban research advocated by Robert Park, the key figure in the Chicago School and himself a former reporter, is ultimately indebted to the tradition of urban reportage. *The Reportage of Urban Culture* goes beyond a thorough reconstruction of the relationship between journalism and sociology. It shows how the figure of the city reporter at the turn of the century represents a new way of looking at life, and reflects a transformation in American culture, from rejecting variety to embracing it.

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

IDEAS IN CONTEXT

THE REPORTAGE OF URBAN CULTURE

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

IDEAS IN CONTEXT

Edited by QUENTIN SKINNER (*General Editor*)
LORRAINE DASTON, WOLF LEPENIES and
J. B. SCHNEEWIND

The books in this series will discuss the emergence of intellectual traditions and of related new disciplines. The procedures, aims and vocabularies that were generated will be set in the context of the alternatives available within the contemporary frameworks of ideas and institutions. Through detailed studies of the evolution of such traditions, and their modification by different audiences, it is hoped that a new picture will form of the development of ideas in their concrete contexts. By this means, artificial distinctions between the history of philosophy, of the various sciences, of society and politics, and of literature may be seen to dissolve.

The series is published with the support of the Exxon Foundation.

A list of books in the series will be found at the end of the volume.

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE REPORTAGE OF URBAN CULTURE

Robert Park and the Chicago School

ROLF LINDNER

Professor of European Ethnology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

translated by

ADRIAN MORRIS

Fellow of the Institute of Linguists

with Jeremy Gaines and
Martin Chalmers



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School
 Rolf Lindner
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521440523

Originally published in German as *Die Entdeckung der Stadtkultur: Soziologie aus der Erfahrung der Reportage* by Suhrkamp Verlag 1990
 and © Suhrkamp Verlag Frankfurt am Main

First published in English by Cambridge University Press 1996 as
The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School
 This digitally printed first paperback version 2006
 English translation © Cambridge University Press 1996

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Lindner, Rolf, 1945–
 [Entdeckung der Stadtkultur. English]
 The reportage of urban culture: Robert Park and the Chicago school / Rolf Lindner; translated by Adrian Morris.
 p. cm. – (Ideas in context ; 43)
 Includes bibliographical references and index.
 ISBN 0 521 44052 1 (hc)
 1. Park, Robert Ezra, 1864–1944. 2. Chicago school of sociology – History. 3. Sociology, Urban – United States – Study and teaching – History – 20th century. I. Title. II. Series.
 HM22.L6P344413 1996
 301'.072'077311–dc20 95-40693 CIP

ISBN-13 978-0-521-44052-3 hardback
 ISBN-10 0-521-44052-1 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-02653-6 paperback
 ISBN-10 0-521-02653-9 paperback

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To Gudrun and Sarah

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

His favorite professor at the University of Chicago, Robert Park, had told Allan that he was an intelligent young man with closed eyes. Allan was working at getting them open, but it was hard to satisfy Mr. Park. Around the seminar table, whenever Allan or some of the other graduate students ventured an opinion, they risked having Mr. Park look at them owl-eyed and inquire, 'Vas you dere, Cholly?'

Nicholas von Hoffman, *Organized Crimes*

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiii

Introduction	I
--------------	---

PART I

1 'News': the reporter and the new	7
News: the symbiosis of big city and press	7
Types of reporters and styles of reporting	11
The reporter as urban explorer	27
2 The sociologist as city editor: Robert Ezra Park	31
Daily news and <i>Thought News</i>	31
'. . . a good work as lieutenant': Park in Tuskegee	44
The big city as <i>pars pro toto</i> for society	48
A massive research programme: <i>The City</i>	67
The sociologist as city editor	80
Adoption or stimulus? A summary	98
Communication and society: Park's theoretical concept	106
3 Reporters in depth: a comparison of journalistic and sociological studies	115
Wanderlust and journeywork: on the ethnographical method	115
Decline and career: on the biographical method	134

PART II

4 Marginality and experience	154
Marginal man	154
The wish for experience	164

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Contents

- | | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 5 | 'To see life': the cultural undercurrent | 175 |
| | 'To see life' | 175 |
| | Shift in perspective | 190 |

- | | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 6 | Uncle Sam and Young Sammy: sociology between reform and report | 197 |
|---|--|-----|

	<i>Bibliography</i>	205
--	---------------------	-----

	<i>Index of names</i>	228
--	-----------------------	-----

	<i>Index of subjects</i>	231
--	--------------------------	-----

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Illustrations*

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| 1 | The drawings from <i>Puck</i> (March 1877) caricature the new ‘art’ of the interview | <i>page</i> 12 |
| 2 | Robert E. Park, Berlin, 1900; drawing by Clara Cahill Park | 33 |
| 3 | Park’s entry for the <i>National Cyclopedia of American Biography</i> , with his own handwritten corrections | 42 |
| 4 | Park’s original manuscript jottings for <i>The Marginal Man: a study of the Mulatto Mind</i> | 49 |
| 5 | Ernest W. Burgess’ diagrammatic representation of the paradigmatic city | 73 |
| 6 | University of Chicago Press publicity for <i>The Hobo</i> , by Nels Anderson | 91 |

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been written without the continued encouragement and support of Wolf Lepenies.

My thanks go to him. My thanks also to Hermann Bausinger, Hans Peter Dreitzel, Hans Joas and Joachim Moebus for their help and advice. Martin Bulmer, Paul M. Hirsch, Edward Shils and above all Donald N. Levine gave up their time to talk with me; I hope they don't regret it. Elizabeth Clemens, Wendy Espeland and Bruce Carruthers made sure that I was able to feel myself among friends during my time in Chicago. The Special Collections Department in the Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago was an inexhaustible source; the library of the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies in the Free University of Berlin made my work much easier. The generous and non-bureaucratic assistance given by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation in Cologne enabled the book to be completed successfully. Last but not least, I am grateful to Gudrun, who read through the manuscript with a critical eye, and to Sarah, who treated it kindly.

Cambridge University Press

0521440521 - The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School

Rolf Lindner

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Abbreviations

EWB	Ernest W. Burgess Papers
JTC	James T. Carey Interviews
REP	Robert E. Park Papers
REPA	Robert E. Park Addenda
SNF	Samuel N. Fuller Papers
SNH	Samuel N. Harper Papers
UCP	University of Chicago Press Collections

All are in the Joseph Regenstein Library, Special Collections Department, University of Chicago; the first number after the abbreviation refers to the box, the second to the folder.