

The Social Construction of Organizational Knowledge: A Study of the Uses (and Abuses) of *The Hitchhiker's Field Manual*

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Paul DiMaggio's *The Hitchhiker's Field Manual* has become an acknowledged classic amongst tripped-out trippers since its publication in 1973. But why has so little of DiMaggio's advice been heeded by the groovy freaks, straights, Jesus people and other hipsters he intended to address? Although clearly stating in his introduction that he will equally address "those spark-plugs of modern America, dope, sex and violence" (DiMaggio 1973: 6) the book has become known almost entirely for its dope-related concepts, predictions and advice. An empirical survey of the book's reception in major sociology journals, flophouses and opium dens supports a neoinstitutional explanation for the relative lack of attention to DiMaggio's treatment of sex and violence in comparison to dope.

In 1973, a 22-year-old Paul DiMaggio published *The Hitchhiker's Field Manual: the complete guide to hassle-free thumb-tripping in North America*. Though neglected by sociologists for years, the book has begun to receive significant critical attention recently, most likely due to the rise second-hand and out-of-print internet services such as BiblioFind and Alibris. Thanks to this new technology, DiMaggio's masterpiece is once again available to all.

The book's advice on managing one's store of dope (or "stash") while on the road is legendary. DiMaggio (1973: 36) is careful to stress that he does not endorse any illegal acts, and points out that "Carrying dope ... is asking for trouble." But in the next sentence he notes that "Someone will probably pick you up and turn you on anyway," and throughout, he displays an impressive knowledge of the issue. His discussion of the dangers of swallowing one's stash of LSD when confronted by the police is masterful: "Some people just eat the dope. It is wise to avoid being seen if you attempt this, or you many [*sic*] spend an acid trip in prison, surrounded by blue meanies trying to bum you out." (DiMaggio 1973: 78). Even though the chapter that this excerpt comes from is a mere seven pages long (Chapter 9, pp73-80, "Dope on the Road") this section is what the book has become known for. Why is this so? This is the question we address in this paper.