

Joseph Bensman (1922-1986), a renowned analyst of modern institutions, professions, and culture, was Distinguished Professor of Sociology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and at City College of New York. *From Joseph Bensman: Essays on Modern Society* brings together some of his finest work, often done in collaboration with colleagues such as Arthur J. Vidich, Robert Lilienfeld, Bernard Rosenberg, and Israel Gerver.

In the introduction to this volume, editors Robert Jackall and Duffy Graham identify Bensman's trademark habits of mind: an analytical stance, fundamentally objective and dispassionate; a vigilant awareness of the reach and vitality of bureaucracy; an ability to discern intellectual problems in superficially unremarkable phenomena; attention to empirical detail and suspicion of theoretical abstractions; and appreciation of irony and unintended consequences.

"Bensman pursued his analyses ethnographically by examining specific occupational and professional types in detail, as one sees in his essays 'Bureaucratic and Planning Attitudes' and 'The Advertising Man and His Work.' He was fascinated by the antinomies of organizational ethics, the dilemmas they pose for organizational actors, and their consequences for the formation of character. His method was to explore these antinomies in carefully wrought investigations of concrete cases, as in 'Crime and Punishment in the Factory,' 'Who Writes What in Bureaucratic Universities,' and 'The Aesthetics and Politics of Footnoting,' an underground classic in sociology."

— Guy Oakes

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ON THE COVER: Portrait of Joseph Bensman by Lydia Csato Gasman, reproduced with the permission of Marilyn Bensman, in association with the art gallery Les Yeux du Monde and the Lydia Csato Gasman Archives, both in Charlottesville, Virginia. Photograph by Lindsay Ann Nolin.

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Jackall & Graham



# FROM JOSEPH BENSMAN ESSAYS ON MODERN SOCIETY

Edited and introduced by  
Robert Jackall  
& Duffy Graham

With gratitude  
I'll always remember  
you for  
Lydia Csato Gasman  
1976