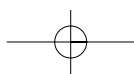
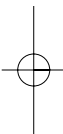
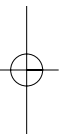


PART I

THE DISCIPLINE OF SOCIOLOGY



1

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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A commonly accepted definition of sociology as a special science is that it is the study of social aggregates and groups in their institutional organization, of institutions and their organization, and of the causes and consequences of changes in institutions and social organization. (Albert J. Reiss, Jr. 1968:1)

Within the contemporary context, sociologists are interested in human social interaction as people take one another into account as each behaves toward the other. Sociologists also take into analytical consideration the systemic units of interaction within social groups, social relations, and social organizations. As stated by Reiss (1968), the purview of sociology extends to

Governments, corporations, and school systems to such territorial organizations as communities or to the schools, factories, and churches . . . that are components of communities. . . are also concerned with social aggregates, or populations, in their institutional organization. (P. 1)

Sociology is, as Touraine (1990) suggests, an interpretation of social experience and is thus a part of the reality that the practitioners of the discipline attempt to observe and explain. To these areas we can add that sociology is a discipline that demystifies its subject matter, and it is, as Dennis H. Wrong (1990:21–22) notes, a debunker of

popular beliefs, holds skeptical and critical views of the institutions that are studied (Smelser 1990), and challenges myth making (Best 2001).

The early history of sociology is a history of ideas developed in the European tradition, whereas the sociological approach of the last 150 years involved the development of concepts, methodology, and theories, especially in the United States (Goudsblom and Heilbron 2001). As American sociologists trained in the traditional theory and methods developed during the first eight decades of the twentieth century, we acknowledge our intellectual debt to the European founders. But beyond an earnest recognition of the classic work of the early founders, including Auguste Comte, Émile Durkheim, Alexis de Tocqueville, Frederic LePlay, Marcell Mauss, Max Weber, Karl Marx, and Harriet Martineau, most of whom were attracted to the European environment that included the liberalism, radicalism, and conservatism of the early to mid-nineteenth century (Nisbet 1966; Friedrichs 1970) and to what C. Wright Mills (1959) refers to as the *sociological imagination* that “enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society” (p. 6), our approach to sociology is deeply embedded with and indebted to those individuals who established the Chicago, Harvard, Iowa, and Berkeley schools of thought. Similarly, as practitioners, our approach to the discipline of sociology

is reflected in these distinctive American scholarly perspectives.

The American tradition of sociology has focused on social policy issues relating to social problems, the recognition of which grew out of the dynamic periods of social transformation wrought by the Industrial Revolution, the Progressive Era, world crises engendered by war, worldwide population shifts, increasing mechanization, and the effort of sociologists to create a specific niche for the discipline within a growing scientific community. This effort occurred first in North America and Western Europe and then, similar to cultural transitions of the past, within a global context. In every instance, the motives embedded within a science of society lie in the attempt to understand and offer proposals for solutions to whatever problems gain significant attention at a particular point in time.

In a most interesting work, Goudsblom and Heilbron (2001) pose that sociology represents a great diversity, or what some analysts may refer to as fragmentation, because the discipline grew as a part of the processes affecting societies and cultures worldwide throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, as we move well into a new era and a new stage of academic development, it remains important that we recognize the sociological heritage as identified and discussed by these analysts. The five stages that sociology has experienced to date are (1) the predisciplinary stage prior to 1830, further identified as “protosociologies”; (2) the formation of the intellectual discipline, 1830–1890; (3) the formation of an academic discipline with diverging national traditions, 1890–1930; (4) the establishment of an international academic discipline, 1930–1970; and (5) a period of crisis, fragmentation, and attempts to develop a new synthesis, 1970–2000 (Goudsblom and Heilbron 2001:14574–80).

Consistent with the fifth stage, for almost four decades we have been witness to major changes in the substantive topics that undergo sociological inquiry both in the United States and, given the influence on the discipline by Canadian, European, and Scandinavian scholars, internationally. Among the areas more fully developed that might be identified as fragmentation are many of the most interesting sociological topics, including deviant behavior, the family, religion, gender, aging, health, the environment, science and technology, among so many seemingly unrelated topics. The unique conceptual paradigms of sociology serve as a template or pattern for seeing the social world in a special way. Every discipline and, indeed, every occupation employs templates or patterns to see and accomplish things in a unique fashion. Disciplines such as sociology rely on intellectual templates based on certain conceptual schemes or paradigms that have evolved through the development of a body of knowledge in those disciplines. Thus, the content of this two-volume reference reflects this rich legacy and current emphases within sociology. We have also asked the contributing authors to

consider the prospects for sociological inquiry during the early decades of the twenty-first century, thus making the above-cited categories of the phases of development of the discipline of sociology most germane.

THE EARLY SOCIOLOGY

In its early era of the mid- to late nineteenth century, sociology was understood to represent anything relating to the study of social problems. Indeed, it was thought that the methods of the social sciences could be applied to social problems and used to develop solutions (Bernard and Bernard 1943). In focusing on such substance, O’Neill (1967:168–69) notes that periodicals of this early period had a sociological section in which news items relating to family matters, poverty, and labor often appeared. These early social scientists did not hold any special talents other than their training in theology. This situation was similar in the United States as well. It is not difficult, then, to imagine that, as Bramson (1961) notes, “For many American sociologists these problems evoked a moral response” (p. 75). Thus, the process of solving the problems of society was attempted by application of the conventional morality and the validation of Christian principles of piety rather than reform or progress.

Sociology was born as a result of a process, a process that directed a method of inquiry away from philosophy and toward positivism (MacIver 1934). Sociology was the result of a process caused by two major forces—namely, the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution. The events, changes, and ideas that emerged from these two revolutions are found in the nineteenth-century thought pertaining to social order (Eisenstadt 1968). Following in the wake of the Age of Reason and the Renaissance, according to Nisbet (1966), this was a period of word formation:

Perhaps the richest period of word formation in history . . . which were either invented during this period or were modified to their present meanings: industry, industrialist, democracy, class, middle class, ideology, intellectual, rationalism, humanitarian, atomistic, masses, commercialism, proletariat, collectivism, equalitarian, liberal, conservative, scientist, crisis . . . [among others]. (P. 23)

These were words that held great moral and partisan interest in the European economy and culture; such passions were identified with politics as well.

Identified with European conservatism, which became infused by and with science, the visionary perspective promoted by Auguste Comte during the 1830s in his six-volume *Positive Philosophy*, later translated from the French and condensed into two volumes by Harriet Martineau, was based on the medieval model of European society.

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This model of family, community, authority, tradition, and the sacred became the core of scientific sociology that was to serve notice that a science of society was essential to provide for more than commonsense analysis and to reestablish social order (MacIver 1934). Although unsuccessful in his quest to secure a professorship, Auguste Comte was a positivist, mathematician, and promoter of the scientific identity of the engineering profession (Noble 1999). Comte argued that positivism and the still-to-be-identified area of “sociology” would serve as a means of supporting his intention to create a unique perspective of human relations and a system to reestablish the social order and organization of society. Reestablishment of this new social order was to proceed in accordance with the positivist stage of evolution with its ineluctable natural laws that could and would be established through engaging the scientific perspective. Along with the arts, the science of sociology, according to Comte, was to emerge as the queen of the sciences, the *scientia scientorum*, and would ultimately supplant biology and cosmology.

If the restoration of order in French society was a preoccupation for many early-nineteenth-century scholars, including Auguste Comte, it was also the case, as Bramson (1961) notes, that

many of the key concepts of sociology illustrate this concern with the maintenance and conservation of order; ideas such as status, hierarchy ritual, integration, social function and social control are themselves a part of the history of the reaction to the ideals of the French Revolution. What conservative critics saw as resulting from these movements was not the progressive liberation of individuals, but increasing insecurity and alienation, the breakdown of traditional associations and group ties. (Pp. 13–14)

For social scientists of the early nineteenth century, many of the problems of the time were much more well defined than is the case in the contemporary experience.

Comte was fervently religious, and he believed those interested in science would constitute a “priesthood of positivism” that would ultimately lead to a new social order. According to Noble (1999),

A theist in spite of himself, Comte declared that the existence of the Great Being “is deeply stamped on all its creations, in moral, in the arts and sciences, in industry,” and he insisted, as had previous like-minded prophets since Erigena, that all such manifestations of divinity were equally vital means of mankind’s regeneration . . . Comte was convinced that people like himself, science-minded engineering savants occupied with the study of the sciences of observation are the only men whose capacity and intellectual culture fulfill the necessary conditions. (P. 85)

The legacy of this enthusiastic perspective is that sociology has been at the heart of the positivists’ contribution to the understanding of the human condition. It was also to serve in part as a basis for the reactions of conflict theorist

Karl Marx, especially as these writings referred to the religious *opiate of the masses* deemed by Comte as critical to the reorganization of society (Noble 1999:87). The discipline continues to present an array of perspectives that have served to stimulate much controversy within both society and the discipline (see Turner 2001).

Although the sociological legacy of Harriet Martineau is substantial, as outlined by Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley (1998), it was Martineau’s effort to translate and condense Auguste Comte’s six-volume magnum opus into a two-volume set of writings published in 1853 that allowed this important work to be available to the English-speaking world. Interestingly, Comte’s English translation came after Martineau’s sociological contributions, the richness of which was finally recognized by feminist researchers during the 1980s and 1990s. Martineau engaged in “participant observation” of the United States during the mid-1830s and subsequently published the two-volume *Society in America* (1836/1837), which is based on this excursion to the North American continent. Because of this experience, Martineau was able to lay the foundation for her treatise on research methodology in *How to Observe Morals and Manners* (1838).

THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE: STATISTICAL STUDIES

Perhaps it is ironic that the distinctive difference between the European theoretical sociology and the empirical sociology practiced in the United States was advanced by events in Europe. Indeed, the origin of empirical sociology is rooted in Europe. Statistical studies began in the 1660s, thereby preceding the birth of all of the social sciences by a couple of centuries. The early statistical gatherers and analysts were involved in “political arithmetic” or the gathering of data considered relevant to public policy matters of the state, and as noted by Reiss (1968), the gathering of such data may have been accelerated to meet the needs of the newly emerging insurance industry and other commercial activities of the time. But it was the early work of the moral statisticians interested in reestablishing social order in the emerging industrial societies that was to lay the quantitative foundation for the discipline, especially the early scientific work of the French sociologist Émile Durkheim (Whitt 2001:229–35).

The second stage in the early history of quantification may have been related to the development of probability theory, the rise of the insurance industry, other commercial activities, and political necessity (Lecuyer and Oberschall 1968; Reiss 1968). English political arithmeticians, including John Graunt and William Petty, were destined to be followed by the efforts of the moral statisticians who engaged in data gathering in Belgium and France. Indeed, as early as 1831, the Belgian Adolphe Quetelet and the Frenchman Andre Michel de Guerry de Champneuf, in building on the early efforts of the practitioners of the “political

arithmetic” that first began in the 1660s, were engaging in the government-sponsored data-gathering activity pertaining to data on moral topics, including suicide, prostitution, and illegitimacy. Such activities would prove quite instrumental in the establishment of the empirical social sciences. Even many of the methodologies developed during this same era of the early nineteenth century, as well as awareness of important ecological methodological issues such as statistical interactions, the ecological fallacy, and spuriousness, were developed by early moral statisticians such as Andre-Michel de Guerry and Adolphe Quetelet. Later, the work of Henry Morselli, Enrico Ferri, and Alfred Maury during this same century were to serve well the needs of aspiring European sociologists and even later members of the Chicago School of Sociology (Whitt 2001:229–31).

THE RISE OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY

American sociology is one of the intellectual creations that has most deeply influenced our century. No other society (*the American*) has been more actively involved in understanding its own organizational change for the sake of knowledge itself. (Touraine 1990:252)

The birth of the social sciences in general and of sociology in particular is traced to the liberal democratic ideas generated by the British social philosophies of the seventeenth century—ideas that later were to be enhanced by the French Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and then transformed in the United States where these ideas served as the foundation for practical democratic society. The rise of American sociology can be traced to the early-nineteenth-century social science movement, a movement that by the mid-1800s became a new discipline that was widely introduced into college and university curricula. The movement also led to the establishment of a national social science association that was to later spawn various distinctive social sciences, including sociology, as well as social reform associations (Bernard and Bernard 1943:1–8).

Although the promotion of the social sciences in the United States began as early as 1865 with the establishment of the American Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences and then, in 1869, creation of the American Social Science Association with its association-sponsored publication the *Journal of Social Science*, prior to the 1880s there had been no organized and systematic scientific research in the United States. This was the case simply because, as Howard W. Odum ([1927] 1965:3–20) noted, there was no university per se in which research as a scientific pursuit could be conducted. It is within the context of the movement to organize such a university that sociology and many other social sciences were embraced as viable academic disciplines, thereby allowing systematic research to be conducted in a rigorous manner. This also was a period of great emphasis on pursuing

answers to new research questions through the evaluation of knowledge and the employment of methodological and statistical tools within an interdisciplinary context. Indeed, L. L. Bernard and Jessie Bernard (1943) posit that the vision of the founders of the American Social Science Association was “to establish a unified science of society which could and would see all human problems in their relationships and make an effort to solve these problems as unified wholes” (p. 601).

Thus, the social sciences in general and sociology in particular owe a great intellectual debt to the American intellectuals who studied at length with the masters of Europe. Included among these are notables such as William Graham Sumner, Lester Frank Ward, Albion Woodbury Small, Franklin Henry Giddings, John William Burgess, Herbert B. Adams, Thorstein Veblen, Frederick Jackson Turner, James Harvey Robinson, George Vincent, Charles Horton Cooley, Edward Alsworth Ross, George Howard, Frank W. Blackmar, Ulysses G. Weatherly, John R. Commons, and Richard T. Ely (see Odum 1951, [1927] 1965); each of whom were well versed in scholarly areas other than sociology, including history, theology, economics, political science, and statistics. With the decline of the social science movement and its national association, the general discipline that emerged from the remains of social science was in fact sociology (Bernard and Bernard 1943:835).

The development of an intellectual and academic American sociology, like sociology in any part of the world, was and continues to be dependent on the social and political conditions of the country. In the United States, a liberal political climate and, in the aftermath of the Civil War, the advent of a system of a mass public education system, American sociology flourished. Thus, in countries in which the structure of the system of higher education was open to free inquiry, research was supported by private foundations and government contributions (Wright 1895), and the university was organized albeit loosely, sociology, subject to the polemics of its status as an academic science, gained entry if not acceptance among university faculty. Where education was available to the elite rather than the masses, sociology was less apt to flourish (Reiss 1968).

Another important factor is that American sociology arose basically without roots other than the growing influence of the social science movement in the United States and the emphasis on the virtues of science that permeated the intellectual and social environs of this same period. As noted by Neil J. Smelser (1990:49–60), American sociology did not experience the yoke of either European feudalism or any peculiar intellectual history. Rather, sociology came into being within American higher education during the 1880s and only after several other disciplines, including psychology and economics, had been accepted within the academy. Attempts among adherents of these other disciplines led to the establishment of the scientific theme within the social sciences. Early sociologists embraced this same scientific theme.

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A second factor that had a profound effect on the early adherents of the sociological perspective is the social reform theme of the 1890s. The legacy of these two themes—namely, scientific respectability and social reform—became the dual platforms on which the unique American sociological perspective was to be based.

Although there was a great, direct influence of European thought, research, and the philosophy of the British Social Science Association on sociology to focus on attempting to solve America's problems (Odum 1951:36–50), the rise of American sociology, at least during the first half of the twentieth century, was concomitant with the most dynamic period of technological, economic, and social reform changes ever recorded. In this context, Howard W. Odum (1951:52) views sociology as a product of the American social and cultural experience and places sociology's heritage to be as "American as American literature, American culture, and the freedoms of the new world democracy" (p. 3). American sociology is thus part European and part American. Indeed, American sociology was envisioned early on as a social science that could and would assist policymakers and concerned citizens in creating the "American Dream."

Consistent with this ideology, Odum (1951:59–60) identified three unique American developments, each of which influenced the direction of American sociology throughout the entire twentieth century. The first of these developments is the symbiotic relationship between the discipline and the American society and culture. The ideology that focused on the American Dream and its realization had a great influence.

The second development, according to Odum, is the emphasis on moral development and the motivation to establish ethics as a component of the educational curricula, American literature, and the social sciences, especially as these relate to ethical conduct, social justice, and public morality. Within sociology, this orientation is found in the application of sociological principles into economic and organizational behavior and the founding of the American Institute of Christian Sociology.

Finally, Odum (1951) notes, the American experience led to a research emphasis on social problems of a moral and economic nature. In an effort to better understand these social problems, sociologists organized the systematic study of issues such as waves of immigration, the working class, public disorder, neglect of children, violence toward women, intergroup conflict, urbanism, alcoholism, suicide, crime, mental illness, delinquency, and poverty (see also Fine 2006). This was the application side of sociology that held important social policy implication. However, there was also an early emphasis on a "general sociology" as opposed to a "special sociology" as was found at the more elite institutions of higher learning. Clearly, this difference foreshadowed the pure versus applied dichotomy that has generated so much discussion within the discipline (see Odum 1951:51–74).

Because of the important influence of the social science movement in the United States, there is some disagreement

pertaining to who the founders and members of the first generation of American sociologists are (see Odum 1951, [1927] 1965). But publication of Lester Ward's book *Dynamic Sociology in 1883* does appear to mark the beginning of American sociology (Bramson 1961:84–85). On the other hand, there does not seem to be any disagreement as to the purpose of the American founders, and that was to establish a scientific theoretical base. Later, at the University of Chicago the goals were to establish a relationship between sociology and the classical problems of philosophy by focusing on process issues relating to elements of social control, such as conflict, competition, and accommodation (Kurtz 1986:95).

American sociology emerged concomitant with the challenges to legal philosophy and the discussion of questions relating to myriad questions that arose as the effects of industrialization were observed Calhoun (1919). Such questions have their focus on marriage, divorce, immigration, poverty, and health and how to employ the emerging scientific model to topical data that had been gathered by the nineteenth-century moral statisticians.

Leon Bramson (1961:47–48) observed that the most interesting aspect of American sociology in the first half of the twentieth century is that when affected by European theories of mass behavior and collective behavior, American sociologists, in their haste to establish a role for sociology in America, either transformed the meaning of the concepts to meet their needs or created new concepts to apply to the more liberal American social and political context. American sociologists, according to Bramson, also applied European theoretical concepts such as social pathology, social disorganization, and social control to the data referring to the American experience without regard for whatever special conditions should have been accounted for or even possible theoretical distortions; this issue is also discussed by Lester R. Kurtz (1986:60–83) in his evaluation of the Chicago School of Sociology.

Albert J. Reiss, Jr. (1968) notes that the first formal instruction of a sociology course in the United States was offered by William Graham Sumner, a professor of political and social science at Yale University, during 1876. The first, second, and third American Departments of Sociology were established at Brown University, the University of Chicago, and Columbia University, respectively (Kurtz 1986:93–97). Between 1889 and 1892, 18 American colleges and universities offered instruction in sociology, but in 1893, the University of Chicago was the first to develop a program that led to the granting of a Ph.D.

Despite the recognition of the emerging field of sociology as a distinctive area of inquiry, the focal point of a religious orientation and perhaps fervor expressed by social commentators in their discussions and analyses of the social issues that were to constitute the purview of sociology also engaged the attention of other early practitioners of the discipline. The social problems identified in the wake of expansion of the American West and the building

of the railroads included issues relating to “the influx of immigrants, the rise of the factory system and the concentration of people in big cities. These comprised the now familiar catalogue of crime, delinquency, divorce, poverty, suicide, alcoholism, minority problems and slums” (Bramson 1961:75).

Alfred McClung Lee (1978:69) notes that ever since that time, sociologists have been attempting to divorce themselves from an ancestry that is historically rooted in the clergy, the police, utopian ideologues, social reformers, conservative apologists, journalistic muckrakers, radical thinkers, agitators, and civil libertarians.

Given the moral tone of much of the writing of many early American sociologists, it is noteworthy that in articulating the six “aims” of the *American Journal of Sociology* established at the University of Chicago in 1895, the scientific view of sociological concern so clearly defined several decades later by E. A. Ross (1936) was not so clear to many if not all of the moral philosophers of this earlier period. Witness the following comments offered by the founding editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*, Albion W. Small (1895):

Sociology has a foremost place in the thought of modern men. Approve or deplore the fact at pleasure, we cannot escape it. . . . To many possible readers the most important question about the conduct of the *Journal* will be with reference to its attitude toward “Christian Sociology.” The answer is, in a word, towards Christian sociology sincerely deferential, toward “Christian sociologists” severely suspicious. (Pp. 1, 15)

These comments were of particular significance given that the *American Journal of Sociology* was not only the first journal of sociology created anywhere, but it was also, until 1936, the official journal of the American Sociological Society. Thus, the influence of both the Chicago School and the large number of contributions by its faculty and students to the *American Journal of Sociology* placed the work of the Chicago School at the forefront in shaping the early direction and substance of American, Canadian, and Polish sociology (Kurtz 1986:93–97). This was especially true in the subareas of urban and community studies, race and ethnic relations, crime and juvenile delinquency, deviance, communications and public opinion, and political sociology.

Leon Bramson (1961:73–95) identified three important phases in the rise of American sociology. The first period began in 1883 with the publication of Lester Ward’s *Dynamic Sociology* to about 1915 or 1918 with the publication of Robert E. Park’s essay on the city and/or the end of World War I, respectively. During this period, the founders began their earnest quest to establish the theoretical foundation as it related to the American experience focusing on “a liberal sociology of change and process, rather than one of conservation and equilibrium” (Bramson 1961:85).

This focus on change and process became even more evident during the second stage of American sociology,

identified as the period between the two world wars. This was a period of academic expansion, with major increases in faculty and students, but even more important, led by sociologists at the University of Chicago, this was a period of specialization and the beginning of differentiation within sociology as the quest to develop a viable methodology began in earnest. This also was a meaningful period during which sociologists worked to establish the scientific status of the discipline and to earn respectability and academic legitimization. It was also a period during which many of the conceptual problems of sociology first began to emerge as its practitioners developed an increasingly complex technical vocabulary, a vast array of classification schema, and other abstract systems categories of thought. Perhaps assuming the need to compensate for a past that included so many nonscientifically moral reformist-oriented representatives of the discipline, sociologists responded during this phase of development by creating complex theories that, for an extended period of time, were not only unintelligible to the layperson, but also the abstract nature of these grand theories exceeded the ability of social scientists to create methodologies appropriate to empirically test these theoretical models (Lee 1978). But despite this theoretical/methodological problem, this second stage of sociological development was also one in which much substance was created.

The history of sociology in America from prior to World War I to approximately the mid-1930s is, according to Kurtz (1986), a history of the school of thought promoted by the University of Chicago. If the second phase of American sociology is to be distinguished as a period dominated by the Chicago sociologists, it is also one that led Pitirim Sorokin to observe that American sociology was emerging as a distinctive brand:

The bulk of the sociological works in America are marked by their quantitative and empirical character while the bulk of the sociological literature of Europe is still marked by an analytical elaboration of concepts and definitions; by a philosophical and epistemological polishing of words. (Cited in Bramson 1961:89)

The period is characterized by a marked increase in the development of new and expanding methodologies and measurement. These new techniques included a plethora of scales intended to measure the theoretical concepts developed previously.

As noted, Goudsblom and Heilbron (2001) identify five phases of development of the discipline that cover the period prior to 1830 to the very end of the twentieth century. But the third phase of the development of American sociology, identified by Bramson (1961) as covering the period from 1940 to 1960, is noteworthy because this was a period during which the development and adoption of theories of the “middle-range” advocated by Robert K. Merton led to even greater specialization and differentiation of the discipline. In turn, sociologists began to develop ever-expanding areas of inquiry. Robert K. Merton

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([1957] 1968), who wrote in reaction to the abstractness of the previous dominant position of the functionalist school of sociology, stated that theories of the middle range are

theories that lie between the minor but necessary working hypotheses that evolve in abundance during day-to-day research and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, social organization and social change. (P. 39)

The all-inclusive efforts refer, of course, to the contributions of Talcott Parsons in *The Structure of Social Action*, originally published in 1937, and in 1951 with the appearance of *The Social System*.

The third phase of development can be characterized as the most enthusiastic period during which greater emphasis was placed on the application of sociological knowledge. As the field expanded, new outlets for sociological studies and knowledge were created, sociologists found employment in nonacademic settings such as government and business, and the new specialty areas of interest reflected the changes in American society, including a growing rise in membership in the middle class, the expansion of the suburbs, more leisure time, and the growth of bureaucracy. In lieu of the previous sociological interest in the reform of society and the more traditional social problems orientation of the discipline, the new sociology opted to leave such concerns to the social work profession and to special studies programs such as criminology. Thus, specialty areas emerged—areas such as the sociology of marriage and the family, and aging (later to be defined as gerontology), industrial sociology, public opinion, organizations, communications, and social psychiatry (later called mental health). From this point forward, the continued rise to respectability of sociology is attributed by analysts such as Robert Nisbet (1966) to the public recognition that societal problems are more integrative in nature than previously thought. This may also serve as a partial explanation for why the discipline is viewed by some as fragmented.

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The logic and ethos of science is the search for the truth, the objective truth. Thus, the most fundamental problem the social scientist confronts, according to Gunnar Myrdal (1969), is this:

What is objectivity, and how can the student attain objectivity in trying to find out the facts and the causal relationships between facts? [That is,] How can a biased view be avoided? The challenge is to maintain an objectivity of that which the sociologist is a part. (P. 3)

Although the sociologies of the United States and Europe differ in perspective, both attempt to answer

similar albeit distinguishable questions. In his discussion of “the two faces of sociology,” Touraine (1990:240) states that these differences lie in the scholarly research response to two problems: (1) How does society exist? (2) How are culture and society historically created and transformed by work, by the specific way nature and its resources are put to use, and through systems of political, economic, and social organization? Because the intellectual legacy of American sociological thought has been shaped to a large extent by the historical experience of creating a nation in which the rights and the will of the American people have been dominant, American sociologists have long focused on “institution” as a central concept and the significance of efforts of reform movements within the American society to affect its social organization. Thus, the substance of American sociology has been on topics such as the family, social organization, community, the criminal justice system, and law and society among the numerous institutional-level areas of inquiry that are evaluated within the context of yet another American theoretical focus—namely, the emphasis on theories of the middle range. European sociologists, on the other hand, tend to focus on the second question while emphasizing the concept “revolution” in their analyses. Thus, even when similar topics such as social movements serve as the focus of inquiry, the American and European sociology responds from a different perspective (Touraine 1990). To understand the importance of this difference in perspective between the two sociologies, Alain Touraine (1990) poses the view that American sociology has a symbiotic relationship between culture and society, whereas European sociology integrates society and its history. American sociologists focus on society; the European sociology is focused on the rich history that serves as the backdrop for any attempt to understand social change.

Because the American experience is predicated on building a nation through the rule of law; the concepts of individualism, capitalism, and territorial conquest; and the attempt at integration of successive waves of immigrants to the North American continent, American sociology began its rise in prominence through an elitist intellectual process that dominated the academy during the early formative years of the discipline. Thus, it is perhaps ironic that an American sociology housed within the university setting would assume a critical teaching and research posture toward an elitist system of institutions that the early sociology assisted in creating. Within the context of certain kinds of social problems areas, such as ethnic studies, discrimination, and segregation, sociology and sociologists have been able to exert some influence. But in other important areas within which issues relating to elitist society may be involved, such as social class relations and economic and political power, the official and public perceptions of the efforts of American sociologists may not be as well received.

Many analysts of the past can be called on to render testimony in support of or apologize for the past efforts of sociologists to provide useful information, but none is

perhaps more relevant than the following statement offered by George A. Lundberg (1947): “Good intentions are not a substitute for good techniques in either achieving physical or social goals” (p. 135). During the 1960s and 1970s, sociology, psychology, and other social science undergraduate job candidates customarily responded to interviewer queries with “I want to help people.” Similar to those who attended graduate school after World War II, these individuals were influenced by the potential of sociology to make a difference. But good intentions aside, the real issue is, How do we go about assisting/helping people? Perhaps the more educated and sophisticated we become, the more difficult are the answers to social problems and social arrangements that are deemed inappropriate or at least in need of some form of rearrangement. That is, the more we believe we already know the answers, the less apt we are to recognize the importance of the sociological perspective. Within this context, sociology necessarily must adhere to and advocate the use of the methods of science in approaching any social problem, whether this is local or international in scope.

Sociology has utility beyond addressing social problems and contributing to the development of new social policy. Indeed, the sociological perspective is empowering. Those who use it are in a position to bring about certain behavior in others. It has been said that “behavior that can be understood can be predicted, and behavior that can be predicted can likely be controlled.” It is not surprising that sociologists are often used to help select juries, develop effective advertising campaigns, plan political strategies for elections, and solve human relations problems in the workplace. As Peter Berger (1963) phrases it, “Sociological understanding can be recommended to social workers, but also to salesmen, nurses, evangelists and politicians—in fact to anyone whose goals involve the manipulation of men, for whatever purpose and with whatever moral justification” (p. 5). In some ways, it might be said that the sociological perspective puts one “in control.”

The manipulation of others, even for commendable purposes, however, is not without critical reaction or detractors. Some years back, industrial sociologists who worked for, or consulted with, industrial corporations to aid them to better address problems in the workplace were sometimes cynically labeled as “cow sociologists” because “they helped management milk the workers.” Knowledge is power that can be used for good or evil. The sociological perspective is utilitarian and empowering in that it can accomplish things for whatever purposes. Berger (1963) goes on to reflect the following:

If the sociologist can be considered a Machiavellian figure, then his talents can be employed in both humanly nefarious and humanly liberating enterprises. If a somewhat colorful metaphor may be allowed here, one can think of the sociologist as a *condottiere* of social perception. Some *condottieri* fight for the oppressors of men, others for their liberators.

Especially if one looks around beyond the frontiers of America as well as within them, one can find enough grounds to believe that there is a place in today’s world for the latter type of *condottiere*. (P. 170)

Responding to the question, “Can science save us?” George A. Lundberg (1947) states “yes,” but he also equates the use of brain (the mind) as tantamount to employing science. Lundberg also posed the following: “Shall we place our faith in science or in something else?” (p. 142). Physical science is not capable of responding to human social issues. If sociologists have in a vain effort failed to fulfill the promise of the past, this does not indicate that they will not do so at some future time. Again, as Lundberg (1947) heeded long ago, “Science is at best a growth, not a sudden revelation. We also can use it imperfectly and in part while it is developing” (pp. 143–144).

And a few years later but prior to the turmoil that was to embroil the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, John Madge (1962) urged that a century after the death of the positivist Auguste Comte (now 150 years later) the structure of sociology remains incomplete. However, Madge recognized and demonstrates in *The Origins of Scientific Sociology* that sociology was slowly gaining in maturity and with this growth was on the verge of or within reach of achieving the status of a science. But it is also important to keep in focus the goals of science as articulated by Gunnar Myrdal (1969)—more specifically, “The goals of objectivity and effectiveness in research are honesty, clarity, and effectiveness” (p. 72). If the results of sociological research have been less than to the liking of policymakers and government and corporate leaders, then yet another of Myrdal’s insights is especially germane. That is,

Research is always and by logical necessity based on moral and political valuations, and the researcher should be obligated to account for them explicitly. When these valuations are brought out into the open any one who finds a particular piece of research to have been founded on what is considered wrong valuation can challenge it on that ground. (P. 74)

There are other reasons as well, reasons that complicate the delivery of the important message promoted by the discipline’s practitioners, for as noted by Joel Best (2003:11), sociology “is a perspective built on relativism, built on the recognition that people understand the world differently.” Indeed, many years earlier George C. Homans (1967) observed,

If some of the social sciences seem to have made little progress, at least in the direction of generalizing and explanatory science, the reason lies neither in lack of intelligence on the part of the scientists nor in the newness of the subject as an academic discipline. It lies rather in what is out there in the world of nature. (P. 89)

Such statements lie at the heart of the epistemological debate that began in the 1920s (see Reiss 1968:10–11) and

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continues into the modern era. Despite the vastness of sociological inquiry, it is obvious that a strong orientation toward the scientific study of human behavior, social interaction, and organizations continues and that this scientific focus is predicated on the assumption that such study is possible because it is based on the examination of phenomena that are subject to the operation of universal laws, a point not lost in the minds of the discipline's founders. The counterpoint that the social sciences are cultural sciences and thereby fundamentally different from the physical sciences and also subject to different methodology and other evaluative criteria is representative of a long-standing European influence that also began in the 1920s.

Given the diversity and fluidity of the topics addressed and the levels of theories employed by sociologists, it is not surprising that many others do not agree. The counterargument is based on the premise that given the circumstances behind the evolution of science and the support it received in the past and the more repressive attention it receives in the contemporary experience from powerful interest groups, objective social science and the establishment of universal laws that are based on such inquiry may not be possible (see Turner 2001).

Whether or not one argues that the study of human society is unique, it is still extraordinary given the vast array of extant theories used to express the human experience and capacity. Witness the statement of one contemporary analyst who, in an intriguing assessment of the contemporary American "wilding" experience, wrote,

Sociology arose as an inquiry into the dangers of modern individualism, which could potentially kill society itself. The prospect of the death of society gave birth to the question . . . what makes society possible and prevents it from disintegrating into a mass of sociopathic and self-interested isolates? This core question of sociology has become the vital issue of our times. (Charles Derber 2003:18)

Only in part is Derber referring to the American experience. His assessment also speaks to the experience of Western Europe. Much social change has taken place, and the efforts of sociologists to describe and explain this change and to draw upon these insights to develop predictive models has led to a diversity of theories. Indeed, over time, the scientific paradigm shifts more generally described by Thomas Kuhn ([1962] 1970) are obvious in our discipline (see Friedrichs 1970). There have been, there are at present, and there undoubtedly will be future paradigm shifts within this evolving and apparently expanding discipline of sociology, many of which will focus, as has been the case in the past, on the social change process. And for all the so-called objectivity of a scientific sociology advocated by analysts such as George A. Lundberg (1947), the development of which is so eloquently described by Leon Bramson (1961)), sociologists have been involved in social activism and social engineering, that first occurred during the embryonic years of the

discipline's development (Volkart 1968). Such activism occurred again during the 1960s and 1970s, in many social justice areas, and in occupational settings such as those of the criminal justice system.

At present, sociological inquiry represents a vast array of topics and offers many competing theoretical models while its practitioners attempt to make sense of a rapidly changing world. For all its middle-range theories and studies that reflect the efforts of those dedicated to cumulative knowledge, it is also important that we recognize that the building of a paradigm as well as challenges to an extant paradigm are not relegated to the gathering of information alone. Indeed, if sociology is to advantage itself in the twenty-first century, it may be imperative that a dominant paradigm begins to identify the kinds of community needs that it can usually serve, for as Joseph R. Gusfield (1990) so clearly notes, sociology has been at odds with and a critic of the classical economic and individualistic interpretations of American life. Thus, whatever issues sociology may need to address at this juncture, perhaps we are hampered only by the limits of the sociological imagination. Again, the following comment by Homans (1967) is noteworthy:

The difficulties of social science lie in explanation rather than discovery. . . . Our trouble has not been with making discoveries but with organizing them theoretically—showing how they follow under a variety of given conditions from a few general principles. (Pp. 79, 105)

The present diversity of the discipline welcomed by so many social critics also serves as a barrier to the creation of a dominant theoretical paradigm. Without this focus, sociology remains in the minds of many of the discipline's representatives a less-than-coherent discipline. Perhaps this is not different from the struggle of the 1960s as described by Gouldner (1970), a period that also was far less than organized and coherent and certainly far less civil in disagreement. It is important that sociologists take stock of their trade and question in earnest the utility of the work we do. As noted by Herbert L. Gans (1990),

By and large, we sociologists have been too distant from the society in which we operate and in which we are embedded, which funds us even if too poorly and which influences us surely more than we influence it. We are too busy trying to understand how that society functions . . . that we rarely think about our own functions—and dysfunctions. To some extent our failure to do so stems from a typical professional blindness, which results in our inability to distance ourselves sufficiently from ourselves and our routines to look systematically at what we are for and to whom. (Pp. 12–13)

Not all may agree, of course. Indeed, sociology in the United States and in Europe has been a critique of modern urban life with its emphasis on the individual, capitalism, and bureaucracy. In some instances, this critique of American society has been radical and reformist in its

thrust (Gusfield 1990:31–46). And although American sociology had been shaped in part by psychology in establishing its methodology during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, especially through a common social-psychological area (see, e.g., Reiss 1968), it can be safely stated that American sociology has been transformed during the latter decades of the twentieth century.

THE PASSION FOR SOCIOLOGY

Sociologists may be accused of engaging in an affair with their work. Witness the stirring comments of one colleague:

I fell in love with sociology when I was twelve. . . . Sociology was my savior. It saved me from the vexing confusion caused by my once despising the mundaneness of everyday life and deeply loving and admiring my people. It stabilized me by articulating the dedication that I felt for social justice. (Shahidian 1999:303–04)

We share this passionate approach to social science based on the insightful development of theory and empirical research, an approach that has, in turn, led to a vast array of subject matter. Note the other 105 chapters represented in this two-volume *Handbook*. In light of these impressive contributions, the only aspect of this endeavor that may seem perplexing to some is that as we move further into the twenty-first century, there are those who continue to believe in and practice the scientific method; there also are those who argue that if the logic of science and the methods of scientific objectivity are to be carried to an extreme, sociology will lose or has already lost its humanistic perspective and, with this loss, the inclination toward active community involvement through social policy advocacy and practical intervention. As Peter L. Berger (1963) phrases it,

At the same time it is quite true that some sociologists, especially in America, have become so preoccupied with methodological questions that they have ceased to be interested in society at all. As a result, they have found out nothing of significance about any aspect of social life, since in science as in love a concentration on technique is quite likely to lead to impotence. (P. 13)

This dichotomy certainly is a matter of considerable debate, but perhaps most advocates and active practitioners of the discipline would fall somewhere in between these two orientations (see, e.g., Reiss 1968:10–11). In this regard, we are also optimistic that the sociological imagination will continue to be an important part of the work of sociologists as they take into consideration “a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves” (Mills 1959:5).

THE FUTURE OF SOCIOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

More than 170 years ago, sociology began to emerge from its philosophical and biological roots to its current status as an important social science. Early sociologists achieved renown based on their interest in providing information useful to appraise social policy issues. However, in the contemporary instance, there are strong indicators that sociology has not achieved the eminent position envisioned by the founders. Note the less-than-enthusiastic assessment offered by Black (1999):

The problems endemic to the discipline of sociology include the lack of a paradigm, disciplinary fragmentation, and the irreconcilability of science, ideology, and politics . . . and the lack of an occupational niche—[all these] place sociologists in the position of having constantly to defend the profession. (Pp. 261, 263)

Thus, as we move well into the twenty-first century, it is clear that sociology is engaged in yet another struggle to (re)identify itself. Perhaps such a struggle is to be expected of any science of human behavior. And nowhere is this situation more contentious than in the responses of representatives of the discipline to the question as to whether sociology is or is not yet considered an activity worthy of the label “scientific activity.”

At the center of this struggle lies the heart of any discipline—namely, sociological theory. Among the eminent theorists reporting on the status of sociology in this *Handbook* are individuals who represent the very best of what the discipline has to offer. That the message is suggestive of a continuing debate within the discipline is both disheartening and encouraging. It is disheartening in that after a period of more than 175 years, representatives of the discipline should be able to exclaim with great pride the accomplishments of so much activity instead of debating their scientific worth. It is encouraging because the current debate over the theory and the substance of the work sociologists engage in can only lead to the exploration of new and challenging frontiers. But the substance of sociological inquiry also represents a matter of contention for many research- and practitioner-oriented representatives of the discipline. Some contemporary analysts who have observed the developments within the academy during the past several decades call for a critical reevaluation of that which sociologists identify as the substance of research and understanding. Sociology has given birth to and generated intense interest in many areas of study that are no longer identified with the discipline. Because the specific subareas developed by sociologists became well accepted as legitimate applied disciplines within the academy, independent, overlapping units within the academy have been created.

If the 1960s represent the *golden era* of sociology, it is also a period, as described by Turner and Sica (2006), that

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is “remembered as a time of violence, massive social change, and personal transformation” (p. 4). The period had a profound effect on an entire generation of students, many of whom were instrumental in creating the new sociological emphasis that today is criticized for its diversity, the lack of continuity, and a failure to develop a unified paradigm. Whatever reservations that may continue to exist as we progress well into the twenty-first century, these can be hailed as a challenge. Thus, at the same time that community involvement and applied research are increasingly being devalued in the academic world, there is a distinct pressure, according to Harris and Wise (1998), for sociologists to become increasingly involved in the community and society.

This call to establish a public sociology may well combine with the three types of knowledge identified by Burawoy (2005)—the professional, critical, and policy-specific databases. In each of these areas, the initiative would be consistent with enthusiastic proclamations of the past. George A. Lundberg’s (1947) *Can Science Save Us?* serves as but one important example of those who promoted the application of social science insights to solve social problems. Of course, one major difference between the time when Lundberg wrote and now is that we are not rebounding from the tragedy of a world war. Indeed, it was during the post-World War II period and during the subsequent several decades that American sociology assumed its theoretical and empirical dominance (Odum 1951), especially in the area of deviant behavior (see Touraine 1990). Yet another important difference between then and now, as Harris and Wise (1998) suggest, is that sociologists need to be perceived as problem solvers rather than as social critics, and similar to the pleas of Marion Talbot (1896) at the end of the nineteenth century, much of the sociological may necessarily become interdisciplinary in nature. This perspective is supported as a portion of a more scholarly editorial philosophy articulated by Wharton (2006:1–2). Most noteworthy for our purpose are points three and four:

- (3) Be aware and reflective about the . . . broader contributions to scholarship, policy, and/or activism . . . ; (4) produce useful knowledge—not merely in the applied sense of solving problems, but knowledge that is useful as *basic* research that can help people better understand and transform the social world. (P. 1)

These same kinds of issues—social activism and public policy research—were recognized at the end of the nineteenth century as strengths of the new discipline.

Thus, there appears to be hopeful as well as worrisome aspects of sociology at the end of the twentieth century (Lewis 1999). But this kind of enthusiasm and concern appears to be periodic throughout the history of the discipline as sociologists attempt to both define and then redefine the parameters of what some argue is too extensive a range of topics to allow practitioners of the discipline to be

definitively identified (Best 2003). Witness the statement attributed to one of the coeditors of this *Handbook* who, in the early 1980s, wrote the following:

Future prospects for sociology(ists) no doubt will depend upon our ability to identify and respond to community needs, to compete for funds available from nontraditional sources, to work in applied areas, and to establish creative problem-solving strategies. The challenge before us should generate a healthy response. (Peck 1982:319–20)

Since that time and in the wake of a declining influence of the social sciences, there has been a response as evidenced by the many new areas of inquiry, many interdisciplinary in nature, that currently curry attention from sociologists. Indeed, there does appear to be a fragmentation, but this so-called fragmentation is consistent with an assessment offered by Beck (1999), “Sociology today, as throughout its history, is not unified. . . we have never been able to sustain . . . unanimity and consistency for very long. Thank goodness” (p. 121).

Perhaps we do not engage in “normal science,” at least not in the sense that Thomas Kuhn ([1962] 1970) refers to it. That is, academic sociologists continue to function quite well even though they are outside the single frame of reference that usually serves as the paradigmatic foundation for the physical sciences. Normal science is rigid, but it is also burdened by uncertainty and inconsistency, as Friedrichs (1970) observes. In the case of sociology, this is found in the diversity of theoretical models and topical areas. Although some analysts lament the current state of the discipline, Jacobs (2004) recently observed that “some might view this diversity [of topics] as evidence of excessive fragmentation, (but) there are important theoretical connections” (p. v). Of course, the substance of manuscripts submitted for possible publication, the rubrics under which the research can be categorized, is quite different from the search for a common sociological paradigm. To wit, classic studies do exist, but none serve to forge a single paradigm. Thus, the future of the discipline will depend, as usual, on the contributions of those who may be relatively silent in the wake of less-than-acceptable “scholarship,” as suggested by Lewis (1999), but who nonetheless commit themselves to excellence by producing significant contributions to theory and application (see, e.g., Rossi 1999) that should, in the long run, counter the myriad productions that are less significant. Concomitant with this effort will be an increased awareness of and involvement in the applied and an earnest effort to again be a viable force in the policy-related aspects of sociology and society. In other words, we believe there will be a reawakening of and involvement in those aspects of sociology that served the discipline well during its early years of development in the United States (see Ross 1936) even as the applied social work-oriented practitioners broke away to form their own professional association (Odum 1951; Rossi 1999). Indeed, there exists a need for answers

to myriad policy-oriented questions as well as applied concerns at all governmental levels.

But in the end, sociologists may, as Beck (1999:123) suggests, go where they go, where they want to go. This may again mean that sociologists will abandon important areas of inquiry that they helped to establish, leaving the sociological legacy to others. Sociologists will also move to create other areas of inquiry while questioning past and present assumptions and knowledge claims in an ongoing quest to better understand social arrangements and to engage in, as Beck (1999) observes, “life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and the sociological imagination” (p. 124). To this we can add the quest to establish the meaning of social justice in a rapidly changing democratic society.

Thus, contrary to dubious predictions of an ominous obscure future, the content of this *Handbook* attests to a much more positive and grand future orientation within the discipline that will include much more than the rigorous efforts to clean up conceptual problems that sociologists are supposedly noted for. Moreover, the epistemological debates of the past will undoubtedly continue as Turner (2001) and Best (2003) suggest, but in so doing, the future of academic sociology will again be broadened. This expansion will again, we think, involve the applied aspects of the discipline and engagement of the public through active involvement of sociologists in the four traditional areas—namely, through a public sociology with an emphasis on further development of the profession and a critical civic activism with the intent to broadly influence social policy. Moreover, the increasing influence of European sociology in the global community will undoubtedly continue; this influence is not only important, it is most welcome. Given the above, it may well be that another call to arms will result. There has been a movement, albeit a small movement, among highly regarded intellectuals (the National Association of Scholars) to enhance the substance and quality of academic teaching and scholarly activity. This, too, is welcome in sociology.

The world that engages a scientist, as noted by Friedrichs (1970), is one that emerges from a scientific tradition, along with its special vocabulary and grammar and environment. Sociology’s laboratory is the social world and on occasion its practitioners are criticized by those who argue the arcane nature of all that is considered scientific. If the normal science, as described by Thomas Kuhn ([1962] 1970) and Robert W. Friedrichs (1970), is to be realized within the discipline of sociology, then it may depend on efforts of young sociologists (see, e.g., Frickel and Gross 2005) who may capture the essence of such a paradigm in a general theory of scientific/intellectual movements. Such work may also serve to stimulate more thought as to the requisite initiatives essential for subsequently developing the kind of intellectual movement that will define once again, and actively promote, the substance of the sociological perspective.

If the emphasis of American sociology at the beginning of the twentieth century was unsophisticated, armchair

science that “featured the study of general society and the ‘system’ of social theory, it reflected not only the almost universal philosophical approach but also the consistency of the best minds in interaction with European philosophy and American higher education” (Odum 1951:421–22). In the mid-twentieth century, sociology, similar to other social and physical sciences, struggled to determine whether the future of the discipline would continue to pursue a general systems theory of society or whether the discipline’s practitioners would develop more theory and then relate these theories to research and the scientific method (Odum 1951:422). At this critical midpoint of the century past, and in recognition of the importance of the discipline, Odum (1951) wrote that there is

the extraordinary need in the contemporary world for a social science to seek special knowledge of human society and welfare and meet the crises brought on by science and technology, so often out of perspective to human relations, and so to provide the basis for not only a social morale in an age of science but for societal survival as well. (P. 3)

At the end of the twentieth century, these comments rang clear, and as we move forward and well into the greater twenty-first-century experience, Odum’s words seem no less germane today than in the past.

Toward establishing the prospects for the future of this great academic discipline, we hasten to add how critical it is and will be to again acknowledge the important work of the founding mothers and fathers of sociology. Thus, at the end of the twentieth century, the state of sociology may have been debatable, but during the initial decades of the twenty-first century, sociologists will undoubtedly take up the challenge to pursue answers to vexing social problems that are, as Fine (2006:14–15) states, embedded with complex, dynamic, interconnected social systems. Some of the solutions to be tendered in the near future may not serve well the needs of all citizens, but these should nonetheless address policy issues relating to social freedom, social justice, and social equality while recognizing that such policies determine the behavior of those actors whom sociologists are intent to study. Herein American sociologists may now have achieved the requisite disciplinary maturity to employ the kind of *sociological imagination* envisioned by C. Wright Mills (1959) half a century ago. Such a sociology would, in the tradition of Europe, encompass a biography and history within society, thereby allowing sociology to represent not only a scientific enterprise but also to serve as a sensitizing discipline that allows us to continue to view the world in a new and interpretive fashion.

Finally, in some peculiar ways, the vexing problems that capture our attention during the early portion of the twenty-first century parallel those of the early twentieth century; this is true at all levels of society and perhaps even more so within those sectors that heretofore were barricaded from a critical analyses. The actors may have

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changed but, in general, the public concerns regarding the kinds of behavior tolerated and considered to be appropriate tend to remain the same. And as the moral entrepreneurs of the twenty-first century push their agendas, the new prohibitionist movements continue to capture the attention of policymakers, which may of necessity be cause for some sociologists at least to revisit many of the same topics that held sway in the past. Thus, we will

continue to use templates in our lives to understand the world, physical and social, in which we exist. The sociological templates derived from the many conceptual constructs available provide us with a unique and perceptive perspective. As sociology further develops, new conceptual constructs will be added and will contribute to its unique perspective, thereby enhancing our ability to better analyze and understand human social behavior.

2

THE HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY

The European Perspective

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George H. Mead (1936:116f.) taught us that each generation will write anew its history. Many histories of sociology have been written before, and the sociology of knowledge has made an interesting object of research out of them. However, today's history of sociology will set different priorities than those written 50 or 100 years ago, and it would be interesting to detect the reasons behind such changes. We want to present an overview of three aspects constituting much of sociology's dynamic development. The first aspect is the stepwise emancipation of sociology from philosophical thought. The second is the discovery that societal change and continuity are causally based on meaningful human behavior that needs to be understood and explained in social research. The final aspect is sociology's growing empirically validated knowledge. Finally, we will ask if there is a current tendency aiming at the reintegration of theories of human conduct and social research.

FROM THE ORIGINS TO THE FOUNDING FATHERS

The History of Ideas

The more people began to understand that society is not simply god-made, natural, or the traditional, unchangeable

way of life it always used to be, the more we see sociological thought emerge and develop. However, it is impossible to draw a clear historical line where sociology comes into the picture. Society has always been an object of curious interest of mostly philosophical thinkers such as Aristotle (1943), who considered the human being as *zoon politikon* that naturally tends to build up communities. Hence, his works discuss the essence and the tasks of the "good" state. Aristotle tries to determine institutionalized forms of power adequate to the human nature and, therefore, considered legitimate. For Aristotle, humans are unequal by nature. It is the main task of the state to help realize the good life of its citizens. Society is seen as something that is on the way to reaching a good, natural form. Empirically, Aristotle made clear that there is a wide variety of factual states and that societies he analyzed critically were at different stages of "goodness." But the point to be stressed here refers to the quite unquestioned assumption about the *nature* of society.

This assumption breaks down in modern social thought. It is quite common to see in Thomas Hobbes's (1588–1679) *Leviathan* (1904) the fundamental turning point. The reality of the British Commonwealth with its growing cities and spatial immensity, its ceaseless conflicts and problems, provide the empirical data from which Hobbes attempts to derive principles to solve a concrete social problem: the origin and persistence of social order.

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Hobbes reverses Aristotle's assumption of the state of nature and conceives of it as one of war of all against all. This change fundamentally determines his social thinking. Since human desires are random and all men seek to realize them, individuals must necessarily strive for commanding means that secure the realization of these desires. Furthermore, since these means are limited, the control over means toward ends results in zero-sum games. Power becomes the facility for getting what one party wants by preventing another party from getting what it wants. If man is no longer considered a *zoon politikon* but rather relentlessly driven by passions, desires, and the will to survive, reason demands the overcoming of the state of nature. The Hobbesian state must be understood as a natural necessity. The social contract as the foremost goal of the state is not meant to protect man's freedom but to provide security to the people. In return for vesting the state with power monopoly and for being obedient and loyal, the sovereign protects the subjects' right to live and to own property. The price for social security consists in restricting natural freedom.

Hobbes's man does not appear as capable of moral responsibility, but an atom whose movements in the social space must be regulated through socialization and social control. Social order is thus based on man's coercive subjection to the authority of a powerful state. Hobbes posited war as primeval and inherent in human nature and justified political absolutism in the name of peace and security.

As Hobbes's *Leviathan* shows quite clearly, the sociological quest for more knowledge about a society that evidently got involved in far-reaching social change and shocking revolutions and wars did not develop in a linear direction. Modern social thinkers were more or less stuck with the great philosophical tradition and combined their contemporary knowledge and experiences in often amazing ways with traditional certainties. The social thinkers who followed may also be characterized along the lines we want to highlight in our history of sociology: gathering more and more knowledge about events and amazing changes of their times while at the same time reconciling these changes with traditional assumptions.

We should look at these thinkers in a sociological way: Human beings are mostly conservative insofar as they do not easily give up expectations they have learned. Therefore, even those theorists we call visionary today have tried to grasp the salient change and adapted it to the traditional views of society they have learned from their teachers. This is, as we will show, why the history of sociology is characterized by many hybrid systems of thought that combine an increasingly radical sociological view with unquestioned traditional assumptions.

The trend, however, unequivocally pointed to giving more and more weight to man-made facts instead of discovering natural states, and looking for empirical proof of this shift. Even Hobbes's contemporary Spinoza (1632–1677; 1899) stressed the importance of social institutions for guaranteeing freedom. For him, the institutions

of the state mirror the changing relations of social power. He rejected the proposition that the problem of social integration could be solved through a general value consensus or by subjecting people to an all-powerful state. Charles de Montesquieu (1689–1755; 1999) for the first time formulated social order as independent of such presuppositions as natural law or rationality. He did not deny the existence of a substratum of history like human nature. However, what can be deduced from human nature characterized by a drive for self-preservation, peace, reproduction, and sociability is merely the existence of human society, not its specific structure. The latter, and the social laws by which it is explained, can be derived only from the conditions of real human associations. Montesquieu did not believe that the structural principles of social order could be derived from abstract ideas. Rather, these principles were to be recognized through observation and analysis of "positive" facts—that is, social realities. To discover the structural laws of society, he focused *not* on moral principles (like Rousseau later) or some rational will of a powerful state (like Hobbes before) but on the variety and causality of existing *social facts*. In his examination of the relationship between types of political superstructure and their social foundations, Montesquieu argued that the problem of social integration was a different one in different societies. Analyzing different forms of state and society, he confined himself to stating that social conflicts spring from society. Contrary to Hobbes, he thought that they are less a human or natural than a *social* phenomenon. Conflict, war, and inequality of men are rather related to the essence of society, inseparable from collective life, and in need of being mitigated and moderated. Today, the pluralism attached to this concept appears particularly modern: Social order was not to be established on the basis of commonly accepted norms and values but by tolerating and legally channeling the various interests and rights.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), like Hobbes, was interested in discovering the laws that governed human action in society. Unlike Hobbes, however, he arrived at the conception of the absolute sovereignty of the people by means of which the state should force the individual to be free. Whereas Montesquieu and Hobbes had been concerned with the integrative and disruptive effects of human action, the intellectual, social, and political changes the eighteenth century was undergoing generated the need for a new perspective. The focal point now shifts toward altering those forms of integration under the auspices of *progress*. This new frame of reference transcends the existing society and provides the potential view that man is the master of his own history. Man's will should now be translated into social reality. It was no longer important to determine the equilibrium of social powers by studying social laws. The imagined commitment of all members of society to a central cause, the *volonté générale*, now provided the criterion of relevancy and is, by definition, never wrong. The ideal of happiness replaces the ancient ideal of virtue.

Rousseau's conclusions and practical hopes are based on the assumption that man is a reasonable creature. Present evils could therefore be eliminated through emancipation of the individual by releasing him from the current form of society. The new society, or *contrat social*, should enable the individual to be absorbed into the common will, thus securing reconciliation among men as well as equality of all before an external power (Rousseau 1972). Man's "second nature" would thus be grounded in normative principles in accord with collective interests and social solidarity—the general will. When Rousseau submitted his prize essay, "The Origin of Inequality," he based his theory on the assumption that there is natural equality among men, thus replacing the Aristotelian premise of a natural rank order.

Because theoretically sovereignty is inalienable and indivisible, therefore for government to represent the general will would require, in practical terms, that the divergent opinions of individuals be brought to a common platform through permanent exchange of arguments and political conviction. Permanent discussion should guarantee that people become aware of their common interests, which are geared toward collective maintenance of the body social and toward general welfare. In contrast to Hobbes's compromise between liberty and security through subjection, Rousseau offers the alternative of radical emancipation through free submission to the general will. Rousseau envisions a society united by reason and founded on liberty. Finally, Rousseau states in the last chapter of the *Contrat Social* that a civic religion of sentiments of sociability could provide the primary integrative force to which everyone could commit himself.

Rousseau's fantastic ideas, to a large extent a reflection of his personal creed, stand in remarkable contrast to the tradition of sober empiricism in Great Britain where statisticians and world travelers initially developed the idea of a general theory of society on the basis of worldwide experiences of manifold cultures and diverse human societies. In the social sciences, the old empiricism had received important methodological impulses from Francis Bacon and later indirectly from Isaac Newton. Society was seen as a construct of nature. However, it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the first scientific system of this sort was presented by Adam Ferguson (1723–1816; 1773) in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*. Ferguson showed perhaps even more than Adam Smith (1723–1790) that a science of society was an oppositional discipline against the *ancient regime* and developed new ideas of social order. Whereas Hobbes had committed men to common values and total institutions and Rousseau proposed the free choice of the general will, the Scottish moral philosophers now gave up the underlying assumption of a given human nature. They began to attribute to society the capacity to mold human nature, thus making man open for society. Man is now believed to be able to learn from his experience and subordinate his actions to rules and natural rights of others. The reason imputed

to the alter ego limits the claim to rational efficiency in ego's action. This limitation on utilitarian rationality has been achieved by introducing the postulate of the "natural identity of interests," thus evading successfully the Hobbesian problem of order. The new conception of the state of nature is materialized in a particular social structure with the *cooperatio omnium* as its basic principle. Under the guidance of reason and the subsequent recognition that human association is mutually gratifying, Hobbes's *bellum omnium contra omnes* turns into associative cooperation of all with all.

Among the Scottish philosophers, Adam Smith stressed the invisible hand that integrated the self-interested striving of individuals, while Ferguson and John Millar (1735–1801) stood at the beginning of a social conflict theory highlighting that social change resulted from conflicting interests. Smith pictured a society that, by means of a system of mechanisms, sets man's basic interests free and controls them at the same time. He did not see the Cartesian principle of reason as the great means of revelation to man. Rather, sensations and sentiments were taken as the empirical foundation of thinking. Therefore, in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith (1971) analyzed such elements of interaction as passions, propensities, affections, and feelings, which make society last. Moral sentiments should be regarded as the immediate expressions of social life. According to Smith, man is endowed by God with moral sentiments that serve to bind men to each other. At the same time, his science of the social order is founded on the theory of reciprocity rather than conflict between the individual and the collective. In *The Wealth of Nations* (Smith 1963), he converted the concept of mutuality into the problem of exchange relations, fundamental to the economy of civil society.

It seems that the French Revolution (1789) destroyed this optimism of early social thinking about order. Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who gave the discipline its name, grew up in a counterrevolutionary environment and was continually disturbed by the disorder of his time (Lenzer 1998). Like his teacher, Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1852), he saw the revolution as a turning point in the history of social affairs. Their message, like that of many other social thinkers of the nineteenth century, consisted mainly in the search for the new principles of the emerging industrial society (Strasser 1976). They also agreed that the actions of men were ill-directed, their system of thought disoriented, and their feelings lacked coherence and were without worthwhile objectives. Therefore, Comte's fight against the negative heritage of the revolution embraced all those individualistic ideas that had weakened the sources of morality and social solidarity. He felt strongly the need for an order of institutions that would be able to cope with the changes in society. For him, in its stringent legislation against French society as it existed at the time, the Revolution led to an intolerable centralization of government in the sense that the state absorbed social functions belonging properly to other institutions, thus

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accelerating the rate of moral disorganization. The essential problem was consequently neither a political nor an economic one but rather one of *societal* organization. Thus, in some pamphlets he called for the replacement of theology and war by science and industry and even drew “a plan of the scientific operations necessary for reorganizing society.” All his life, he was devoted to the creation of an intellectual basis for a new social organization. Positive philosophy, he believed, could eventually deliver society from the peril of dissolution.

In this attempt, the law of the three stages is his key notion as it describes the evolutionary development of the individual and, finally, of all humanity. The theological stage supposes the phenomenon under consideration to be due to immediate volition, either in the object or in some supernatural being. It can be seen in the thinking of children and primitive societies with regard to the phenomena of nature. In the metaphysical stage, abstract force residing in the object and, yet existing independently of the object, that is nature, is substituted for volition. In this stage, men do not deify objects but they do reify and personify abstractions. They imagine that they are making deductions from eternal truths, when they are really neglecting in their reasoning what needs to be examined most. They imagine that freedom, equality, and sovereignty actually exist, whereas these are really human constructs with many meanings.

The final stage, the positive, is reached when the quest for certainty is abandoned, and men accept the scientific laws derived from experience as the highest form of knowledge within human grasp. Inherent or external volition and inherent force have disappeared from the minds of men. Therefore, the explanation of a phenomenon is meant to refer, by way of succession or resemblance, to some other phenomenon, resulting in the establishment of a relation between the given fact and some general fact. Comte’s philosophy of science is inseparable from his philosophy of history and from the theory of progress. What the sociologist does is simply give an accurate account of the realization of the essential order of each society in history. Comte’s sociology assumes a harmonious evolution as a progress of social order in which one stage is the inevitable result of the preceding one and itself the motor of the next stage.

Even though “sociology” had formally entered history by Comte’s system, it is evident that in the nineteenth century, the new discipline was still far away from a completely successful emancipation from philosophy, especially from the speculations of the philosophy of history that dominated the coming Hegelian Age. The German alternative to the early French social criticism of the time formulated a conservative theory of society. Georg Friedrich A. Hegel (1770–1831) conceived of a Universal Consciousness or Spirit in place of God, existing before man and nature. Conceptual phenomena evolved and revealed themselves through world history. There was no eternal truth; rather, truth and thought were subject to

constant progress and change. In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel (2005) attempts to explain the social forms of history based on human free will. The progression begins with the family as a property-holding unit, paving the way for civil society based on private interests and mutual needs. The Spirit finally culminates in the socioethical community of the state. In its monarchic stage, all contradictions of civil society are reconciled in the realm of thought. Hegel, like Marx after him, thought that mankind had reached maturity. The truth actually coincided with the given social and political order.

Karl Marx (1818–1883) rejected Hegel’s separation of the act of thought from the human subject, which tended to reduce the individual to a predicate of the hypostatized thought. Nevertheless, Marx extracted the rational core of Hegelian dialectic. Marx put Hegel’s theory, the pendant of truth, to a test. The truth, Hegel claimed, is pervasive so that every single element can be connected with the process of reason. If that cannot be accomplished, the truth of the whole is destroyed. Marx believed that he himself had found such an all-destructive element: the *proletariat*. According to him, the existence of the proletariat was marked by universal suffering and injustice that meant, to him, the negation of the reality of reason. An entire class gives proof that the truth has not been realized. In opposition to Hegel’s society-oriented theory, Marx developed his individual-oriented theory of society. Marx implied that individual freedom presupposes a free society and that the true liberation of the individual requires the liberation of society. This emancipation required the abolition of the prevailing mode of labor that was rooted in the historical form of society. According to Marx, people’s essence of existence is expressed by a definite mode of life, which coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce.

Marx and his collaborator, Frederick Engels (1820–1895), established three propositions on which they based their theoretical and empirical studies. First, in capitalist society, men work under material conditions independent of their will. Second, relations of production are fundamental in forming man’s character, including his consciousness. Third, the materialistic nature of the prevailing social order, that is, the prevalent relationship between social being and social consciousness, is to be regarded as man’s alienated condition. Marx’s unending effort to fulfill the truth of the materialistic thesis in its negation, by leaving the domain of “necessity” and entering the domain of “freedom” in which men would begin consciously to determine their fate, can be seen as proof for the unity of his early writings with those of his maturity.

The Rise of Probabilism

So far, we have stressed the history of ideas from which sociology emancipated itself later on. However, the prehistory of modern sociology would remain incomplete without its second major heritage: the so-called probabilistic

revolution. Probabilism thoroughly changed the way of explaining social phenomena. From a traditional viewpoint, something is either the cause of some effect or it is not. Such attribution of causes and effects is proposed by the structure of language, which often directs our attention to the assumed relation between *one* certain cause and *one* certain effect. As twentieth-century research on causal attribution shows, it can still be considered predominant in everyday behavior today, even though the beginnings of the probabilistic revolution date back to the eighteenth century.

The most important founding father of data collection and statistical reasoning on which later research could draw was Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874), the Belgian multitalented astronomer who in his *social physics* gathered all kinds of information that might provide insight into societal regularities. Moral statistics rose with the industrialization, first of England, then of other European countries. The need arose to understand what kind of new social structure was developing and the forces governing it. After the success of the natural sciences, people started believing that not only natural and technical but also *social* affairs were governed by regularities and even laws (Kern 1982:37).

Quetelet was familiar with Laplace's "error curve," or, as it was called later, the normal distribution. He was fascinated by the fact that distributions of birth, death, crime rates, physical capacities, height, weight, and strength showed similar shapes. Furthermore, he analyzed bivariate relations between mortality, occupation, yearly seasons, divorces, age, gender, and suicide. He summarized his results in many tables and constructed a "l'homme type," a typical man with propensities to act in a certain way. By doing so, he hoped to answer questions such as which laws govern the development of man, how high the influence of nature is, and what consequences human conduct has on society. From his observations, Quetelet was skeptical about free will and its individual behavior because his statistics suggested that it was neutralized by large numbers and social conditions change only slowly and appear to be amazingly constant from one society to the next.

Looking back, one recognizes in Quetelet's ample statistical material the problem that has accompanied empirical social research until today: Regularities of the kind that were available at Quetelet's time may well indicate strong associations. However, they alone neither answer the decisive question what exactly accounts for social change nor tell us how we can shape such change. Causal hypotheses about social change must refer to actual regularities of *human conduct*. Despite great efforts and advances in attitude measurement, our knowledge about actual human behavior has remained a serious problem that is still—despite many attempts at synthesis—discussed as the irreconcilability of qualitative and quantitative research, of explaining and understanding (Quah and Sales 2000:11).

This is not to deny that Quetelet's enthusiasm managed to make some intuitively convincing hits. Also, it paved the

way for statistical progress without which sociology could not work the way it does. In Germany, Wilhelm Lexis (1837–1914) and in France, Émile Dormoy (1844–1871) found that statistical series showed greater dispersion than Quetelet's interest in population means had indicated and that it would be necessary to differentiate populations into more subgroups and variables such as age, ethnicity, occupation, and class. This movement finally led to breaking with Quetelet's approach—away from the *statistics of the average* to the *statistics of relationships* (Desrosières 1993). Further research led to a deeper interest into actual variation and laid the basis for the conception of correlation and regression as methods of dealing with two and eventually any number of variables of whatever kind (Stigler 1986).¹

Weber, Durkheim, and Early American Sociology

Despite the successful expansion of administrative statistics, the problem of a balanced database necessary for explaining social change started to become manifest at the end of the nineteenth century. Quetelet directed the organization of Belgian official statistics, and they became a model for social statistics in other countries. So the European states and their statistical offices started producing more knowledge about contemporary societies. The conviction spread further that history is man-made. But the more that data were collected, the more often the question arose as to how one could interpret such data to achieve convincing solutions for public policy and social problems. A look at the discussion about the consequences of industrialization shows the urgency of this difficulty. Neither politicians nor scientists knew what kind of behavior would result from newly discovered regularities, especially the formation of new social classes.

It is not possible to go into the details of all early research problems, so we will focus on one of the key issues of early-twentieth-century research: the so-called social question and the state of workers' consciousness. How would workers in the long run react to the strains of industrialized work, low wages, and unemployment? Some speculated they would revolutionize society sooner or later. Others postulated that they would rather fall into apathy. Such questions were vital to the modern state, but science had no valid information about what behavior could be expected in such crucial situations.

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) and Max Weber (1864–1920) were among the first who tried to solve this puzzle. Their main merit consisted, however, in ending the long-lasting struggle between the philosophy of society and the sociological study of society by calling for a thorough *empirical* study of human conduct and social structures without philosophical speculation or unproven assumptions. They set the stage for the rise of sociological theory and social research and may therefore be considered as the most important founding fathers of sociology. Almost all assumptions about the nature of society and

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man, the relation between consensus and conflict, good and bad, progress and history, were dropped and replaced by the empirical study of the variables of “social facts.” Weber and Durkheim did not in the least postulate that efforts in theoretically founding sociology should be abandoned. The relation between theory and research was rather a matter of degree, not a question of all or nothing. But the theory of society became much more sober, guided as it is by methodological considerations and no longer by philosophical reflections. There is good reason to let the actual history of sociology start with Weber and Durkheim in addition to Georg Simmel (1858–1918), Ferdinand Toennies (1855–1936), Werner Sombart (1863–1941), Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Norbert Elias (1897–1990), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Robert E. Park (1864–1944), Ernest W. Burgess (1886–1966), and George H. Mead (1863–1931), while most previous theorists may be regarded as more or less philosophical speculators who built on traditional assumptions that were not meant to be tested empirically.

Durkheim’s contribution to the history of sociology appears at least twofold. On the one hand, he directed his attention to the moral elements of society. In his studies *The Division of Labor in Society* (Durkheim 1984) and *Suicide* (Durkheim 1952), Durkheim polemicizes against the utilitarian individualists and shows that the Comtean requisite of social order, the consensus of moral beliefs, requires new interpretation in the light of newly discovered social facts. Illustrative examples are the “higher” type of solidarity, “organic solidarity,” as generated by the growing division of labor, the occupational corporations that could regulate interpersonal relations more effectively, even in a socialist society, and social cohesion, a low degree of which could lead to suicide. This normative paradigm was soon to become part of social theory through Talcott Parsons’s structural functionalism.

On the other hand, in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, Durkheim (1938) left us with the seemingly clear instruction to explain the social by the social. Against much contemporary opposition, Durkheim insisted that social facts form a reality *sui generis*, not be reduced to individual or psychological qualities. Social institutions (e.g., marriage, court, market, church), norms, and social regularities (e.g., the growing division of labor in civilized countries, the shrinking of the traditional family, economic depressions) depend on their own laws to be discovered by sociology.

The best example Durkheim offered for this thesis is the development of suicide rates. At first sight, it seems that no other human action could be more individual than the decision to end one’s life. However, Durkheim shows convincingly that suicide rates are amazingly constant in relation to social, religious, and professional groups, to winter and summer, to married or single people. Durkheim therefore distinguishes between different *types* of suicide: egoistic, altruistic, fatalistic, and anomic. The relative isolation of a human in society—if, for example, a young single sees all

other boys walk with their girlfriends on a summer day—is a precondition for an egoistic suicide. In contrast, the altruistic suicide protects the community in which the person is strongly integrated: The military officer kills himself because he has done something dishonorable, which threatens his professional group. The term *anomie*—literally translated, *without law*—signifies a state of normlessness, irritation, confusion, and breakdown. Durkheim assumes that anomie will be found in times of increased social change when traditional values no longer have their binding authority and the new norms do not yet have enough power to guide human behavior. People will commit suicide more often in such a state of depression because they do not know what way their life is going. Durkheim’s way of arguing with official statistics has made *Suicide* a paradigmatic study of sociological research and generalizing, probabilistic explanations on the basis of correlations.

Weber was also concerned with the problem of social order, but in a different way. As he did his dissertation and habilitation thesis in law, he started off with a completely different view on social life. The breakdown of social order is not his starting point but rather the simple observation that human conduct shows certain regularities that can be documented. If sociologists want to explain such regularities, they need a complex theory about human behavior that Weber (1949) developed gradually in his scattered methodological writings, later known as *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Weber’s mature social theory, expounded in *Economy and Society* (Weber [1922] 1968) and *Some Categories of Sociology* (Weber 1981), calls for a combination of three elements:

1. “Objective” regularities (“devoid of meaning”), that is, all kinds of regularities, including unknown influences on human behavior as indicated in public statistics, for example, by *distributions* of income, education, resources, health
2. The meaning of human behavior, which is, as we know today, the subjectively believed reason for one’s behavior and the way people usually attribute internally or externally behavior, especially as internally set goals (“I want to . . .”) and values (“because it means so much to me”) but also emotions and traditions (“we always did it that way”)
3. The selection of a typical social relationship or *type of situation* the explanation refers to (in contrast to the unclear term *society*, which Weber refused to use); this element refers to questions such as, Which audience is listening? How many people are present? Is the situation formal or informal? What is the time horizon of the situation? What is the problem dealt with? Do people act on a consensual or on a conflictual basis?

Weber sees the fulfillment of all three requirements as crucial to achieve valid statements on consequences of human behavior. Even though all three elements may be

closely connected in practical research, they need, however, separate efforts at empirical proof. In Weber's time, such data were not available. Weber wants us to have more concerns for local, microscopic ideas. For example, Marx neglected requirements 2 and 3 by focusing on objective regularities of surplus value distribution and exploitation and by simply maintaining that the typical motives of workers were "false." For Marx, it seemed that behavior in nineteenth-century society looked as if it could be understood from such distributions alone. The use of language unavoidably results, as Weber stresses, in statements about regularities of behavior *and* meaningful, that is, attributional, ideas. Even simple sentences imply far-reaching assumptions about behavior that are indeed difficult to prove empirically.

In his methodological writings, Weber liked to exemplify the *selective* function of causal statements by such everyday examples as the mother who attributes the causes of her own rude behavior against her child in a particular situation. Or to use a more contemporary example: We may say that in contrast to upper-class students, lower-class students do not believe as strongly in effort as upper-class students do. From Weber's view of causality, such a statement tells us that there is both an "objective" influence on behavior (class of father) and a selective meaning of behavior (small causal belief in one's effort). Furthermore, Weber wants the sociologist to locate the specific social relationship in which such a statement actually and typically occurs. Modern society is differentiated into many types of situations. Depending on where people show what kind of conduct, it will have different consequences. Weber was well aware that the rules that guide conduct vary considerably from one situation to the next. A science that was to elaborate on the consequences of meaningful behavior would have to pay attention to such situational differences, as our example demonstrates: Even lower-class students may agree to try harder *in the classroom* because effort attributions are highly institutionalized within school, while in the afternoon at home—the next type of situation—this attributional expectation may well lose its plausibility if the lower-class family and their peers do not impose equal pressure on more effort. The consequence of such different behavior in and outside the class may well be that lower-class students are not as successful in education because they cannot get rid of their social origin and unintentionally continue its structural disadvantages intergenerationally. In the end, their attitude and behavior at home are causally decisive for the outcome in their life course—despite all efforts on the parts of the teachers and the state. This is a consequence of unequal meaningful behavior that needs to be determined and possibly measured.

In Weber's time, such detailed research knowledge was, of course, not available. But his writings on meaningful behavior demand that we distinguish between objective ("devoid of meaning") and subjective ("meaningful") regularities both theoretically and empirically and combine

them because both regularities become causally effective in the end. Subjective understanding refers to typical situations in which people show differential expectations. In contrast, by elaborating objective causes, we may well detect forces (especially resource distributions, class positions, educational level) whose societal effects may overlap considerably, although they may be in explicit contrast to socially visible attributions. For example, people may think of themselves (and say this in surveys), more than ever before, as being self-determined, individualized decision makers of their life courses. And yet, as observers, we see that the influences of unequal origins, class positions, education degrees, access to institutions, and resource distributions (which can often hardly be changed by individual behavior) have not vanished. Therefore, sociological explanations must combine *seemingly* contradictory elements.

However, this paradox self-presentation of modern behavior is not new at all. Weber had a solution for the analysis of such a society by distinguishing between the *material* and the *idealist* aspect of human behavior. This distinction is indispensable because both dimensions have their own evolution in modern society. Material welfare has risen incredibly, and yet, at the same time, the causal ideas that people have with regard to their practical behavior have changed even more dramatically. More than ever before, people conceive of their behavior as self-determined and individualized so that "subjectively" the world will increasingly appear as ordered from inside instead of from outside, for example, by tradition, God, nature, or the collective fate of class. The elective affinity between religious ideas and capitalist materialism, discussed in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber 2001), was just one example of the type of analysis Weber had in mind.

Today, many more examples *could* follow. "Understanding" therefore means doing research on the selective causal ideas that people show in their behavior. "Explaining" refers to the detection of the structural forces and distributions that "accompany" such behavior. Both views combined reflect the entire causal situation appropriately. This two-part model of an explanation will be convincing only if it is complemented by a statement on the meaning of behavior because it is the major source of social change in modern times. Therefore, Weber wants sociology to analyze human behavior by means of *both* an observer's and the participant's concept of causality.

Evidence for the argument that people have causal ideas about situations and behave accordingly has been usually taken from the tradition of attribution research established by Heider's (1958) analysis of everyday concepts of causality. It is amazing how little attention sociologists have given to Weber's (1949) obstinate discussion of causality. Weber insisted that human behavior can be explained causally just like explanations for natural phenomena. He therefore stressed that causality is not an objectively given feature of the external world but rather a

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practical tool of language that we use in our behavior. We *understand* both the historical and our contemporary world by attributing selectively certain causes and effects to it. The emphasis is on *selection* from a horizon of different possibilities that makes our views meaningful in a phenomenological sense.²

Weber did work on the empirical operationalization of such a scientific concept (Lazarsfeld and Oberschall 1962)—without much success, as demonstrated by his and his brother's early attempt at studying attitudes in the German *Verein für Socialpolitik* in 1908. Contemporary research had much information about conditions of workers' existence such as wages, work time and loads, nutrition, and living conditions in general. Little knowledge was available about their personality and the influence that industry had on their attitudes. The *Verein* decided to conduct a survey, which faced basic problems with respect to not only professional, reliable execution but also the question of what exactly one was to ask workers in order to obtain the expected knowledge about their actual behavior. However, the scientists administering the survey had virtually no idea about the mechanisms in which objective conditions are converted into subjective attitudes and in what way such attitudes shape structural opportunities. Therefore, no theory about the interview situation and an appropriate questionnaire design existed so that in 1911 the frustrated Weber concluded that the surveys had brought almost no reasonable results.

While Weber and Durkheim tried to master more or less successfully the requirements in a unified research program, representatives of early American sociology made clear that it would be difficult to keep the sociological research train on common rails. On the one hand, we find in Mead's theory of causality striking resemblances to Weber's insistence on the practical first-order character of causal statements. Like Weber, Mead (1936:114) argues that "everything in experience falls under the idea of causation." Human experience is ordered by a pragmatic construction of causes and effects:

If in the past we find one event following another and this has been repeated, then we expect that it will happen again. That is all there is to the law of causality. It does not show that every cause must have a certain effect, every effect a cause; that there must be like causes for like effects; that there must be an adequate cause for every effect. We do not know this as a law of the universe. What we find is this fixed expectation—an expectation that comes so frequently, so unconsciously, that we are not aware of it. (P. 438)

This conception of causality is surprisingly radical. Mead does not even mention science in his definition of causality and stresses—like Weber—but the ordering power of practical everyday expectations. Nevertheless, Mead does not in the least intend to devalue scientific work on causes and effects. Mead is optimistic about the capacity of science to come up with causal knowledge, uniformities, and regularities and help society in directing

progress. Therefore, Mead's (1936:286) motto is, "The law is dead; long live the law!" With these views, Mead warranted later the microsociology approach that focused on qualitative regularities of human behavior (Blumer 1954; Strauss 1956; Goffman 1961). The study of social interaction, socialization, and group psychology was firmly established *within* sociology (Kalberg 2005:43).

On the other hand, early American sociologists stressed the necessity to study social change in the early twentieth century in macrosociological terms. Widespread immigration led to the establishment of demography within sociology—unlike in Germany, England, and France. Social change could not be studied solely by qualitative knowledge of human behavior; it required quantitative efforts. This exigency matched a quest for distinguishing sociology from the humanities and social work. The search for scientific procedures and laws became central (Oberschall 1972). Such scientific commitment promised further implications of research for social policy, for example, by alleviating tensions caused by massive population growth.

Concluding this section on the "prehistory" and the early constitution of modern sociology, we want to stress the enormous efforts undertaken until the beginning of the twentieth century. Not only had sociology had to emancipate itself from philosophical and speculative theories of society and the "great" history of ideas, it also had to elaborate its own concepts, which assumed that society is made up of meaningful human behavior and that, therefore, a methodological individualism would be appropriate. Finally, sociology needed to institutionalize itself in the academic community, thus establishing a link to the growing statistical knowledge about social affairs. These difficult tasks took a long time to accomplish but were solved by the time the founding fathers left the scientific scene in Europe and in America.

THE RISE OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

The Sociological Research Program

If we want to explain the directions that the more recent history of sociology has taken, we need to look at two aspects: what sociologists had in mind and the structural opportunities under which the discipline developed. To be sure, the circumstances of scientific analysis changed dramatically in the course of the twentieth century. Sociologists managed to institutionalize the new discipline in the scientific community in the first half of the twentieth century. In the second half, the history of sociology is characterized by its expansion at the universities with many new chairs and emerging research fields, at least in Western societies. However, the institutionalization of sociology had unexpected side effects, the increasing specialization of scholars in particular. Social theory and social research developed along separate routes and not

without conflicting relationships. In many countries, particularly in the United States, sociological theory was accused of promoting an undesirable regression to unscientific armchair research (Turner 1989:224). In contrast, in some European countries, particularly in France, Germany, and Great Britain, sociologists promoted theoretical efforts more than ever before.

We do not want to judge whose claims may be more or less justified in these continuing struggles. Rather, we take these conflicts within the discipline as a hint at the complexity of the sociological research program devised by its founding fathers. Weber's and Durkheim's legacies proved to be much more difficult to realize. Soon after Weber's premature death in 1920, a controversy started about what exactly his combination of explaining and understanding meant and in what way a theory of social action should be elaborated. Contenders to Weber's legacy were Alfred Schütz (1899–1959) and Talcott Parsons (1902–1979), both great admirers of Weber. They did develop, however, two completely different views of the master's intentions. Even though both Parsons and Schütz claimed that it was the perspective of the actor that should guide sociological research, Schütz disputed that Parsons's theory represented an analysis *adequate to meaning* (Schütz and Parsons 1977:57ff.). Weber's call for both *causal and meaningful adequacy* in sociological explanations was one thing, its concrete realization quite another.

This is one reason why sociology started splitting up in terms of its categories, intentions, and goals. Phenomenological sociology and its interpretive variants have stressed, against Parsons's structural functionalism, that sociological explanations must aim at meaningful adequacy and that it was necessary to understand the subjectively intended meaning of Ego's consciousness to explain social behavior and its outcomes. Some of the best discussions and exemplifications of this program can be found in Erving Goffman's (1959) studies of the *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, in Harold Garfinkel's (1967) *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, and finally, in many explications of the symbolic interactionist program originating in the social psychological writings of George H. Mead.

Another important discussion was drawn along the lines of conflict and consensus. Some of the key participants in this debate were Alvin W. Gouldner (1920–1981), Lewis A. Coser (1913–2003), and Ralf Dahrendorf (1929–), on the one hand, and Talcott Parsons (1902–1978) and Robert K. Merton (1910–2003), on the other hand. Especially in the 1960s, this debate polarized the sociological community with one side claiming a particular competence for the analysis of social change, whereas the other side was said to be obsessed by the question of social integration. Parsons never accepted the proposed challenge that his general theory of action had a conservative, static bias and was led by an oversocialized conception of man. He developed the basic postulates of his theory gradually from *The Structure of Social Action* (Parsons 1937) to *The Social System* (Parsons 1951), in which he elaborates two

familiar axioms of human action. First, following the utilitarians, Parsons assumes that in every situation, people aim at an optimum gratification of their needs. The second axiom relates individuals to situations assumed to be determined by culturally structured patterns or norms. Hence, the pursuit of aims is always based on culturally recommended action patterns. These patterns discipline action—the system of order thus supersedes men's interest. Norms, or better, the obligatory character of norms, function not only to avoid social war but also to overcome “double contingencies” generally. By recognizing that in society there are choices and uncertainties on my part and that of others, Parsons places the solution of the problem of these contingencies in the center of the interaction process. They are supposed to be overcome by internalized norms. In deciding the Hobbesian problem of order, Parsons refers to the common value system as *the* prerequisite for the constitution of social order.

The much-discussed relation between action and system is easy to express in Parsons's sense: Action *is* system, that is, social systems are formed by interrelated actions. Parsons gradually developed a conceptual scheme for the analysis of social systems. He maintains that a social system gets its system character from boundary maintenance and a tendency toward equilibrium. That is to say, members of some social entity are generally closer to one another than they are to nonmembers; there is more mutual understanding, and anticipated responses are more often validated in relations with insiders than with outsiders; there is a tendency with regard to insiders to repeat contact, to cooperate, and to continue relationships. On the other hand, social systems are also characterized by built-in mechanisms that tend to keep society unchanged over time or that tend to reestablish a lost equilibrium. From this point of view, social conflicts and societal change can only be conceived of as temporary deviations from stable structures. If any given social system is to persist or to undergo an orderly process of developmental change, the system must solve four functional problems: adaptation to the environment, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern maintenance (AGIL). As they evolve, societies differentiate first along these AGIL lines and then into subsystems of each AGIL function (economic subsystem, etc.). However, the principle of differentiation is not sufficient. Segmentation and normative specification are also needed.

Even though Parsons's argument (actually taken from Weber) that empirical observation shows a certain stability of normative patterns is undoubtedly correct, his obsession with normatively stabilized social integration challenged his contemporaries to systematic criticism, and competing theories were developed that put more stress on social conflicts. In *The Functions of Social Conflict*, Coser (1956)—a student of Merton—presented a conflict-theoretical reanalysis of Simmel's *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations* and stressed that social conflicts are not necessarily in contrast to social order and have positive effects

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on societal development. Dahrendorf (1958) found his place in the social sciences of the twentieth century by delineating himself from Parsons. He points out that society is always characterized by two faces that unite static *and* dynamic components, integration *and* conflict. Nevertheless, both sides are by no means structures that are self-understood and closed, but “two equally valid aspects of every imaginable society” (p. 175). Hence, he focused on an extension of the structural-functional theory wherever its claim of universality hides the immanent capacity of explaining social change and conflict. Dahrendorf (1959) argued against the structural-functional primacy of integration that “the ‘dynamically variable elements’ which influence the construction of social structures do not necessarily originate outside the ‘system’ but may be generated by the structure itself” (p. 123).

The confrontation between structural functionalism, on the one hand, conflict theorists and phenomenological interactionists, and on the other hand, it also posed a challenge to Niklas Luhmann (1927–1999), whose devotion to systems theory relates him to Parsons, but only in a very limited sense. Luhmann argued that it does not make sense to develop competing theories for social integration and social conflict, interactionist and societal analysis. His claim is as high as Parsons’s was: formulating a general theory of human conduct capable of treating every type of human conduct, be it consensual, be it conflictual. For Luhmann, there can be no doubt that research will inevitably lead to some alienation of meaningful first-order expressions because individual motives must be subsumed under more general categories to be part of sociological explanations. While many scientists continue to use Weber’s problematic ideal types of human conduct, Luhmann (1990:53ff.) believes that the interpretation of action as a means-values-ends relation is a far too special view of human behavior to be able to constitute a *basic* tool. Undoubtedly the causal relation between means, values, and ends provides evidence to the observer, but it is not fundamental enough to reconstruct the broad ways in which meaning appears in the social world. Instead, Luhmann sees the attribution model of behavior as suitable for achieving meaningful *and* causal—that is, generalizable—adequacy in sociological research. This model summarizes conduct in four directions: internal versus external, stable versus variable interpretation. Internal attributions of behavior will appear as action based either on ability and/or effort. External attributions are interpreted as passive experience of the world, either as luck or fate. Hence, social action is not an ontologically, unquestioned given object of sociological research but a first-order interpretation based on the internal attribution of conduct. It is for this reason that Luhmann (1995:137ff.) places his level of analysis on social systems, or, to be more precise, on communication instead of social action.

From Luhmann’s point of view, systems theory helps distinguish between the mental level, on the one hand, and the social level, on the other hand. This clear distinction

reminds us that sociological explanations are—as Weber and Durkheim told us—based on the *social* rules that govern the attribution of meaning. Mental idiosyncrasies are of no interest to sociology. Therefore, the advantage of using systems theory appears as methodological—not only by providing a clear-cut distinction between the social and the mental level but also by breaking down, as Weber had intended by his notion of “social relations,” the complex object of “society” into smaller units of observation, which Luhmann calls different kinds of social systems: face-to-face interactions, formal organizations, and functional subsystems of society. Such a theoretical use of the term *system* has nothing in common with Parsons’s notion of “action as a system.”

Nevertheless, Luhmann’s solution of the problem of intersubjectivity must be understood in the context of the discussions between Parsons and Schütz. Luhmann takes Parsons’s side against Schütz in this question and reinterprets phenomenologically the Parsonian distinction between the psychic and the social system. Both systems constitute two separate levels of meaning. Therefore, the distinction between psychic and social systems is not—as in Parsons’s AGIL scheme—meant analytically but rather *empirically*: Luhmann (1995:12) assumes that there are psychic and social systems in the real world. Both consciousness and communication are based on meaning but each has its own logic and dynamic. Only communication—and not consciousness—forms the “intersubjective” level of the social on which sociological explanations must be found. This solution of the intersubjectivity problem makes the struggle between “subjective” and “objective” terminologies obsolete.

Luhmann’s concept of understanding follows Schütz, who had objected to Weber’s methodology that ideal-type understanding is not a privilege of the social scientist. Rather, in everyday life, actors apply interpretive schemes to grasp the meaning of what they do. Luhmann integrates this idea into his concept of communication and insists on practical first-order understanding as the object of sociology. Accordingly, communication consists of three combined elements: utterance, information, and understanding. The meaning of behavior is constituted by the *communicative* act of *understanding* that follows the *utterance* of *information* (Luhmann 1995:139ff.). Selective understanding constitutes meaningful social rules that help actors build up certainty about what to expect in the social world. Luhmann defines meaning phenomenologically as a means of selection. In other words, human behavior is meaningful as its motives are causal selections from a horizon.

Unfortunately, Luhmann’s integration of systems theory and interpretive sociology has not been widely discussed in Anglo-Saxon sociology. Instead, Jeffrey Alexander’s (1982) call for multidimensionality and Anthony Giddens’s (1984) theory of structuration found more attention. Especially Giddens’s approach generated some consensus on the relation between human behavior

and social structures that are no longer considered as incompatible. Structures are now seen as both restricting and enabling conduct. The crucial question, however, that remained was what consequences this new consensus has for empirical research.

The Rise of Social Research

While theorists insisted on the meaningful behavior as the causal basis of social change, researchers did not wait for a consensus that might end theoretical controversies about the meaning of meaning. After World War II, Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) became the founding father of modern social research. Together with Marie Jahoda (1907–2001) and Hans Zeisel (1905–1992), he conducted the famous study *The Unemployed of Marienthal* (Jahoda, Lazarsfeld, and Zeisel [1933] 2002). The task of Lazarsfeld's research group from the *Wirtschaftspsychologische Arbeitsstelle Wien* was to document the psychological effects of long-term unemployment. They used modern methods of data collection that allowed insights into the mechanisms between structural descriptions and subjective experiences that the affected persons themselves reported. The measurement of walking speed became famous as an indicator for individual coping. The group constructed types of attitudes, for example, the unbroken, the resigned, the apathetic, and the desperate. The answer to the by then much politically debated question about the social psychological consequences of unemployment was clearly the prevalence of apathy. Despite the qualitative and individual case study character, the group demonstrated that it is in principle possible to quantitatively measure complex social phenomena. In 1940, Lazarsfeld got a chair at Columbia University, New York City, where, in 1944, his *Forschungsstelle* became the *Bureau of Applied Social Research*.

Twentieth-century social research is well characterized by the development of Lazarsfeld's reader *Language of Social Research*. In the 1955 edition, Lazarsfeld and Rosenberg (1955:393) give an account of action (purchasing a good) that combines understanding and explaining, connecting the analysis of the "total make-up of the person" and "the total situation in which he finds himself." By the 1972 edition, empirical understanding of action largely disappeared together with qualitative research in favor of extensive multivariate analysis. Such quantitative methods as path analysis fulfilled a deep wish for sociological scientism—a stance that triumphed in the generation after World War II connected with names such as Otis D. Duncan (1984), William F. Ogburn and Meyer F. Nimkoff (1964), and Hubert M. Blalock (1982). A strong concern with methodology promised to cure sociology's inferiority complex on its way into academia and to provide equal strength in the competition of scientific disciplines.

In the quest for more quantitative, generalizing knowledge, researchers aimed at all major sectors of society

(e.g., family, education, work, and health care). Funding agencies asked for more information about society to be able to modernize it, rebuild it, and make welfare state activities more efficient. Together with textbooks and research methods, American sociology's triumph of empiricism and scientific orientation were adapted widely. This is illustrated, among other things, by the establishment of various institutes for advanced studies in Europe after World War II (e.g., in Austria, Sweden, and The Netherlands).

One of the most important achievements is constituted by the development of class schemes. Class schemes uncover class *relations* instead of conceiving of them as a gradational difference of prestige. Therefore, Goldthorpe (1980:40) defines the class concept by typical market and work situations, including the proximity to occupational authority, the level of work autonomy, the way work is supervised, the opportunities for promotions, and job security. It has become common to confront the European Erikson/Goldthorpe/Portocarero, or EGP, scheme as "Weberian" with the American scheme of Wright's (1997:25) more "Marxist" scheme, which, too, is based on typical work relations but which focuses on the inherent relations of exploitation. Goldthorpe's scheme is widely used in comparative research.

Another major achievement of the twentieth-century social research was established by large-scale panel data and the implementation of longitudinal research designs. Longitudinal research aims at the collection of data over time, which is essential if one wants to measure social change (Mayer 2000). It may be based on repeated cross-sectional studies, prospective or retrospective data collection. Important examples of repeated cross-sectional surveys are the United Kingdom's General Household Survey and Family Expenditure Survey, and the European Union's Eurobarometer. Well-known prospective panel studies are the US Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), the British Household Panel Study (BHPS), and the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP). They are based on a random sample of respondents and repeated data collections at fixed intervals (up to a year). They all aim at grasping in more detail the nature of social change. The GSOEP is a prospective longitudinal survey that interviews a random sample of adults annually.

Cohort panels constitute a specific form of study taking into account generational replacement. It is assumed that a cohort experiences relatively similar life events. Researchers select an age group and administer a questionnaire to a sample to follow it over life courses with reinterviews usually every five years. Examples are the UK National Child Development Study and the German Life History Study (GLHS). The GLHS is a retrospective study of individual life courses that collects all information from birth on at one point. It consists of different birth cohorts for which information about education and employment history, parental status, marital and fertility history, and family and household composition are provided. In

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comparison to other panels (e.g., the American PSID), both the GSOEP and GLHS contain relatively little information about attitudes and other social psychological scales that might provide a deeper insight into the micro-dynamics and consequences of human behavior (Diewald 2001). This is also demonstrated by a more recent struggle in British Sociology where the National Child Development Study (NCDS) provided the basis for a debate on the more or less meritocratic character of contemporary labor markets (Bond and Saunders 1999; Breen and Goldthorpe 1999). This “race” between the causal weight of structural and individual factors did not have a definite result, which in turn stresses the need for more and deeper panel studies into the meaning of human behavior.

Interviews and surveys have become the major methodological instrument of data collection to measure both subjective attitudes and structural characteristics of classes and life courses. Whereas origins of surveying date back to the early nineteenth century, early political polls began to appear in the 1930s, and market research emerged only after World War II. Since then, survey and interview research has become dominant so that the majority of available data today stems from interview surveying. Such programs as the General Social Survey (GSS), European Social Survey Program (ESS), and the Eurobarometer today provide sociological research with interesting data about social change. Another example for recent international collaborative survey research is the International Social Justice Project (ISJP), which has explored popular beliefs and attitudes on social, economic, and political justice through two large-scale opinion surveys fielded in 13 countries in 1991 and 6 countries in 1996 (Kluegel, Mason, and Wegener 1995). The ISJP questionnaire combined structural and social psychological, attributional concepts—a research design that might prove to be an important tool for combining quantitative and qualitative aspects. It did show that beliefs about justice and inequality are much more individualistic in the United States than in other countries (see Kluegel and Smith 1986).

Survey and interview research has gone a long way—and not only in terms of internationalization, which makes it virtually impossible today to distinguish between European, American, and other sociologies in this field. It proceeded from merely collecting objective facts about the poor in the nineteenth century to surveying subjective phenomena and measuring specific human behavior and its contextuality in the past decades. The relation between attitudes that people will mention in surveys and their real behavior has continuously inspired research efforts (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980) and a more recent interest in the cognitive processes of the interview situation (Krebs and Schmidt 1993).

This is not to deny that case studies and “small *N*” qualitative research have played an important part in tracking social change, especially in areas of society with radical social change, dealing with public and private talk, all kinds of documents and texts, interviews of different style,

Internet communication, and visual data such as photographs, cartoons, videos, and advertisements (Silverman 2004). Important schools comprise conversation analysis, ethnography, ethnomethodology, and discourse analysis. Qualitative research in virtually all areas of society will also continue to be at the center of sociological efforts in the twenty-first-century sociology.

FROM SPECIALIZATION TO REUNIFICATION: PROSPECTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

In the twentieth century, sociologists have often been quite critical of their discipline because of its many rivaling schools and its seeming multiparadigmatic failure to focus on a unified approach to the study of society. One could argue, however, that it is not only the pronounced willingness of scholars to come into conflict over methodological and conceptual issues, it is also sociology’s object of study—a highly differentiated society—which enforces methodological and theoretical pluralism.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we find an extensive search for new goals and orientations as well as a lot of dissatisfaction with the development of social research. The deepest dissatisfaction seems to stem from the wide gap between our everyday and theoretical knowledge about human behavior and the available data. Despite ever-larger and differentiated data sets, research does not seem to have achieved convincing explanations that make the inequality and change of life courses sufficiently understandable, not to mention the lack of firm recommendations for political goals. The relation between understanding and explaining remains sketchy despite our certainty that it is only human behavior that can be the causal source of change and continuity.

Consequently, in recent years the nature of causal statements has (again) been critically discussed. *Sociological Methods & Research* even printed Abbott’s (1998:174) overly pessimistic view that correlational analysis is a waste of time if you want to understand why social life happens the way it does. There is a wide dissatisfaction with the deficiency of research to make unequal human behavior more *intelligible*, as Goldthorpe (2000:178, 260) stresses in his quest for complementing statistics and hermeneutics. According to Goldthorpe, we do not exactly know how educational “decisions” are actually made and what kind of causal attributions people from different class backgrounds typically make. In fact, our methodology and data suffer from knowing a lot less about such situations on a general level than about the *results* of mobility processes, which are revealed by class schemes. As a consequence, research on meaningful behavior in such situations up to now is dominated by qualitative typologies gained from small *N*’s. The results are interesting, but their underlying data sets lack a level of validity that would

permit the test of specific hypotheses on social change between cohorts.

Nevertheless, looking back at the history of sociology, we see no reason to be overly pessimistic about sociology's scientific record. As we indicated at the beginning, sociology had to go a long way to free itself from philosophical theories of social life and society. Even today, philosophical, theoretical, and "armchair" conceptions of society remain rivals in public discourse. It is often difficult to find public sympathy for sociological research results, as the mass media favor simple answers to complex societal problems, and these do, however, inevitably involve multiple causal assessments. Often, political discussions assimilate sociological advice to their conflicting structures so that much of its actual value is lost when it is transferred to the public. Against this background, the sociological ideas about meaningful human behavior as the basis of societal change and continuity are difficult to defend—despite sociology's growing empirically validated knowledge.

Keeping these obstacles in mind, both the theoretical and empirical progress of sociology and some more-recent integration of theories of human conduct and social research are impressive. We believe that sociology will have to live with a continuous critical self-perception and public distrust against attempts at a sociological "enlightenment" of societal processes. Sociologists should present their research results with more self-confidence and insist on their high proficiency for a deeper understanding of modern societies and their problems. However, this goal will be achieved only by more integration of research and theoretical attempts at grasping the meaningful character of human behavior and its consequences. Theorists often forget that their efforts and controversies should actually contribute to or at least lay the basis for better empirical understanding and research designs. A more serious integration of theory and research could, as we believe, make sociology a leading discipline in the scientific community.

3

THE HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY: THE NORTH AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

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All histories are written from a particular perspective, time, and place, and are therefore partial and incomplete. To paraphrase Albion Small (1916:721–22), the history of sociology has less to do with facts and even ideas than it does with the context of those facts and the reasons for particular thoughts. As suggested by the recent volume *Diverse Histories of American Sociology* (Blasi 2005), the histories of North American sociology have been written from diverse perspectives and contexts, but always with the conviction that expanding the knowledge of its history would provide a greater and more sophisticated understanding of the discipline and its complexities (House 1936; Bottomore and Nisbet 1978; Bulmer 1984; Ross 1991).

THE VARIETIES OF HISTORIES OF SOCIOLOGY

Albion Small (1854–1926), one of the key founders of American sociology, produced several historical accounts of the discipline, including “Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States (1865–1915)” (1916) and *Origins of Sociology* (1924). Small (1924) maintained that sociology “came into existence as an organic part of this maturing of social science as a whole . . . Sociology is a normal advance of human thought from less developed to more

developed dealings with human reality” (pp. 14–15). He recognized that the work of building sociology was done also by those outside of, or marginal within, academe who wished to explore the social world, to understand it, to answer questions, and to solve social problems. “Indeed,” Small remarks, “there is the wherewithal for a brilliant Doctor’s dissertation on the subject ‘Sociology outside the Ranks of the Sociologists’” (p. 15). Small credited especially German sociology and philosophy as a watershed for the evolution or development of a social and historical self-consciousness in sociology, reflecting especially his own training and perspective. In addition, Small recognized how the history of sociology is shaped and influenced by factors of politics, nationality, and ethnicity (p. 19), and, we would add, race and gender. He asserted that an understanding of our discipline and its accumulated knowledge in whatever period requires an understanding of its history.

Nearly half a century later, Howard W. Odum (1951) began his history of American sociology reiterating and extending Small’s point of view, reminding the reader of (1) the distinct history produced by each epoch, (2) the need for young sociologists to understand the history of sociology, (3) the dynamics of technological, economic, and social changes creating the context for the development of sociology, (4) North American sociology’s roots in European as well as American culture, and (5) the expectations for sociology in the future. In his detailed and

useful history, Odum takes an institutional approach to tell “the Story of Sociology in the United States through 1950.”

Various approaches to the historical narrative of sociology have followed the early histories by Albion Small, including Harry Elmer Barnes’s (1948) classic edited compendium, *An Introduction to the History of Sociology*, which views the topic through the sociologies of individuals who were pioneers (Comte, Spencer, Morgan, Sumner, Ward, Gumpłowicz, German sociologists, non-German Europeans, English, and finally American). J. H. Abraham in *The Origins and Growth of Sociology* (1977) similarly looks at individual figures through a periodization from Plato and Ibn Khaldun to twentieth-century America and modern Europe. A voluminous and detailed account of the history of American sociology is L. L. Bernard and Jessie Bernard’s ([1943] 1965) *Origins of American Sociology: The Social Science Movement in the United States*, which relates the rise of sociology to the social science movement, associationism, the impact of Comte and positivism, quantification, and sociology’s emergence as a positive science.

Heinz Maus (1962) in *A Short History of Sociology* examines the history of sociology internationally from the nineteenth century to modern times. In analytical chapters, Maus considers how “American Sociology Faces Reality” and “American Sociological Theory and Teaching” in which he discusses the impact of the work of Park, Burgess, and Thomas and Znaniecki, as well as the influence of cultural anthropology on early American sociology. He notes that sociology in America has been significantly more influenced by social psychology than in other countries, that American social research has tended toward the quantitative and therefore away from history, but that the migration of European sociologists and social scientists to America in the 1930s and 1940s had a remarkable influence on the development of social theory and social research.

Jennifer Platt’s (1996) *A History of Sociological Research Methods in America, 1920–1960*, is a comprehensive and well-contextualized analysis of research methods in American sociology in the twentieth century. Neil Smelser’s (2003) “Sociology: Spanning Two Centuries” combines a historical view of sociology’s development in the twentieth century with insightful projections about the movement of sociology in the new millennium.

Histories of the American Sociological Association (ASA) by Lawrence Rhoades (1981) and Katherine J. Rosich (2005) focus on the umbrella organization of American sociology. Other histories may be found that focus more specifically on subdisciplines, specific areas of study, academic departments, and professional organizations. *A Centennial Bibliography of the History of American Sociology* by Michael R. Hill, a comprehensive and well-developed research tool, was prepared for the 2005 Centennial Celebration of the ASA.

THE ORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY

The rise of sociology in the United States was not the result of a straightforward transplantation of European ideas to American soil. To be sure, early American sociologists drew upon the European legacy, but they did so selectively, in some cases critically, and adapted European ideas to American experience and conditions. In addition, some streams of thought, for example, pragmatism, appeared to arise from distinctive aspects of the nineteenth-century American context in the decades following the Civil War.

The European Legacy

In common with the other social sciences, sociology traces its modern intellectual lineage to the eighteenth-century Enlightenments of France, Germany, and Britain. It was in these contexts that both general and specific social sciences were first proposed and foundational ideas advanced. Of particular significance was the idea of distinguishing between state and society, including the assumption that state forms were malleable and contingent, subject to human design, whereas societies included both malleable and more or less permanent features resistant to human intervention or wholesale change.

Baron de Montesquieu pioneered a sociological approach to the classification and study of societies focusing on their social laws and institutional organization. Condorcet, his successor, extended the goal of the scientific study of society with a strong commitment to the idea of progress. In Germany, Immanuel Kant developed a synthetic view of knowledge showing the necessity of both rational and empirical aspects of any possible science. J. G. Herder developed the idea of societies as coterminous with cultures that could be understood as unified wholes based on common language and living patterns. In Scotland, Adam Smith pioneered the idea of making specific human institutions and processes, for instance, the division of labor, objects of new “moral sciences.” Adam Ferguson and John Millar called specific attention to the significance of social rank or stratification as an object of study. In all of these cases, human societies, institutions, and practices were regarded as objects of systematic observation without recourse to theological speculation or nonnaturalistic modes of explanation. At the same time, the Enlightenment philosophers shared the view that increases in our knowledge and understanding of human societies and social processes could be expected to lead to the improvement of society and hence of human welfare. By the end of the eighteenth century, the way had been prepared for the establishment of social sciences as specific disciplines with defined frames of analysis and inquiry.

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Taking their cue from Condorcet, both Henri de Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte worked out ideas for a new science of society to be called *sociology*. This new science was to comprise both rational and empirical methods in the study of both structural (*social statics*) and processual (*social dynamics*) aspects of society. Above all, this new science was to contribute to our knowledge of human social evolution and to the improvement of human societies by the application of sociological knowledge to social life. Comte set forth his detailed vision and program of sociology in his six-volume work *Cours de philosophie positive, 1830–1842*.

During the nineteenth century, the formative center of gravity of the new field of sociology shifted from France to England. First of all, the promulgation of Comte's ideas for sociology became the project of Harriet Martineau, the English political-economist and writer whose 1853 translation remains the standard version (Martineau 1853). Martineau, who in 1838 declined a publisher's invitation to preside over the establishment of a new journal of sociology, published over 70 volumes of essays and research over the next several decades on topical questions of the period, such as the effects of industrialization, occupational and social change, urbanization, work and work conditions, socialization, race relations, women's roles, to name but a few (Hill and Hoecker-Drysdale 2001; Hoecker-Drysdale 1992). Especially noteworthy were her empirical and critical macro-studies of American society based on extensive fieldwork, direct observation, and interviews conducted over a two-year period; her contributions to the public discourse concerning the abolition of slavery; and her analysis of the subjugation of women (Martineau 2004). Her *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, 1838, the first treatise on methodology in sociology, provides still valuable instruction for researchers (Martineau 1989).

The theoretical development of the social sciences was aided by John Stuart Mill, whose 1843 work, *A System of Logic*, outlined methodological ideas for the social sciences. Herbert Spencer wrote several influential books on sociology, including *Social Statics*, 1851, *The Study of Sociology*, 1873, and *The Principles of Sociology*, 1882. Spencer made extensive use of biological, especially organismic, analogies in his analysis of society ("society is an organism"), and is best known as a theorist of societal evolution paralleling the Darwinian model.

The Emergence of American Sociology: 1850–1890

Not unlike the situation in Britain and Europe, American sociology emerged out of a number of influences: the prevalence of, and interest in, political economy; concern with social problems, including poverty with increasing urbanization; workers' situations in nineteenth-century industrialization (Martineau, Florence Kelley, Edith Abbott); a strong interest in the methodologies of

social research (Martineau, Spencer, Comte, Durkheim, Charles Booth, Beatrice, and Sidney Webb); empirical investigations of families and workers (Booth, the Webbs, Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and others); the increasing use of ecological and statistical analyses (Booth, Durkheim, Kelley, and Clara Collett); analyses of gender and class (Thorstein Veblen, Max Weber, the Webbs, C. P. Gilman, and Lester Ward) and race relations (Martineau, W. E. B. Du Bois, Annie Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary Church Tyrell, and Fannie Barrier Williams).

Generally, sociology's early figures practiced sociology as a response to the societal needs and problems, serious questions and issues about social change in urban industrial contexts, and the desire to know more about the social factors affecting people's lives. However, sociology was struggling for recognition as a positive science based on empirical observation, a progressive accumulation of facts, and provable theories. By the end of the second period in America, around 1920, sociology's history became regarded as anachronistic and unimportant, except, of course, for some, like Albion Small, who were committed to this aspect of sociology. New theories, concepts, and methodologies were seen to stand on their own, as abstract tools of timeless meaning. The various debates and tensions between theory and empiricism became pronounced by the mid-twentieth century in America. Today, however, in the early twenty-first century, though tensions remain, the history of sociology is acknowledged as essential to our understanding of sociology; to the critique of our research goals, tools, and findings; and to suggestions for new directions in our research.

The impetus for the rise of sociology in North America, first in the United States and later in Canada, was provided by a number of developments. First, a major influence among the North American founders of sociology, academic and nonacademic, was their philanthropic and humanistic, even moralistic, concerns. American Protestant ministers and/or offspring of ministers whose concern for the effects of the experiences of immigration, urbanization, industrialization, and accompanying dislocation, poverty, family disorganization, and crime combined an interest in exploring and understanding these developments with a desire to find solutions to society's problems. In the same way, women and black Americans were pursuing research to address social issues and problems of gender and race. "In short, like every other distinct thought-phenomenon, the American sociological movement was a child of its time" (Small 1916:724). Small points out that this quest to understand societal problems was prevalent as early as the mid-nineteenth century (pp. 723–24). The American Civil War and its Jim Crow aftermath created the realization that "work was ahead to bring American conditions into tolerable likeness to American ideals" (p. 725). Harriet Martineau had concluded in her antebellum studies of America that the contradictions between stated American values and the realities of race and gender discrimination

and subjugation posed a grave danger to the social fabric of American society, and indeed to the survival of the young republic (Martineau 2004).

In their analysis of American sociology, Stephen Turner and Jonathan Turner (1990) emphasize the moral concerns, in large part fueled by abolitionist values and activities that fed into reform movements and professional organizations during and after the Civil War. Many reformers recognized that these provided more efficacious avenues for improvement in human affairs than political parties. The authors further point to the fact that this interesting relationship between sociologists and reformers became riddled with tensions between the establishment of sociology as a science, still regarded with trepidation by some, and the demands for social reform led by religious reformers, particularly (pp. 12–15).

As young women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to attend universities in the United States and Canada, they applied their educations and training in empirical methods to pursue their philanthropic interests and social concerns about various groups and social problems in the community. The outstanding instance, rather parallel to the collaboration of Charles Booth and Beatrice and Sidney Webb in England, is Jane Addams and the Hull House women (Deegan 1988, 1991, 2002). A great deal of research along with fresh perspectives have revealed the critical roles in theory, empirical research, social policy, and applied sociology that women have played in the emergence of sociology since Harriet Martineau's generation (Deegan 1991; Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1998; Reinhartz 1992, 1993); and indeed, in the Western world since the Enlightenment (McDonald 1993, 1994, 1998). For a look at North American women's narratives about their experiences as sociologists in the twentieth century, see works by Ann Goetting and Sarah Fenstermaker (1995), Barbara Laslett and Barrie Thorne (1997), and Deegan (1991).

The second factor in the emergence of North American sociology lay in the need to legitimate a new social science with its focus on society and collectivities that made claims not only to its own distinctive object of study but also to its place as a science among others following natural science paradigms, an objective perspective on social life using scientific methodologies, quantitative analyses, logical reasoning, and verifiable results (Smelser 2003). Tension between the model of sociology as a traditional scientific discipline and the model of sociology as a humanistic, interpretive field of study can be found in most decades and particularly in the interwar and post-World War II periods (Lundberg 1947; Lynd 1939). Certainly Lester Ward (1883) as well as Albion Small and George Vincent (1894) were interested in establishing sociology's scientific stature within the social sciences.

A third aspect of this endeavor has to do with the organizational foundations of this new field of study as an academic discipline, a recognizable and legitimate source of

data for broader public use, and an acceptable, credible enterprise for the "study of mankind" (Stuart Chase). These foundations include not only the institutionalization of sociology in higher education but also recognition through the organization of professional associations and by governments, foundations, unions, business and industry, and society at large of the value of sociological research and of the profession. Sociology in the United States was born out of the concerns and interests of individuals trained in the related fields of history, economics, political science, psychology, and religion. Blasi (2004) shows that the early faculty in sociology often held doctorates in history (several at Johns Hopkins), philosophy (Dewey, Mead), and economics (E. A. Ross, Veblen). The earliest departments not surprisingly had at least one of the founding male academics associated with them: Yale—Sumner; Columbia—Giddings; Brown—Ward; Chicago—Small; and Wisconsin—E. A. Ross.

Fourth, it should be emphasized that in sociology's early period, many important sociologists were outside of academe so that while doing sociological theory and empirical research, they were generally not considered part of the founding generation nor what became the sociological establishment. Many of these were either trained in other disciplines, worked outside colleges and universities, and/or were women and minorities, particularly African Americans, who had specific perspectives on minority needs. The matter of trained membership in the profession becomes more complex when one considers the profound impact of European and other immigrant scholars in various time periods. In addition to research by academics, major projects took up pragmatic inquiries, as in the works of Ida B. Wells-Barnett on lynching (1892, 1900) and Ann J. Cooper on racism (1892) and *The Hull House Maps and Papers* in Chicago (1895). Survey research had begun in the American context with the Pittsburgh survey by Paul U. Kellogg, 1907–1909, and even earlier with the labor surveys of H. K. Oliver in the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor in the 1870s that were successful in showing both the usefulness and the problems in survey research (Turner and Turner 1990:15, 32–33).

The Founding of Academic Sociology: 1890–1920

The early stages of American sociology can be best understood in terms of the major figures and the theoretical and methodological debates in North America at the time. Albion Small (1854–1926), Lester Frank Ward (1841–1913), William Graham Sumner (1840–1910), and Franklin H. Giddings (1855–1931), among the most influential of the male founders of sociology, were significantly influenced by the work and ideas of their European predecessors. Women founders in this generation, extending the tradition of Martineau, Besant, Butler, Tristan, and Webb (Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1998) and influenced

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by these predecessors, included Anna Garlin Spencer (1851–1932), Jane Addams (1860–1935), Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935), Florence Kelley (1859–1932), Edith Abbott (1876–1957), Sophonisba Breckinridge (1886–1948), Marion Talbot (1858–1947), Emily Greene Balch (1867–1961), Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862–1931), and many others (Deegan 1991). Several of these women held faculty positions and most published in sociology journals and conducted sociological research within and outside of academe.

Sociology as a discipline entered academe in the form of courses, specific faculty interests, and ultimately departmental structures. Courses were offered in other disciplines, especially political economy and political science, that were sociological in content if not in title. The first sociology course was taught by William Graham Sumner at Yale in 1875. Albion Small, in 1890 at Colby College, announced that he had changed the focus of an important course to “moral science” and “sociological philosophy” that included “descriptive sociology,” “statical sociology,” and “dynamic sociology” (Cosser 1978:292–93) and chaired the first Department of Sociology at Chicago in 1892.

From the beginning in North American sociology, there were differences in perspectives, predominantly between evolutionary naturalism that predicates immutable laws of evolution (Spencer, Sumner) and progressive evolutionism that suggested humans had evolved to a stage of emancipation and liberation from the imperatives of nature (Ward, Small) (Fine 1976; Smelser 2003:9–10). The conflicts in assumptions and approaches in sociology reflected differences in values and priorities for the study of society that had been embedded in the lives of the early sociological founders.

It was the struggle, then, between evolutionary, naturalism and social Darwinism against progressive evolutionism that dominated the intellectual and institutional development of sociology during its first two decades, as shown by William F. Fine (1976). The naturalistic or Darwinist evolution emphasized the inevitability of structures, classes, and natural processes that would shape the social world. Progressive evolutionism emphasized human distinctiveness, the creation of the sociocultural world, mastery over nature, humans’ developing freedom, and pursuit of values. It challenged the evolutionist idea of inevitable transition according to natural laws and emphasized human agency, free will, and progress as consequences of human actions. Nevertheless, both perspectives identified the need, indeed necessity, for the scientific study of social life and for new knowledge to address specific developments and problems in society. Both sides were building the case for sociology. Turner and Turner (1990) comment on the blending of positivism, organicism, and individualism as American sociology moved forward to establish itself as a science:

What emerges in early American sociology, then, are programmatic commitments to (1) a science that seeks to develop abstract general theory and (2) a combination of

individualism/mentalism that is reconciled in an uneasy alliance with evolutionism, organicism, and implicit functionalism. (P. 18)

One must recognize the additional fact of social reformism that was particularly dominant in America in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century, a number of basic textbooks were published: Albion W. Small and George E. Vincent, *An Introduction to the Study of Society*, 1894; Lester Ward, *Outline of Sociology*, 1898; and Ernest Burgess and Robert Park, *An Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, 1921. Important studies produced in the United States included W. E. B. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 1899; Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, 1899; Edward A. Ross, *Social Control*, 1901; Charles Horton Cooley, *Human Nature and Social Order*, 1902; William Graham Sumner, *Folkways*, 1906; Cooley, *Social Organization*, 1909; George Herbert Mead, “The Social Self,” 1913; Ernest Burgess, *The Science of Sociology*, 1921; E. A. Ross, *Principles of Sociology*, 1901; W. I. Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl*, 1923; Frederic Thrasher, *The Gang*, 1927; and Robert E. Park and E. W. Burgess, *The City*, 1925.

Studies by women that used the methodologies and analyses of sociology but were often done outside of academe included Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horror: Lynch Law in all its Phases*, 1892; Matilda Joslin Cage, *Women, Church and State*, 1893; Florence Kelley, *The Sweating System and Wage-Earning Children*, 1895; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Women and Economics*, 1898; Frances Kellor, *Experimental Sociology*, 1901; Emily Green Balch, *A Study of Conditions in City Life: With Special Reference to Boston*, 1903; C. P. Gilman, *Human Work*, 1904; Jane Addams, *The Subjective Need for Social Settlements*, 1892; *Democracy and Ethics*, 1902; “Trade Unions and Public Duty” and “Problems of Municipal Administrations,” in the *American Journal of Sociology* and over 500 other publications; Edith Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 1910; and Olive Schreiner, *Women and Labour*, 1911.

The roles played by women sociologists during this period exemplified in many ways the tensions and differences in perspectives among the early founders of sociology. Women who were not Ph.D.s in sociology, such as Martineau, Beatrice Webb, Josephine Butler, Annie Besant, and Jane Addams, had been doing sociological research and theorizing in the nineteenth century in England, Europe, and North America. Their work was most often associated with social reform, philanthropy, social policy making, the abolition movement, and suffrage politics in large part because these educated and trained women identified community issues, social injustices, individual and group needs, and social trends that required study, exposure, and action.

As Mary Jo Deegan (1991:8) points out, there were a number of “firsts” for women sociologists in the nineteenth century. Rose R. Firestone received her doctorate in

sociology from the University of Wooster (Ohio) in 1887; Mary Roberts Coolidge became an Assistant Professor in Sociology at Stanford University in 1894; Ida B. Wells-Barnett became the first black woman practicing sociologist (journalist) with her publications in the 1890s; Anna Julia Cooper (Ph.D., Sorbonne, 1925) wrote *A Voice of the South* in 1892; Marion Talbot became the first woman assistant professor sociologist at the University of Chicago in 1892.

Black American sociology made further inroads toward establishing its place within sociology with W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro*, 1896, a brilliant study using a variety of methodologies, and *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903. Along with E. Franklin Frazier and later Oliver Cox, Du Bois not only produced groundbreaking analyses of blacks in America but also ensured that research on minorities would become a critical part of the sociological enterprise.

The Establishment of Professional Organizations

Early organizational formations such as the American Social Science Association (1865–1885) founded by Franklin B. Sanborn brought together academics and nonacademics with scientific, historical, or philanthropic interests (Haskell 1977; Small 1916). In 1903, African American Jesse Lawson (1856–1927) formed the National Sociological Society (NSS), an organization of white and black men from the North and the South to address, among other things, the race problem (Hill 2005a:126–40). The organization collapsed a year later because of publicity problems, the splintering of potential members into several black organizations like the American Negro Academy, the reluctance of Du Bois and B. T. Washington to get involved in NSS, and the turn of the American Sociological Society (ASS) away from social reform and activism (Hill 2005a).

At the December 1905 Annual Meeting of the American Economics Association (AEA) at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, C. W. A. Veditz of George Washington University called a meeting of the sociologists present, to be held on December 27, to determine whether a section of sociologists should be formed within the AEA or another existing association, or whether the group should form an entirely new sociological association. Sociologists were surveyed in advance to explore their general thoughts on the matter. The nearly 50 attendees included Albion Small, E. A. Ross, Lester F. Ward, Thomas Carver, William Davenport, Anna Garlin Spencer, and Franklin Giddings among others. In one day a subcommittee (Cooley, Veditz, Wilcox, Wells, and Lindsay) produced a constitution. All articles were passed unanimously after limited discussion, officers were nominated and elected, and the first Annual Meeting of the ASS's 115 members (women and men) was held on December 27–29, 1906, in Providence, RI. Of the charter members, 14 would serve as presidents of the ASS (Rhoades 1981:1–5). The first executive committee consisted of Lester F. Ward, president,

William G. Sumner, first vice president, Franklin H. Giddings, second vice president, and C. W. A. Veditz, secretary-treasurer, plus six elected council members. The *American Journal of Sociology*, the first professional sociology journal in America, founded in 1895 at the University of Chicago by Albion Small, became and served as the official journal of the ASS until the *American Sociological Review* was established in 1936.

The major and best-known figures in this founding generation were Albion Small, Lester Frank Ward, William Graham Sumner, and Franklin H. Giddings. Others such as George Vincent, E. A. Ross, Thomas Carver, and William Davenport were also active in the new discipline. The ASS became important in the promotion of the social sciences, the creation of the Social Science Research Council, the establishment of the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, the development of the American Council of Learned Societies, and the advancement of the social sciences in the curriculum of public schools. Other accomplishments included the journal *Social Science Abstracts*, the *Dictionary of American Biography*, a national social science fraternity—Alpha Pi Zeta, and the *American Yearbook* (Rhoades 1981:6–7). Membership in ASS increased from 115 in 1905 to 1,530 in 1930. As the society grew in size and complexity, controversy arose regarding structure, fragmentation, the annual meeting format, and publications (Rhoades 1981:11–17).

Albion Small trained for the clergy, studied in Germany for two years and at Johns Hopkins for a year, and served as professor and president of Colby College for three years before he went to Chicago. He was a key figure in the first two decades of the movement to establish sociology as a recognized social science because he took initiative in founding the necessary formal structures. He was appointed the first Head Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago in 1892. He served as founding editor of the *American Journal of Sociology* for 30 years, and played a key role in the establishment of the ASS, of which he served as the fourth president in 1912–1913. Small was especially concerned that sociology study, understand, and compile its own history. He emphasized the importance for young sociologists to know the history of their discipline, an idea reiterated by ASA at its 2005 annual meetings when it recommended that every department establish a course on the history of sociology. Small's (1916) *Fifty Years of Sociology in the United States (1865–1915)* is an invaluable source of information on American sociology's earliest period. In many respects he reflects the creative tensions in early sociology to relate philosophy and sociology, science and value, historical and interpretive understanding of the social, and the application of specific knowledge to society's problems, issues, and conflicts.

Lester Frank Ward, president of the ASS in 1906 and 1907, published (at his own expense) the first major work in American sociology, *Dynamic Sociology*, in 1883. Ward, a man of working-class origins and a varied educational

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and work background, came to the discipline with an interest in the science of society, taking up an evolutionary theory of societal change that depended on the forces of matter, motion, and energy and moved in a progressive direction. Ward, in addressing the tension between the intellectual pursuit of understanding, on the one hand, and the application of sociological knowledge to improve society, on the other, saw sociology as a field with pure and applied divisions that studied both statics and dynamics, a Spencerian influence.

William Graham Sumner served as the second president of the ASS from 1908 to 1910. He had studied in Germany and England and spent most of his career teaching at Yale. In many respects Sumner can be seen as the pioneer of the anthropological tradition in sociology because of his compilation and theorizing about folkways and mores in societies. He was akin to Darwin and Spencer in defending the inevitability of social change and the imperatives of nature that worked in the social world as in the natural world. He disliked reformers and anyone who would pretend to social engineering. Sumner defended the status quo in such works as *What the Social Classes Owe Each Other*, 1883, and was convinced that social problems will take care of themselves through the elimination of people who perpetuate them. While both Ward and Sumner emphasized that human behavior was driven by biological and psychological drives as well as social motives, Ward emphasized the significance of the individual within a progressive collectivity. He believed that change, deliberate as well as natural, was dominant over a structured social order of inevitable social classes and group stratifications that Sumner emphasized.

Franklin H. Giddings, the fourth major founder, became the third president of the ASS, 1910–1912. Giddings worked as a journalist, had no graduate degrees, but received several honorary doctorates. Odum (1951) tells us that Giddings “was appointed to what is estimated the first full professorship of sociology in America in 1894” (p. 87) at Columbia. He was, above all, a teacher. “His influence upon sociology was measured in terms of his textbooks, his lectures and teachings, and the continued extension of his work by more than fifty PhD graduates who held top positions in college, university, publishing, and public affairs” (p. 87).

In the founding generation (1900–1920), many women began their careers with full intent to become professional sociologists and social scientists. Women such as Edith Abbott, Emily Balch, Sophonisba Breckinridge, Charlotte Gilman, Florence Kelley, and Annie Marion MacLean established connections with Jane Addams’s Hull House where the theory and practice of Chicago sociology continued under her influence and collaboration (Deegan 1991:16). That women most often ended up in tangential departments (social work, statistics, anthropology, union work, labor departments, and community service) and often outside academe was a particular function of the male culture and personnel in sociology at the time.

Nonetheless, women contributed a great deal to sociological research, social policy, and social reform (Deegan 1988, 1991).

There were exceptions among the men of course. Albion Small offered Jane Addams (BA, Rockford Female Seminary, 1881) teaching positions in the Chicago sociology department, which she declined to work instead in the community through Hull House. Cooley, Ross, and Bogardus cited Addams’s writings in their works, and Lester Ward was a defender of women’s rights, talents, and contributions. George Herbert Mead was active in the suffrage movement (Deegan 1988:208–11). Jane Addams, representative of women who became committed to social causes and the movement to facilitate community change, led an active campaign for peace in the years before World War I, but suffered public ostracism and professional marginalization as a result. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931; Emily Greene Balch, a student of Giddings, also won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946. Greene received support and encouragement from George E. Howard and W. E. B. Du Bois (Deegan 1991:55–62). Most important for our purposes here is the recognition and knowledge that women who experienced discrimination in educational environments nonetheless were present in every sense at the beginning and at every subsequent stage in the development of American sociology.

Securing the Place of Sociology as the Science of Society and the Study of Social Change and Crises: 1920–1940

In the period of transition from the post–World War I war decade to the realities of economic depression from 1929 onward, sociology expanded its repertoire of statistical analyses, use of survey methods, development of large research projects often at the impetus of government, and began to rise in visibility as the tools, methods, and approaches offered by this new social science became increasingly known and solicited. An historic project requested by President Hoover and headed by William F. Ogburn and Howard W. Odum resulted in the 1933 *Recent Social Trends*, which revealed the major trends in America in technology, the economy, population, the family, urbanization, education, and other areas. It was an exercise in demonstrating the potential of sociology to serve policy making as well as scientific goals. It was intended to provide background and context for reforms during the Depression and became a standard reference work for government and educators for some time to come.

New methodologies in sociology—participant observation, various types of interviews, questionnaires, use of government and private documents and archives—had been evolving since the nineteenth century. In their methodologically instructive *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 1918, W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki used a public call for immigrants’ autobiographies as well as letters and diaries to explore the Polish experience in the

early twentieth century. This project and W. I. Thomas's *The Unadjusted Girl*, 1923, were funded by philanthropists and social welfare leaders, Helen Culver and Ethel Surges Dummer (Platt 1996:143). The proliferation of empirical studies in sociology by 1920 brought with it the need for research funding, gleaned first from private individuals, then from foundations, and finally from government.

During this period the John D. Rockefeller Foundation, established by the man who founded the University of Chicago, was the largest single supporter of sociological research. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund, 1918–1929, funded sociological research particularly at Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, North Carolina, and the Social Science Research Council (Platt 1996:144). The Institute for Social and Religious Research (ISRR) (originally the Committee on Social and Religious Surveys) at Chicago was supported originally by Rockefeller to conduct research and analyses of the church as an institution and on social and religious movements using the scientific approach (Turner and Turner 1990:39–84). The Institute sponsored the well-known Middletown studies in 1923 but later rejected Robert and Helen Lynd's book as long and too descriptive; Lynd left, published the books with Harcourt, and situated himself at Columbia. Rockefeller withdrew his support from ISRR in 1932, in spite of its support of research by Park and others, because the statistical rigor and absence of practical value of the research were not in line with the expectations of supporters and readers (p. 45). Rockefeller supported from 1927 to 1932 the Local Community Research Committee where Robert E. Park was a central figure and the Social Science Research Council (p. 51).

The Social Science Research Council, a federation of learned societies, was one of the first interdisciplinary research bodies with academics from economics, political science, sociology, and statistics involved in the encouragement of joint research and the development of a scientific methodology. The *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, published in 1934, was also a cooperative project of all the social sciences. Symposia that explored the state of the social sciences resulted, in one instance, in *Recent Developments in the Social Sciences*, 1927, edited by E. C. Hayes. Social research in universities increasingly received monetary support from Rockefeller and others, particularly Howard Odum's Institute for Research in Social Science at North Carolina.

In the contexts of the Depression and World War II, sociologists were increasingly (1) funded to do massive reports on specific social problems or issues and (2) employed by various government agencies and departments: Works Progress Administration (1935–1943), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Tennessee Valley Authority, the Natural Resources Committee, and other state and local agencies, as well as the Office of Strategic Services, the Office of Population Affairs, the Department of State, the Agricultural Experiment Stations at the

land-grant universities, the Bureau of the Census where Philip Hauser played a major role, and, from World War II on, the U.S. military departments (Platt 1996:150–53).

This period set the stage for the founding of other departments, graduate programs, journals, research institutes, and major empirical studies and their expansions in numbers during the 1920s. The figures show considerable growth. Not only had the general undergraduate population in the United States increased from 462,445 in 1920 to nearly a million by 1930 with a subsequent rise in interest in the social sciences, but also the number of undergraduate textbooks in sociology had increased from 10 before 1919 to 26 in the following decade. The number of graduate students trebled from 1920 to 1930; the number of graduate degrees increased threefold from 1918 to 1924; and the number of Ph.D. degrees awarded in 1930 was four times the 1920 figure (Hinkle and Hinkle 1954:18).

Sociology as an organized profession in the 1920s and 1930s was an almost exclusively white male enterprise. Nevertheless, institutions like Jane Addams's Hull House in Chicago became important centers for women to do research, publications, community service, and to develop a culture of women-centered sociological work. Interestingly, women were seen as strong in research, statistical work, and demography (Margaret Hagoood, Alva Myrdal, Dorothy Swaine Thomas, and Irene Taeuber). The next generation of women sociologists being trained at Columbia in the 1930s and 1940s included Mirra Komarovsky, Gladys Meyer, Alice Rossi, and Grace Coyle, and at Chicago, Rose Hum Lee, Ethel Shanas, and Helena Znaniecki Lopata. Jessie Bernard, Helen McGill Hughes, Elizabeth Briant Lee, Carolyn Rose, and Alice Rossi were among the women who married men in sociology. The relationships "for better and for worse" often involved collaborative work as couples but frequently posed difficulties for the women's careers (Deegan 1991:18–20).

More quantitative research was accompanied by the expansion of descriptive sociology, that is, qualitative studies within communities beginning with Charles J. Galpin, *The Social Anatomy of a Rural Community*, 1915, which influenced Robert E. Park's work on the city (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925); E. M. Thrasher, *The Gang*, 1927, 1936; Harvey Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, 1929; Nels Anderson, *The Hobo*, 1923; Ruth C. Cavan, *Suicide*, 1928; Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto*, 1928; Robert and Helen Lynd, *Middletown*, 1929; Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in America*, 1932; Paul Cressey, *The Taxi Dance Hall*, 1932; and many other such studies using multiple methodologies, surveys, interviews, participant observation, diaries, letters, and so on. The factors creating such realities and their actors were seen as multiple and multicausal, creating networks of social relations and communications of a very complex nature.

Increasingly, sociology was moving toward a broader range of subjects of research, often involving other disciplines and contexts, thereby expanding the relevance and visibility of sociology as a discipline. An example of this

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is the studies by Elton Mayo at the Hawthorne Western Electric Plant in Cicero, Illinois, from 1927 to 1932, as much a study in the sociology of work and industrial relations as in industrial psychology because it demonstrated that work group norms and the informal organization among workers determined productivity.

Professionalization, changes in funding patterns, economic effects of the Depression, and a continuing fragmentation of sociology into numerous associations, journals, subdisciplines, and changing departmental rankings generated conflicts between the oncoming generation of sociologists and the older generations (Turner and Turner 1990:57–65). An indicator of these developments was the decline in membership in the ASS to approximately 1,000 by 1940 (Rhoades 1981:74). Perhaps the most pragmatic division was the separation of rural sociologists from ASA to establish the Rural Sociological Society in 1935 and to establish their own journal, *Rural Sociology*. The impetus for this was, to a considerable degree, increased funding from government and to some extent from the Rockefeller foundation in southern colleges and universities for quantitative research in agricultural contexts (Turner and Turner 1990:51–53).

Added to this were the debates over methodology and scientism, leading to questions like *Knowledge for What? The Place of Social Science in American Culture*, the title of Robert Lynd's (1939) challenge to make sociological research both relevant and scientific. Turner and Turner (1990:39–84) draw our attention to the numerous disputes during the 1930s having to do with sociology's audiences, the efficacy of hypotheses in social research, the tensions between traditional scholarship and technical research and between science and reform, and quantitative versus qualitative methods (pp. 66–67). These debates may have been suppressed during wartime, but they perdured in sociology after the war (George Lundberg's [1947] *Can Science Save Us?*).

Major theoretical works were published during the 1930s. The most original domestic works were the posthumously published books of the social psychologist, George Herbert Mead, based at the University of Chicago (1934, 2001). Mead, a pragmatist, developed ideas of the processes of socialization and the development of the social self that formed the basis for what became known as "symbolic interactionism." Other major theoretical publications of the period included Talcott Parsons's *The Structure of Social Action*, 1937; Pitirim Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, 1937–1939; and Parsons's translation of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 1939.

The Emergence of Canadian Sociology

Canadian and American sociology share not only the same continent but also, in some respects, a common history. There were, and perhaps still are, significant differences in the culture of sociology between the two countries, shaped particularly by historical, cultural, and

linguistic traditions (see Nichols 2002). However, even given these differences, the histories of Canadian and American sociologies have been intertwined. Sociology in Canada, as in the United States, emerged in the context of the "social gospel" movement, social reform movements, immigration, urbanization, and industrialization. The imperatives of the social gospel movement resulted in the establishment of sociology courses in numerous denominational colleges and church-sponsored social research (Brym 1989:16).

The influence of the Chicago School on Canadian sociology was clear from the beginning of sociology when in 1922 McGill University hired Carl A. Dawson, a Canadian trained by Robert E. Park at Chicago. In 1925, the McGill Department of Sociology was established, new hires were inevitably from Chicago, and Rockefeller funding helped to build sociology at McGill (Brym 1989:17). Strong ties between Canadian and American sociology were thereby established and sustained through the following decades with a substantial traffic of scholars. It can be said that though Canadian research projects were limited in number compared to the United States, the projects and their subsequent books became classics and highly influential in sociology in both countries, the two earliest being Everett C. Hughes's (assisted by wife Helen Hughes) *French Canada in Transition*, 1943, a study of a small city in Québec (Hoecker-Drysdale 1996). Leonard Marsh's *Canadians In and Out of Work*, 1940, the first important analysis of social class in Canadian society. Hughes promoted Park's sociology and helped to accelerate the growth of sociology in Canada through his association with Father Georges-Henri Lévesque, who in 1932 founded l'École des Sciences Sociales at Laval University, the center for early French Canadian sociology. Lévesque's successor, Jean-Charles Falardeau (Ph.D. Laval), another leader in French Canadian sociology, studied with Hughes at Chicago (Falardeau 1967). Léon Gérin (1863–1951), who produced many studies of Québec rural society, and Hughes were both influenced by Frédéric LePlay's family studies. Gérin studied the work of LePlay in Paris and Hughes absorbed the influence of LePlay from Park (Shore 1987:270).

Back in Chicago, Hughes began training Canadian as well as American sociologists, among them Jean Robertson Burnet and Aileen Dansken Ross. (Hoecker-Drysdale 1990:152–76). Although the singular influence of the Chicago School began to wane, the momentum of the traffic of sociologists between Canada and the United States has continued through the decades. Sociology in Canada is an amalgamation of French *sociologie*, the British tradition of political economy, and the American emphasis on social psychology, community studies, and new methodologies. The *éminence grise* of Canadian social science in its earliest decades was Harold Innis (1894–1952), a Chicago Ph.D. in political economy who spent his career at the University of Toronto and played an enormous role in advancing Canadian social science and in

developing the privately funded Canadian Social Science Research Council in 1941, predecessor of the Canada Council, a government agency founded in 1957 (Acland and Buxton 1999).

THE “GOLDEN ERA” OF SOCIOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES: FROM WORLD WAR II TO 1970

Following the dislocations of European sociologists caused by the rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s and the devastating consequences of World War II in Europe and the United Kingdom, the United States was positioned to take a preponderant role in the development of sociology in the postwar period. In fact, many of the pacesetter developments in both theory and research occurred in the United States during the years between the end of the war and 1970. This period was also marked by a great expansion on almost all fronts: academic development, professional organizations, journals, and scholarly publications, as well as the increasing role of governments in research funding (Lipset and Smelser 1961). While sociological research programs and methods proliferated in numerous directions, the trends in sociological theory showed a different pattern: at first consolidation around a single dominant paradigm, structural-functionalism, and then, by the 1960s, a substantial turning away from functionalism toward a variety of alternatives, including symbolic interactionism, exchange theory, phenomenology and ethnomethodology, conflict, and critical theory. With some justification Lawrence Rhoades (1981), in his *A History of the American Sociological Association*, designated the period from 1950 to 1970 the “golden era” of American sociology.

With the enrollment of returning American soldiers in large numbers in U.S. colleges and universities, sociology also began to expand rapidly as an academic subject. Although fluctuating, the number of undergraduate degrees awarded in sociology doubled between 1950 and 1965, and more than doubled again by the mid-1970s when they reached a peak of some 35,000 per year. The growth of graduate degrees awarded followed a similar pattern, rising from around 400 M.A.s per year in the 1950s to a high of more than 2,000 in the mid-1970s, and from around 150 Ph.D.s annually in the 1950s to a peak of more than 700 per year in the mid-1970s.

Theoretical Schools and Perspectives

The rise to preeminence of structural-functionalism both in the United States and abroad paralleled the period of postwar American dominance in world affairs. The most influential author of this school was Talcott Parsons of Harvard University, who in collaboration with colleagues in cultural anthropology and social psychology established the Department of Social Relations in 1946, an interdisciplinary

unit that subsumed and replaced the Department of Sociology. Along with various collaborators Parsons attempted to develop a comprehensive, abstract taxonomy of human society in such works as *Towards a General Theory of Action* (1951, edited with Edward Shils) and *The Social System* (1951). Using such concepts as *status*, *role*, *norm*, *value*, and *need*, he sought to develop an analytical language for the elemental properties of societies viewed as social systems, including their relations to personality and culture, also viewed as systems. His focus was on the structural aspects of societies and the *functional requisites* of social systems for their maintenance; hence, the name, structural-functionalism, later referred to more simply as *functionalism*.

Parsons, who was elected president of the ASA in 1949, was joined in promulgating functionalism by a number of his protégés and students. The most influential of these were Robert Merton, Kingsley Davis, Wilbert Moore, and Neil Smelser, all of whom also eventually served as presidents of the ASA. Merton, author of *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 1949, responding to critiques of the highly abstract level of Parsons’s theorizing, became known as the advocate of “theories of the middle range.” In attempting to clarify the relation between functions, consequences, and intentions, he distinguished between *manifest* and *latent* functions, according to the presence or absence of intention, and between *functions* and *dysfunctions*, according to whether the consequences were positive or negative for a designated social system. Latent functions were conceptually distinct from what Merton famously called the *unanticipated consequences of intentional (or purposive) action*, in that while such consequences are by definition latent, they may be either *functional* (positive) or *dysfunctional* (negative) for a given system. As the second most influential American functionalist, Merton contributed a number of conceptual analyses of several middle-range phenomena: anomie, social deviance, role, and reference group analysis.

In a 1945 article, “Some Principles of Stratification,” published in the *American Sociological Review*, Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore articulated the so-called functional theory of social stratification. They argued that systems of stratification, for all their structured inequalities in the distribution of rewards (e.g., prestige, income), are universal because they are functionally necessary to provide motivations for people to seek to fill the positions a society most needs. The claim for the functional necessity of social stratification became identified as a signature position for functionalism and a point of contention in the eyes of later critics. While the claim of universality of stratification could be subjected to empirical test on the basis of the presence or absence of specific indicators of stratification, the claim of functional necessity was difficult if not impossible to prove or disprove, leading to the interpretation that functionalists provided justifications for the continuing existence of institutionalized forms of social and economic inequality, regardless of their “necessity.”

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Neil Smelser's affiliation with functionalism stemmed from his collaborative work with Parsons on *Economy and Society*, 1956, while he was still a graduate student at Harvard in the 1950s. He is properly considered a neo-functionalists on account of both a generational difference and a departure from the strict formulations of Parsonsian functionalism. In addition to economic sociology, the fields of social change and collective behavior have been the focus of his work. His focus on comparative methods, social change, and historical subject matter tended to set him apart from most of the other functionalists.

In his 1959 ASA presidential address, "The Myth of Functional Analysis as a Special Method in Sociology and Anthropology," Kingsley Davis proclaimed that functional analysis, rather than being simply one among several alternative "methods" of sociology, was tantamount to sociological explanation *tout court*. In the eyes of functionalists, this proclamation represented the moment of virtually complete ascendancy of functionalism as the preeminent, if not actually the only, paradigm of sociological theory and analysis. Yet by the late 1950s, functionalism had become the target of a number of influential critiques, including especially those by David Lockwood, Ralf Dahrendorf, and C. Wright Mills. The issues flagged by these critiques were, among others, charges of a functionalist bias toward value consensus as opposed to conflict, toward normative order instead of change, and toward abstract "grand theory" instead of empirically testable ideas. Lewis Coser's (1956) *The Functions of Social Conflict* attempted to bridge functionalism and the study of conflict.

The critiques of functionalism continued in the next decade. In his 1961 article in the *American Sociological Review*, "The Oversocialized Conception of Man," Dennis Wrong charged that functionalism's exaggeration of societal integration was based on a faulty conception of personality as being fully malleable to fit the needs of a social system. In 1962, Edward Tiryakian published *Sociologism and Existentialism*, in which he attempted to broaden awareness of the theoretical perspectives beyond the functionalist tradition. During the 1960s, functionalism was challenged not only by its critics, but also by rival perspectives that had been present but overshadowed by functionalism in the postwar period, especially *exchange theory* and *symbolic interactionism*. Exchange theory was developed by George Homans, a departmental colleague of Parsons at Harvard, as an attempt to explain the social behavior of the individual on the basis of principles drawn from Skinnerian psychology and elementary economics. According to Homans's views in his 1961 *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*, neither the social group (as for Durkheim) nor the social structure (as for Parsons), but the individual, was the basic unit of analysis. The behavior of individuals is conceived as a set of exchanges that bring rewards and costs, the calculation of which is carried forward in the conduct of future behavior. Peter Blau, an Austrian émigré from the Nazi period, made a significant contribution to the study of bureaucracy with his

1955 *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy* before turning explicitly to exchange theory in his 1964 *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. While Blau, like Homans, relied on psychological propositions to explain individual orientations to exchange, he demonstrated a broader concern with social structure as both context and result of exchange processes. Through his analyses of processes of exchange based on individual decision making, Blau can also be regarded as a pioneer of *theories of rational choice*. Both Homans and Blau served terms as presidents of the ASA, Homans in 1964, and Blau in 1974.

The most prominent representative of *symbolic interactionism* in the tradition of Mead during this period was Herbert Blumer, who began as a student of Mead, and like Mead, spent half of his influential career in the sociology department of the University of Chicago. Known primarily as an interpreter of Mead's ideas, Blumer sought to distinguish more clearly between stimulus-response models of behavioral psychology and the symbolic or meaningful components of social interaction. In his 1969 *Symbolic Interaction: Perspective and Method*, Blumer argued the view that all stimuli are first interpreted by actors in terms of their meanings before the actor responds (acts). This means that sociological analysis must necessarily focus on the subjective aspects of behavior and take into account the standpoint of the actor. Social structures, when acknowledged at all by Blumer, were regarded mainly as constraints on action that nevertheless have to be interpreted by the actor. One of Blumer's students, Erving Goffman, continued the Meadean tradition by developing a variant called *dramaturgy*. In his 1959 *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman refashioned the symbolic interactionist notion of role playing into what he referred to as *impression management*, as part of a set of theatrical metaphors. Goffman's 1961 *Encounters* and 1963 *Stigma*, influential works of the period, presented innovative ideas of self, identity, and interaction. The continuing influence of symbolic interactionism was indicated by the election to the presidency of the ASA of Blumer, in 1956, and his student, Goffman, in 1982.

The decade of the 1960s was a period of social and political turmoil in the United States and a time when received ideas in sociology were called into question in terms of their implications for public policy and social values. The most direct challenge to functionalism, widely portrayed as conservative and as morally indifferent to issues of poverty, racism, and the war in Vietnam, came from *conflict theories*. In spite of divergent views on certain questions, such as the necessity or universality of conflict, most conflict theorists claimed that conflict is endemic to most forms of group life and is often associated with power and coercion, phenomena neglected by functionalism. The type of conflict theory that came to the fore in the 1960s, however, reflected the view that much conflict and coercion was not only unnecessary but was actually oppressive and socially unjust with respect to issues of class, race, gender, and international relations (colonialism and imperialism).

C. Wright Mills of Columbia University had been first among American sociologists of this period to critique not only functionalism but the structures of class and power elites in American society. The critique of society was also put forward by neo-Marxist *critical theorists* of the Frankfurt School, several of whom had come to the United States in the 1930s as refugees from Nazi Germany, including Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, and Leo Lowenthal. Their critique of advanced industrial societies attracted many of those who studied or entered sociology during the 1960s and who participated in the New Left, a broad and somewhat amorphous political and countercultural movement directed at first toward domestic issues of poverty and civil rights, and later became a significant anti-Vietnam War movement. Domestic neo-Marxist analyses were developed by Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy in their 1966 *Monopoly Capital*.

Among the significant alternatives to functionalism to receive attention in the 1960s were the developments in phenomenology. Having originated in European philosophy through the work and influence of Edmund Husserl, phenomenology was imported to the United States by the émigré sociologist Alfred Schutz. From his location in the New School for Social Research, he taught and influenced a number of sociologists who promulgated *social phenomenology*. Peter Berger, a student of Schutz and also an émigré, was perhaps the most prominent representative of this school during the 1960s, when he published his 1966 *The Social Construction of Reality*, coauthored with Thomas Luckmann, and subsequently, as he moved into the specific field of the sociology of religion. Also influenced by Schutz, Harold Garfinkel's contributions to social phenomenology, designated as *ethnomethodology*, are exemplified in his collection *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, 1967.

By the end of the 1960s, sociology had undergone a major transformation in its theoretical dimension. For most of the 1940s and 1950s, functionalism had been the predominant school, without significant challenge from competing perspectives. The dominance of functionalism had given the appearance of theoretical unity, if not scientific maturity, by the apparent lack of diversity in theoretical orientations. All this changed in the 1960s when functionalism was challenged not only by direct critiques but also by the rise of competing perspectives, especially symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, exchange, conflict, and critical theories. The substantial turn from the previously predominant functionalism led to a vigorous development of diverse perspectives in theory and research in later decades.

Sociological Research

Among the reasons for calling the postwar era "golden" was the flourishing of sociological research and the burgeoning of its funding.

Organization and Funding of Research

The primary sources of support in the immediate postwar period continued to be the major private foundations, especially Rockefeller, but over time also the Sage, Carnegie, and Ford foundations, among others. The choice of universities and scholars as recipients was highly selective, and Columbia and Harvard, along with Chicago, benefited especially from such funding in the first half of this period. The main development in the funding of research in this period, however, was, on the one hand, the enormous growth in the amount of available funding and, on the other hand, the increasingly predominant role of governments, especially the federal government, as the source of funding. Along with this change came others, such as the distribution of research funds to an ever broader array of universities, colleges, and institutes, and broader ranges of research topics, as well as new patterns of allocation processes, such as peer-review procedures.

The other major development occurred in the organization of research. While much sociological research continued to be done by individuals and sometimes by small collegial groups of collaborators, the postwar period witnessed the development of research institutes and centers usually affiliated with specific universities. Examples of research centers of national importance are the Bureau of Applied Social Research, founded during World War II by Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia University; the Survey Research Center, founded in 1946, based at the University of Michigan; and the National Opinion Research Center, founded during World War II at Denver, but since 1947 based at the University of Chicago. Most of the largest centers, along with the Gallup Research Center and the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, tended to focus mainly on survey research using nationwide sampling techniques. The same centers involved collaboration among various social science disciplines, including political science and economics, as well as sociology.

Major Studies

Among the most important and innovative of the large-scale studies that came out of this period were, first, Samuel Stouffer's four-volume *The American Soldier*, published in 1949, and second, Theodor Adorno's *The Authoritarian Personality*, published in 1950. Both of these works were conducted by teams of sociologists and other social scientists who contributed significantly to the research, both substantively and technically. The *American Soldier* research was mandated by the U.S. War Department to address problems of morale, cooperation, and combat effectiveness in the U.S. Army, along with questions of race relations and propaganda effects. Stouffer's team conducted extensive fieldwork and interviewing of American soldiers and employed sophisticated sampling and measurement techniques. Stouffer later served a term as president of the ASA in 1953. Adorno's *authoritarian*

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personality study, sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, developed the *f-scale* to tap prejudicial attitudes with the aim of understanding such problems as anti-Semitism and racial prejudice. The so-called authoritarian personality type exhibited tendencies of submissiveness to ingroup authority coupled with negative attitudes toward members of outgroups.

A third major study was Gunnar Myrdal's 1944 study, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation to address persistent problems of racial discrimination. The "dilemma" referred to the juxtaposition of the societal ideals of egalitarianism versus practices of racial discrimination. On the grounds that most American social scientists were themselves prejudiced, at least in the sense of believing that racial prejudices were largely immutable, Carnegie chose the Swedish Myrdal, as an outsider, to lead the research. Indeed, one of the main conclusions of the research was that racial discrimination patterns were mutable, subject to change by intervention. Myrdal's findings were cited in the context and arguments leading to the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1954 decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision overturning the legality of racially segregated public education.

Sometimes in collaboration with other social scientists sociologists published several important empirical or quantitative studies in the areas of communications research (propaganda, content analysis, and opinion polling), including studies by Robert Merton, Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Leo Lowenthal. Industrial sociology benefited from several studies by, among others, Elton Mayo, William F. Whyte, and W. E. Moore, an important theme of which was the importance of informal groups outside the formal organization of work that nevertheless had a significant impact on worker productivity. Some of this research was criticized by later sociologists (e.g., H. Sheppard and C. W. Mills) as displaying a managerial bias in its perspective. An important study that broke new ground in industrial sociology was *Union Democracy*, 1956, a study of the internal politics of a major trade union, led by S. M. Lipset, with the collaboration of Martin Trow and James Coleman, and supported by Columbia's Bureau of Applied Social Research. Lipset was ASA president in 1993. The study of work and occupations became an important subfield of industrial sociology during the 1950s.

Other fields that developed especially during this period were criminology and the study of deviant behavior, social psychology, and the study of small-group interaction, military and political sociology, as well as rural sociology and the study of social problems and race relations. Most of these fields also represented topics of courses typically offered in undergraduate programs. Occasionally, as with David Riesman's classic 1950 study, *The Lonely Crowd*, a

sociological book also became a bestseller for the general public.

Scholarly and Professional Associations

The American Sociological Association, until 1959 called the American Sociological Society, the sole official national association of sociologists, grew sharply in membership during this period, rising from about 1,000 in 1940 to over 14,000 in 1970. This growth outpaced the increase in degrees awarded in sociology, reflecting a number of changes made in the policies and structures of the national association, as it became more open to members in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity, and to students as well as faculty in all types of educational institutions. After electing E. Franklin Frazier as the first black president in 1948, the ASA elected its first woman president, Dorothy Swain Thomas, in 1952, almost half a century after the founding of the association.

Regional and specialty associations also thrived during this period. The main regional associations had been established in the 1930s, including the Pacific, the Midwest, the Southern, and the Eastern. In the decades following World War II, a number of others were organized, including the Ohio Valley (later renamed the North Central), the Southwestern, and the Mid-South. Almost all the regional associations also formed their own journals, including some of the most important journals, such as *Social Forces* and the *Sociological Quarterly*. Literally dozens of specialty associations have formed, some of them born from discontent with the ASA. The most significant organization founded in this period has been the Society for the Study of Social Problems, founded in 1951. The latter developed with a concern with social policy that its members found lacking in the ASA's neglect of social issues during the 1950s and 1960s.

During the 1960s, the ASA experienced a number of internal conflicts that brought changes of lasting import. One of the salient internal schisms concerned the question of ASA policy toward U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. In 1968, the membership voted not to take an official position on the war. The Sociology Liberation Movement was formed that year largely to give voice to strong anti-war sentiment. In the same year, the Caucus of Black Sociologists was formed, as was the Radical Caucus. Women sociologists formed the Caucus of Women Sociologists in 1969, later to become the Sociologists for Women in Society. Each of these movements and caucuses called for more openness, inclusiveness, and democratization in the ASA, reflecting broader concerns in the society at large for extended civil rights, gender equality, antipoverty, and antiwar policies. Many of these issues were to occupy the attention of the ASA and its members in subsequent decades as well.

SOCIOLOGY IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION: FROM 1970 TO THE PRESENT

In the early 1970s, as the period of greatest student activism and social unrest crested, sociology was nearing the zenith of its most rapid growth in the United States as a discipline, profession, and academic subject. The peak for undergraduate degrees awarded was almost 36,000 in 1973, more than 2,200 master's degrees in 1974, and 734 doctorates in 1977, numbers not matched again in the twentieth century. ASA membership also peaked in 1972 at around 15,000 members in all categories (see American Sociological Association Web page).

Both Robert Friedrichs's *A Sociology of Sociology* and Alvin Gouldner's *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, published in 1970, critiqued mainstream sociology as indifferent to societal issues. Jürgen Habermas's first book, *Toward a Rational Society*, was translated into English in the same year. Taken together, these critical works challenged sociology to reexamine its largely disengaged relation to the societies being observed and analyzed. Likewise, the ASA, when challenged internally on issues of gender and race, responded in the early 1970s by establishing standing committees on the status of women and on the status of racial and ethnic minorities in the profession.

Following the end of the Vietnam War in 1973, undergraduate student enrollments began to decline steeply, with degrees awarded falling by almost two thirds by 1985. ASA membership levels also began to decline, falling from a peak of about 15,000 in 1972 to about 11,000 in 1984, due mainly to declines in student memberships (thereafter membership levels rose gradually to reach almost 14,000 in 2005). Nevertheless, sociology as a discipline continued to grow into a more differentiated field of study, with the rise of new specialties. Gender joined race and class to form a strong core of variables examined by sociologists across most specialties. Long a majority at the undergraduate level, women formed majorities approaching and exceeding 70 percent from the 1980s onward. By 1980, women formed a majority of master's degree recipients, rising to about two thirds by century's end. In 1988, for the first time women comprised the majority of sociology doctorates, reaching about 60 percent by 2000. Men continued to occupy a disproportionately large share of leadership positions both in the academy and in the ASA. An indicator of gender lag in U.S. sociology is found in the fact that eight of the nine women ASA presidents from 1905 to 2006 have been elected since 1970.

U.S. Trends in Theory and Research

The theoretical perspectives developed in earlier periods continued to find followers in the most recent era.

Newer trends tended to spin off from already existing schools rather than arising as radically new innovations. Functionalism begat neofunctionalism; exchange theory continued in its earlier guise but also morphed into network analysis and rational choice theory; symbolic interactionism endured but so did its offshoot, dramaturgy and other variations; conflict theory partially gave way to critical theory; and finally, the study of race, class, and gender became more concerned than ever before with policy issues based on equality, redress, and reform.

Only a few of the major studies of this period can be mentioned. Few works of general theory attracted the interest of sociologists in this period. Jeffrey Alexander's ambitious *Theoretical Logic in Sociology*, 1982–1983, featured Parsons along with Marx, Weber, and Durkheim in a synthetic and neofunctionalist reading of the classic tradition. Neil Smelser's *Comparative Methods in the Social Sciences*, 1986, was among several of his more general works of this period; he served as ASA president in 1997. James Coleman's *Foundations of Social Theory*, 1990, attempted to develop a general statement of sociological theory, which nevertheless owed a great deal to the perspectives of exchange theory and rational choice. Coleman also authored important research in the sociology of education that contributed to public debate and policy changes in the area of racial desegregation of the public schools; he was ASA president in 1992.

The tradition of conflict sociology advanced with Randall Collins, *Conflict Sociology*, 1975; Harvey Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 1974; and Michael Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent*, 1979. Work on various axes of inequality and diversity also tended to reflect emphases on conflict. Outstanding examples included Alice Rossi, ASA presidential address, "Gender and Parenthood," 1983; Patricia Hill-Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 1990; Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, 1989; and Erik Olin Wright, *Classes*, 1985, and *Interrogating Inequality*, 1994.

Microsociology, including social psychology, interaction, exchange, and network analysis, benefited from Richard Emerson's work in the 1970s; Harrison White, *Identity and Control*, 1992; and Linda Molm, *Coercive Power and Exchange*, 1997, in addition to the continuing work and influence of James Coleman and Peter Blau. Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 1996, and Stephan Fuchs, *Against Essentialism*, 2001, are important synthetic works in the same tradition.

Although drawing on previous ideas, sociologists developed some newer directions and emphases in theory and research. Examples include theories of modernity, societal evolution, and globalization; theories of culture and emotions; the sociology of the body; and sociobiology. Studies of large-scale or macrosociological subjects came to the fore from the 1970s onward. Daniel Bell's *The*

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Coming of Post-Industrial Society, 1973, attempted to assess current societal trends in a historical perspective. With his works on world systems theory, notably *The Modern World System*, 1974 onward. Immanuel Wallerstein has played a leading role in the development of macrohistorical sociology on a global scale. Reinhard Bendix, ASA president in 1970, noted for his earlier work in industrial, political, and historical sociology, contributed to comparative political sociology with his *Kings or People*, 1978. In the same area, Theda Skocpol published her *States and Social Revolutions*, 1979. Charles Tilly's major work in this field was his *Citizenship, Identity, and Social History*, 1995. Randall Collins attempted a global theory of intellectual change in his *The Sociology of Philosophies*, 1998. Sociologists also contributed to the conceptualization and study of globalization, as in the work of Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, 1992, and George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society*, 1993.

Perhaps the greatest single growth area in sociological specialties in the past three decades has been the focus on gender (for several years, the ASA section on gender has had the largest number of members of all the sections). Among the major works in this area not already referred to above are Joan Acker, *Doing Comparable Worth: Gender, Class, and Pay Equity*, 1989; Margaret Anderson and Patricia Hill-Collins, *Race, Class, and Gender*, 1992; Jessie Bernard, *The Future of Marriage*, 1972; Janet Chafetz, *Gender Equity*, 1990; Nancy Chodorow, *Femininities, Masculinity, Sexualities*, 1994; Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Sociology*, 1986; and Barbara Reskin and Irene Padavic, *Women and Men at Work*, 1994. Reskin was ASA president in 2002.

The study of race and racism has also been a vital area of sociological research and, as with the study of gender in this same period, has been connected to policy concerns. William Julius Wilson, president of the ASA in 1990, has made major contributions with his *The Declining Significance of Race*, 1978, and *The Bridge over the Racial Divide*, 1999. Joe R. Feagin, also a past president of the ASA, has authored several works on racism in American society, including his *Racist America*, 2001, and *The Continuing Significance of Racism: U.S. Colleges and Universities*, 2003.

At the same time, important developments occurred abroad and American sociologists became more aware of and receptive to sociological ideas and research in other countries. Outstanding examples of influential European works have been the republication in the 1970s and 1980s of Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 1939; Michel Foucault's many works, including his *Discipline and Punish*, 1979; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinctions*, 1984, including his idea of *cultural capital*; Anthony Giddens's work on *structuration*, as in his *The Constitution of Society*, 1984, and on modernity in *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1990; Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 1984–1987; Niklas Luhmann's work in systems theory,

including his *The Differentiation of Society*, 1982, and *Social Systems*, 1995; and Ulrich Beck, *The Risk Society*, 1992. These works are part of a growing international dialogue among sociologists. The writings of Giddens, Habermas, and Luhmann, for instance, address ideas of American provenance, for example, those of Mead and Parsons, while at the same time representing independent and innovative formulations of their own, which in turn have been addressed by their American readers. If the so-called golden era was one of American preeminence internationally, the period since 1970 has seen an internationalization of sociological discourse.

The Development of Sociology in Canada

The widespread development of sociology in Canada began in the 1960s. While sociology had been offered as an academic subject for several decades, the dominant tendency was for sociology to be offered in conjunction with another field such as political economy or cultural anthropology. The Canadian Association of Sociology and Anthropology was formed in 1965. Aside from its more recent development compared to the United States, Canadian sociology is marked by its linguistic duality; French-language sociology has its own institutions, journals, and associations, more or less paralleling those of the English language.

Sociology flourished at Québec's three major French-language universities from the 1960s onward. An important figure was Fernand Dumont, whose *Le Lieu de l'Homme*, 1968, and *Les ideologies*, 1974, contributed to cultural sociology. In the 1960s, Québec society underwent a so-called quiet revolution, a quite rapid transformation conventionally analyzed in terms of modernization, secularization, and liberalization. Québec sociology, which has seen itself at a significant intersection between French and Anglo-American intellectual traditions, has sought to address the peculiar nature of Québec society with its aspirations as a distinct *nation* in relation to Canadian society and the world at large. The sociology of culture and political sociology, perennially important in Québec, were further developed by Marcel Rioux in critical terms in his *Essai de sociologie critique*, 1978. Rioux also participated in the public discourse over the status of Québec with his *Québec in Question*, 1971. Widely recognized as the dean of Québec sociology, Guy Rocher, trained at Laval and Harvard and based at the University of Montréal, has made a major contribution to general sociology, beginning with his three-volume *Introduction à la sociologie générale*, 1969. His book *Talcott Parsons and American Sociology*, 1972, has been published in six languages.

English-language sociology in Canada drew upon British, European, and American sociological perspectives and personnel for the staffing of its fast-growing departments all across the country in the 1960s and 1970s before attempting the *Canadianization* of its curricula and research agendas. A senior sociologist of the period,

S. D. Clark of the University of Toronto, contributed to the discourse on the specificity of Canadian society with his *Canadian Society in Historical Perspective*, 1976. Beyond the exercise of national self-reflection, two especially strong areas of theory and research emerged in English-Canadian sociology: macroeconomic sociology and the study of gender issues. Both areas have been supported by a great deal of empirical and quantitative research as well as critical policy orientations.

The study of social stratification and power was greatly stimulated and influenced by John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*, 1965. Beginning in the 1970s, sociologists joined other social scientists in critical analyses of corporate capitalism. Major examples were Wallace Clement, *The Canadian Corporate Elite*, 1975, as well as his *Continental Corporate Power: Economic Linkages between Canada and the United States*, 1977; Robert Brym, edited collection *The Structure of the Canadian Capitalist Class*, 1985; and William K. Carroll, *Corporate Power and Canadian Capitalism*, 1986. The critical sociology of gender developed especially from the 1980s onward with major contributions from Margrit Eichler, *The Double Standard*, 1980; Bonnie Fox, *Hidden in the Household: Women's Domestic Labour under Capitalism*, 1980; Mariana Valverde, *Sex, Power and Pleasure*, 1985; Roberta Hamilton and Michele Barrett, *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism, Marxism, and Nationalism*, 1986; and Dorothy Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*, 1987.

One of the distinctive features of Canadian sociology has been its frequent interaction with research and perspectives of other national traditions. The boundaries of Canadian and U.S. sociology, in particular, have been permeable in both directions. Several Canadians have had careers in the United States, including Erving Goffman, Dennis Wrong, and Michèle Lamont. Several American sociologists have conducted important research in Canada, including Seymour Martin Lipset's *Agrarian Socialism*, 1950, and *Continental Divide*, 1990. Interaction between Canada and Europe has also been important in the development of Canadian sociology, exemplified by Marcel Fournier's work on Marcel Mauss; Fournier has also collaborated with Michèle Lamont on *Cultivating Difference*, 1992. Finally, Canadians also tend to be disproportionately active in international professional associations.

Challenges Facing Sociology Early in the 21st Century

The history of sociology has to be written anew by each generation. What Max Weber said about concepts applies at least as well to the writing of historical accounts. Weber famously claimed that concepts, once formed, are destined to become obsolete because the culture changes incessantly as does the intellectual culture of science and scholarship. Just as there can be no closed, permanent set of concepts, so can there be no fixed historical narrative

of sociology's past. As new insights, knowledge, and perspectives arise, they provide lenses for making new discoveries about the past, discoveries that in turn nourish reflection and innovation for oncoming generations. Of all the challenges facing sociology, we can highlight only three that are especially relevant to the writing of sociology's history.

Sociology as a Policy-Neutral Science versus Public and Critical Sociology

If there has been a single issue that has haunted sociology from the first generation until now, it is the status of sociology as an empirical science of social phenomena: Should sociology strive to be entirely value- and policy-neutral, or should it attempt to contribute to the reform and improvement of social life? The question itself spawns others: If sociology *should* attempt to be policy- and value-neutral, *can* it be neutral and nonpartisan, and if so, how? If, on the other hand, sociology should align itself with forces of social reform, how can sociologists know and decide which values and policies will lead to societal improvement? Or is the question of science versus reform wrongly put as an "either/or" alternative? Can ways be found to honor the ideals of both a resolutely empirical science and the humanitarian impulse to contribute to social justice and reform? How can sociology best contribute to the quest for the good society, while maintaining scientific credibility?

Although these questions have so far resisted resolution, an examination of the history of sociology can be instructive in various ways. For one thing, we learn about the rich variety of positions and arguments on behalf of scientific neutrality and reform commitments, and the nuanced as well as passionate positions taken by colleagues of the past. Historical knowledge can help the present generation to refine the questions and issues while sorting through possible paths toward resolution and consensus. Second, our historical account has shown that in the 1960s and 1970s, students flocked to sociology, and graduates entered the profession, particularly in a time of perceived social crisis with the expectation that sociology could address the opportunity for societal improvement. Third, an examination of recent ASA presidential addresses shows that leaders of the current generation share a commitment to sociology as both a science and as an instrument for the reform and betterment of society. Two in particular have highlighted the obligations of sociology toward society and the public: Joe Feagin's 2000 address, "Sociology and Social Justice: Agendas for the 21st Century," and Michael Burawoy's 2004 speech, "For Public Sociology." The question of science versus reform, a question that is older and broader than sociology itself, has not yet been resolved, but important steps have been taken to clarify the nettle of questions at stake and the opportunities to move toward workable resolutions.

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Creating and Securing the Conditions of Dialogue

It is often observed that the present era is one of great fragmentation and diversity in sociology. Instead of a single paradigm, sociology has many; instead of a strong core of general sociological theory and research, we have many special sociologies, each with its own concepts, theories, and favored research methods. Lacking a strong core of theory, method, and knowledge, it has become increasingly difficult for sociologists to maintain a unified sense of the discipline as a whole. One of the great challenges facing sociology in the twenty-first century is to create and secure conditions of communication across lines that divide specialists from other specialists, and that separate sociologists from fruitful communication with social scientists in other disciplines, with sociologists and social scientists in other parts of the world, and with the potential constituencies and publics for sociological knowledge. There are a number of ways of addressing the need for greater dialogue and opportunities to learn from each other: greater use of professional associations, conferences, and technologies for wider communication across specialties and national boundaries; increased attention to developing synthetic theories of social phenomena in conjunction with other social sciences; and promoting awareness of the rich content of past sociological theory, research, and practice. An awareness of the history of sociology shows that neither unity nor fragmentation has prevailed for more than a generation. History also reveals the relative benefits and disadvantages of unity, and more importantly, measures of coping with the challenges posed in this generation by disunity, fragmentation, and diversity.

New Directions in the Writing of the History of Sociology

The most recent period in North American sociology has witnessed several new developments in the writing of sociology's history. Turning from literal and descriptive accounts of previous sociology, Lewis Coser (1971), in his

Masters of Sociological Thought, sought to emphasize the importance of examining earlier ideas in relation to their historical and social contexts. Irving Zeitlin (2001), the Canadian sociologist, in his *Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory*, sought in addition to place the development of sociological theory into an overarching narrative in which the thought of Karl Marx was placed at the center as a "watershed." In a more comprehensive vein, Donald Levine (1995), in his *Visions of the Sociological Tradition*, analyzed the history of sociology in terms of national traditions and highlighted the need for dialogue to overcome disciplinary fragmentation.

Perhaps the greatest innovations of recent decades have stemmed from a thoroughgoing reexamination of the founding and early development of sociology. Both the ASA and the International Sociological Association have established vigorous sections and research committees on the history of sociology that foster exchange of ideas and research findings. The recent volume, *Diverse Histories of American Sociology*, 2005, edited by Anthony Blasi on behalf of the ASA section on the History of Sociology, exemplifies the broadening of the scope of contributions to the development of sociology. The most significant development of the recent past has been the rediscovery and acknowledgment of the role of women in the founding of sociology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Several U.S. and Canadian sociologists have participated in this work of rediscovery, including, among many others, Mary Jo Deegan (1988, 1991), Michael R. Hill (Martineau 1989), Susan Hoecker-Drysdale (1992), Shulamit Reinharz (1992), Lynn McDonald (1994), Patricia Lengeremann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley (1998), and Hill and Hoecker-Drysdale (2001).

An education that is concentrated only on the sociology of the present day and of a single country or society yields a seriously limited view of sociological knowledge. The obvious antidote is a sociological education that includes knowledge of the history of the discipline, the ideas, methods, and practices of the past and of other societies. Future work in the field of sociology has much to gain from greater awareness of its history.

4

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Theoretical sociology has differentiated into ever more schools of thought over the last 40 years, a trend that is facilitated by the lack of “grand theories” that seek to integrate more specialized theoretical programs. Differentiation is furthered by a lack of consensus over the very nature of theorizing in sociology, with the major fault lines of debate revolving around whether or not sociology can be a natural science. Without a commitment to a common epistemology or a core canon of early theoretical works, an increasing number of theoretical perspectives has emerged from a small early base of theories and philosophies—functionalism, conflict theory, utilitarianism, pragmatism, and phenomenology. And as theories continue to proliferate, the hope of ever reaching a consensus over the key properties of the social universe and the best epistemology for studying these properties has begun to fade. Moreover, there are now many highly specialized theories emerging out of research traditions that are only loosely affiliated with theories built from the ideas of the founding generation.

It is not a simple task, therefore, to survey theoretical sociology at the beginning of the current century. The best that can be done is to focus on the more general theoretical schemes that built on the early legacy provided by the founding generations of sociologists. These are the theories that dominate theoretical sociology.

THE RISE AND FALL OF FUNCTIONAL THEORY

Sociology’s first theoretical approach was decidedly functional, examining social structures and processes for how they meet postulated needs and requisites necessary for societal survival. Both Auguste Comte (1896 [1830–1842]) and Herbert Spencer (1898 [1874–1896]) drew an organismic analogy calling attention to the systemic qualities of the social universe and to the functions of parts for maintenance of social systems. For Spencer, there were four basic problems that all systems, including organismic and societal, had to resolve: production, reproduction, regulation, and distribution. Later, Émile Durkheim ([1893] 1947) postulated only one master functional requisite: the need for sociocultural integration.

Functional theorizing might have died with Durkheim and the abandonment of Spencer’s evolutionism were it not for anthropologists, particularly A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1952) and Bronislaw Malinowski ([1944] 1964), who carried functionalism to the midpoint of the twentieth century. Since preliterate societies had no written history that could be used to explain the origins of cultural features of these societies, assessing the function of a particular cultural pattern for the survival of the society became another way to “explain” why a particular cultural pattern existed (Turner and Maryanski 1979). Radcliffe-Brown (1952) followed

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Durkheim's lead and analyzed cultural patterns, such as kinship, for how they resolve integrative problems in pre-literate societies, whereas Malinowski adopted Spencer's more analytical strategy, emphasizing that social reality exists at different system levels (biological organism, social structure, and culture) and that each level of reality has certain functional requisites that must be met if that system level is to be viable in its environment.

It is this latter form of analytical functionalism that came to dominate sociological theory in the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, primarily through the work of Talcott Parsons (1951) and colleagues (Parsons, Bales, and Shils 1953; Parsons and Smelser 1956). For Parsons, social reality consists of four action systems (behavioral organism, personality, social, and cultural), and each system must meet four fundamental requisites: (1) adaptation (taking in resources, converting them into usable commodities, and distributing them); (2) goal attainment (establishing goals and mobilizing resources to meet these goals); (3) integration (coordination and control among system parts); and (4) latency (reproducing system units and resolving tensions within them). Each action system was analyzed by Parsons in terms of how it meets these requisites; later, Parsons began to explore the input-output relations among the action systems. Near the end of analytical functionalism's brief dominance of sociological theorizing, particularly in the United States, Parsons (1966) posited a cybernetic hierarchy of control among the action systems, with those high in information (culture) providing guidance for those action systems lower in the hierarchy. Energy was seen as rising up the hierarchy from the behavioral organism through personality and social system to culture, while information from culture guided the organization of status roles in social systems, the motivated actions of the personality system, and the mobilization of energy in the organismic system. At the very end of Parsons's (1978) reign as the leading theorist in the world—indeed, not long before his death—he posited a view of the entire universe as four systems meeting the four functional requisites (a strategy that harkened back to Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy, where physics, biology, psychology, sociology, and ethics could be analyzed in terms of the same elementary principles of evolution).

Functionalism came under increasing attack from many quarters by the early 1960s. From philosophy, the idea that system parts should be analyzed in terms of their functions will produce illegitimate teleologies (outcomes cause the very events that lead to these outcomes) or tautologies (circular arguments in which parts meet needs and needs cause parts to emerge). On a more substantive level, the rise of conflict theories (or their resurrection) in the 1960s led critics to argue that functionalism produced a theory supporting the status quo because, in essence, it argued that existing structures must exist to meet needs for survival (Dahrendorf 1958)—a line of argument that biases inquiry against searches for alternative structures.

Functionalism did not completely die, however, because there are many scholars, especially in Europe (e.g., Münch 1987, 2001), who continue to use Parsonsian categories to perform functional analysis, while others retain the emphasis on systems without the same elaborate taxonomy revolving around multiple-system requisites (e.g., Luhmann 1982). In the United States, a brief neo-functional movement occurred in which theorists (e.g., Alexander 1985; Alexander and Colomy 1985) abandoned the notion of functional requisites and, instead, focused on the strong points of functionalism: the emphasis on structural differentiation and the integrative effects of culture. Neofunctionalism was not functional, for all its other merits, because what makes functionalism distinctive is the view that social structures and systems of cultural symbols exist because they meet fundamental needs or requisites for survival (Turner and Maryanski 1988).

Another effort to save what is important in functional theory revolves around viewing functional requisites as forces that generate selection pressures for social systems. For example, Jonathan Turner (1995) argues that human social systems are driven by forces—much like the forces such as gravity in physics and natural selection in biology—that push populations to organize in certain ways or suffer the disintegrative consequences. Many of these forces overlap with what hard-core functionalists have seen as survival requisites. Thus, for Turner, regulation, reproduction, distribution, production, and population drive the formation of macro-level institutional systems; differentiation and integrative forces drive meso-level formations of corporate units like organizations and categoric units such as social and ethnic classes (Turner and Boyns 2001); and another set of forces direct the flow of micro-level interpersonal behavior in encounters (Turner 2002). Such an approach is no longer functional because needs or requisites are not posited, but the approach still retains the appeal of functionalism: analysis of how the universal forces apply selection pressures on populations. Other theorists working from different theoretical traditions have also begun to pursue this selectionist line of theorizing (e.g., Runciman 1989; Sanderson 1995).

THE PERSISTENCE OF ECOLOGICAL THEORIZING

In the works of both Spencer and Durkheim can be found the essence of an ecological theory. Both argued that as populations grow, competition for resources increases, setting into motion selection pressures. Spencer's famous phrase "survival of the fittest" (uttered some nine years before Darwin's theory was presented) captures some of this view; those individuals and social structures revealing properties that allow them to secure resources in their environment will survive, while those that do not will be selected out. Durkheim took a more benign view of selection, arguing that if individuals and collective actors

cannot secure resources in one resource niche, they will seek resources elsewhere, thus increasing the level of specialization (or social speciation) or differentiation in a society. Thus, from the very beginnings of sociological theorizing, social differentiation has been seen as an outcome of niche density and competition for resources.

The arguments of Spencer and Durkheim were downsized between the 1920s and 1940s by the Chicago School in the United States (e.g., Hoyt 1939; Park 1936). While the members of the department of sociology at Chicago pursued many diverse lines of research, one persistent theme was to view urban areas as a kind of ecosystem, with competition among diverse actors (individuals with varying incomes and ethnic backgrounds as well as varying business and governmental actors) for urban space. Their competition is institutionalized by real estate markets; fueled by these markets, the patterns of control of urban space, the movement of individuals and corporate actors in and out of urban space, and the overall distribution of actors across urban areas can be analyzed with ecological principles. Today, this tradition still operates under the label of urban or human ecology (e.g., Frisbie and Kasarda 1988); it has consistently proven a useful theoretical orientation in understanding processes of urbanization and differentiation within urban areas.

In the 1970s, a new type of ecological analysis, one that focused on the ecology of organizations (Hannan and Freeman 1977), emerged. All organizations can be viewed as existing in a niche, where they seek resources (customers, clients, students, memberships, or any other resource needed to sustain an organization). Once an organization sustains itself in a resource niche, other organizations enter this niche and, in so doing, increase the density of organizations. Thus, the number of organizations in a niche will initially increase, but eventually, niche density becomes so great that selection pressures lead to the “death” of those organizations unable to secure resources or, alternatively, to their migration to a new niche where they can sustain themselves. More than urban ecology, organizational ecology borrowed self-consciously from bioecology, transferring many concepts from ecological analysis in biology to sociology. And perhaps more than urban ecology, organizational ecology remains one of the dominant approaches to understanding the structure and distribution of organizational systems in societies (Carroll 1988).

As urban and organizational ecology flourished, one of the carriers of this tradition from the Chicago School, Amos Hawley (1986), began to move the ecological analysis from the meso level (urban areas and organizations) back to macro-level societal dynamics. In essence, Hawley completed a conceptual odyssey to Spencer’s and Durkheim’s macro-level ecological theorizing, adding new refinements. For Hawley, technology as it affects productivity, modes of transportation, communication systems, and markets will lower mobility costs (for moving people, information, and resources) across space; and as mobility costs decrease, differentiation among corporate units

(organizations revealing a division of labor) increases. Differentiation is also influenced by the capacity of the state to control territories, manage capital investments in the economy, regulate markets, and encourage technological development. When centers of power can effectively accomplish these goals, mobility costs are lowered and sociocultural differentiation increases. With increased differentiation, new integrative problems inevitably arise, often posing threats to centers of power that, in turn, lower the capacity of the state to control territories and otherwise act in ways that make markets more dynamic, that increase productivity, that expand transportation, and that extend communication. Thus, the ebb and flow of differentiation in a society is mediated by the operation of centers of power as these centers raise or lower mobility costs. Thus, the legacy of Spencer and Durkheim is very much alive in modern macro-level ecological theorizing. Others (e.g., Turner 1994, 1995) have also followed Hawley’s lead in carrying forward Spencer’s and Durkheim’s macro-level ecological theory.

THE CHALLENGE OF BIOSOCIAL THEORIZING

The persistence of Darwinian ideas in ecological theorizing has been supplemented in recent decades by another type of Darwinian theory: sociobiology and evolutionary psychology. Both of these approaches emphasize that humans are animals whose phenotypes (physiology as well as behavioral capacities and propensities) are influenced by their genotypes (genetic makeup) as this genotype has been honed by the forces of biological evolution (natural selection, gene flow, genetic drift, and mutation). This approach has been highly threatening to many sociologists because it is often interpreted as a new form of biological determinism that reduces understanding of culture and social structures to genetically driven behavioral propensities. Some of this skepticism was appropriate because early sociobiologists often made rather extreme statements (e.g., Wilson 1975). The basic argument of sociobiology is that behavioral propensities, culture, and social structure are, in essence, “survivor machines” that keep genes responsible for these propensities in the gene pool (Dawkins 1976). If particular behavioral proclivities and the sociocultural arrangements arising from these proclivities enable individuals to reproduce, they operate to maintain the genes of these individuals in the gene pool. Thus, behavioral strategies, social structures, and culture are survival machines, driven by “blind” natural selection to preserve those genes that enhance reproductive fitness (Williams 1966).

Evolutionary psychology (Cosmides 1989; Cosmides and Tooby 1989) adds to this line of argument the notion that there are “modules” in the brain that direct behaviors. These modules have been created by the forces of evolution as they have worked on the neurology of phenotypes

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(and the underlying genotype) to install behavioral propensities that enhance fitness. For evolutionary psychology, then, universal behaviors are driven by brain modules, as these have been honed by the forces of evolution (Savage and Kanazawa 2004).

These biosocial approaches represent a new way to address a topic that was often part of classical sociological theory: human instincts. Most early theorists had some vision of human instincts, but these views were often vague and disconnected to evolutionary biology. Bio-sociology offers a more sophisticated way to examine what is “natural” to humans as evolved apes, although the number of scholars pursuing this line of theorizing is comparatively small (but growing slowly). What this type of theorizing offers is a chance to reconnect sociology and biology in ways somewhat reminiscent of Comte’s and Spencer’s advocacy. (For sociological efforts to develop bio-sociology, see Horne 2004; Lopreato 2001; Lopreato and Crippen 1999; Machalek and Martin 2004; van den Berghe 1981.)

THE REVIVAL OF STAGE MODELS OF EVOLUTION

Comte, Spencer, Marx, and, to a lesser extent, Durkheim all presented stage models that saw the history of human society as passing through discrete stages of development. These models were, in a sense, descriptive because they reviewed the features of societal types, from simple hunting and gathering through horticulture and variants of horticulture like herding and fishing to agriculture and on to industrialism (post-industrialism was added later as a stage by contemporary sociologists, as was a postmodern stage by other sociologists). Yet these descriptions of societal evolution were always seen as driven by some fundamental forces, converting descriptions of stages into theories about the forces driving movement from one stage to another. For Comte, Spencer, and Durkheim, the driving force was population growth as it unleashed the ecological dynamics summarized above. Moreover, Spencer in particular saw war as an evolutionary force because those societies that won wars were generally better organized (economically, politically, and culturally) than those that were conquered, with the result that winners of wars constantly ratcheted up the complexity of human societies through the evolutionary stages that Spencer described in great detail. For Marx, the driving force of history revolved around changes in technologies and modes of production as these worked to generate “contradictions” that led to class conflict. For two thirds of the twentieth century, stage model evolutionary theory remained recessive. But in the 1960s, it was revived not only by Parsons (1966) in his later works but more significantly by Gerhard Lenski (1966) in his analysis of stratification systems. And later, neo-Marxian approaches like world-systems theorizing (see below) often imply a stage of societal evolution (Sanderson 1999; Wallerstein 1974).

These more recent models of societal evolution avoid the problems of early models, such as seeing each stage of evolution as inevitable and as marching toward an end state personified by Western European countries. Instead, more generic forces such as environment, demographic features (population size, characteristics, and rate of growth), technologies (economic and military), dynamism of markets, levels of production of material goods and services, properties and dynamics of stratification systems, and nature of institutional systems are all seen as interacting in complex ways to drive the structure and culture of societies. Few theories would posit one master force as driving evolution; instead, sets of forces are highlighted in various theories.

Lenski (1966), often in collaboration with others (e.g., Nolan and Lenski 2004), emphasizes the effects of technology (knowledge as it is used to increase production), but these effects are influenced by other forces, particularly the biosocial environment, nature of cultural symbols (values and ideologies), population size and rate of growth, institutional systems (kinship, religion, education, and polity), and patterns of war. Larger populations in stable and resource-rich environments, revealing liberal ideologies encouraging technological innovation, and institutional systems that do not discourage innovations or divert resources away from the economy and that limit warfare will become more complex and able to adapt to their environments. Stephen K. Sanderson (1995) blends ideas from bio-sociology and Marxian analysis, stressing that natural selection still works on individuals (rather than on society as a whole), but like Lenski, he stresses that societies are driven by demographic, ecological, technological, economic, and political forces. And like all Marxists, Sanderson emphasizes the material conditions of life—production and distribution—as the base that drives the development of cultural ideologies, political systems, interactions with the ecosystem, and relations with other societies.

While all present-day evolutionary theories stress that it is possible for de-evolution to occur (as Spencer had also argued), they tend to see a direction to evolution toward greater complexity, higher rates of innovation, and increased interdependence among societies connected by global markets. And most theorists would argue implicitly that if human evolution were to be restarted, it would pass through the same evolutionary stages from hunting and gathering to post-industrialism. The virtue of theorizing on stages of evolution is the time perspective gained, with contemporary social formations seen as the outcome of a long evolutionary history driven by a few fundamental forces.

THE REVIVAL OF CONFLICT THEORIZING

Both Karl Marx (Marx and Engels [1847] 1970) and Max Weber [1922] (1968) posited a conflict view of the social world. Each argued that inequalities generate tensions that,

under specifiable conditions, increase the probability (for Marx, a certainty) that subordinates in the system of inequality will become mobilized to engage in conflict with superordinates in an effort to redistribute resources. Marx and Weber presented a similar list of conditions: High levels of inequality, large discontinuities between classes, and low rates of social mobility across classes all set the stage for the emergence of leaders who would articulate a revolutionary ideology. Each added refinements to this general model, but they both saw inequality as potentially unleashing forces that lead subordinates to pursue conflict.

Conflict theorizing remained prominent for most of the twentieth century in Europe, but in the United States, it was recessive until the 1960s. Partly emboldened by the European critique of functionalism and by the demise of McCarthyism in the United States as well as by protests against the Vietnam War, conflict theory supplanted functionalism as the dominant theoretical orientation by the 1970s, although today the conflict approach is so integrated into mainstream sociological theorizing that it no longer stands out as a distinctive approach. The essence of conflict theories is the recognition that social reality is organized around inequalities in the distribution of valued resources such as material wealth, power, and prestige and that these inequalities systematically generate tensions, which under specifiable conditions generate various forms of conflict between those who have and those who do not have these valued resources. At first, the conflict theory revival was used as a foil against the perceived conservative bias of functionalism, but over the decades as conflict theory prospered, it developed a number of distinctive variants.

Abstracted Marxism

The first variant of conflict theory sought to make the theory more abstract, drawing from Marx's analysis of class conflict and extending it to all social systems where inequalities of authority exist (Dahrendorf 1959). This approach took what was useful from Marx, modified the Marxian model with ideas from Weber and Georg Simmel, and generated an abstract theory of conflict in all social systems. In the several versions of this abstracted Marxism (Dahrendorf 1959; Turner 1975), the conditions generating awareness among subordinates of their interests in changing the system inequality are delineated, and these follow from Marx but add the important proviso that the more organized are subordinates, the less likely they are to engage in violent conflict (instead, they will negotiate and compromise). Indeed, in contrast to Marx, these approaches argue that incipient organization, emerging ideologies, and early leadership will lead to open and often violent conflict, whereas high levels of political organization, clearly articulated ideologies, and established leaders lead to negotiation and compromise, a line of theoretical argument that goes against Marx but takes into account Weber's [1922] (1968) and Simmel's [1907] (1990) critiques of Marx.

Analytical Marxism

Another variant of Marxism is what Erik Olin Wright (1997) has termed *analytical Marxism*, an approach that incorporates many of the key ideas of Marxian theory on the dynamics of capitalism while trying to explain with an expanded set of concepts the problems in Marx's approach, particularly (1) the failure of industrial societies to polarize, (2) the lack of revolutionary conflict in industrial societies, (3) the rise of the state as a source of employment (thus making problematic whether government workers are proletarians or state managers), (4) the expansion of the middle classes in industrial and post-industrial societies, (5) the contradictory class locations of individuals in industrial and post-industrial societies (as both workers and managers), (6) the multiple-class locations of many families (where one person is a manager or owner, while another is a wage worker), and (7) the blurring of class distinctions as some skilled blue-collar workers become high wage earners or even owners of highly profitable small businesses, while many white-collar workers become lower-wage proletarians in service industries.

These and other events that have gone against Marx's predictions have troubled present-day Marxists (for a review, see Burawoy and Wright 2001), and so they have set about revitalizing Marxian theory to explain contemporary conditions. In Wright's (1997) version of analytical Marxism, for example, a distinction between economic power (control of others and the ability to extract their economic surplus) and economic welfare (ratio of toil in work to leisure time), coupled with people's "lived experiences" and contradictory class location, dramatically changes the nature of exploitation and, hence, individuals' awareness of their interests and willingness to engage in collective organization. Moreover, the notion of "ownership" and "control" is broadened to include four basic types of assets: labor-power assets, capital assets (to invest in economic activity and extract surplus value), organizational assets (to manage and control others and thereby extract surplus), and skill or credential assets (to extract resources beyond the labor necessary to acquire skills and credentials). Depending on the nature and level of any of these assets for individuals and families, the rate of exploitation will vary, being highest among those who have only labor assets and lowest among those who have the other types of assets. Additionally, Wright has sought to account for the fact that the state employs a significant proportion of the workforce yet cannot be seen as part of the bourgeoisie. Here, Wright emphasizes a "state mode of production" made possible by the resources that come from taxes, tariffs, and fees; and from this mode of production comes conflicts between managers, who ally themselves with capitalists and political decision makers, on the one side, and government workers, who provide the actual services, on the other. These two classes of workers in government reveal conflicting class interests and, hence, increased potential for class conflict. In the end, Wright and other

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analytical Marxists work hard to retain the basic concern with emancipation of subordinates in Marx's thinking while adjusting Marxian concepts to fit the reality of post-industrial societies.

World-Systems Theory

This approach retains many ideas from Marx on the dynamics of capitalism but shifts the unit of analysis from nation-state to systems of societies and globalization (Chase-Dunn 2001). Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) codified this mode of analysis, building on earlier work by dependency theorists (e.g., Frank 1969), into a conceptualization of world systems. One type of global system is a world empire revolving around conquest and extraction of resources from the conquered, which are then spent on elite privilege, control, and further conquest. Such systems eventually face fiscal crises, leading to showdown wars with other expanding empires. Of more interest to world-systems theorists like Wallerstein is a world economy driven not only by war but also by the flow of capital and technology through world markets. Such world economies are composed of (1) "core states," which have power, capital, and technology; (b) "peripheral states," which have inexpensive labor, natural resources, and insufficient power to stop their conquest, colonization, and exploitation; and (c) "semiperipheral states," having some economic development and military power, which, over time, can allow them to become part of the core. Thus, for world-systems theorists, the core is seen to exploit the periphery, frequently aided by the semiperiphery, with analysis emphasizing the economic cycles of varying duration (Juglar, Kuznet, and Kondratief cycles) and the flow of resources from periphery to core. From such exploitation, conflict within and between societies can emerge. There are many variants of world-systems theory, which adopt the broad strokes of Wallerstein's approach but emphasize somewhat different dynamics. For example, Christopher Chase-Dunn (1998) introduces new variables, such as population growth, intensification of production and environmental degradation, and immigration and emigration processes, to world-system dynamics leading to conflict within and between nations (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997). Thus, Marxian ideas have been given new life by the shift to globalization.

Abstracted Weberianism

Just as Marx's ideas have been abstracted and extended, so Weber's analysis of conflict has been converted to more general and abstract theories of conflict. Randall Collins (1975, 1986), for example, has blended Weber's analysis of domination with ideas from other theoretical traditions. Collins (1981) argues that macro-level social structures like organizations and stratification systems are built from micro-level interaction rituals that sustain class cultures, authority systems in organizations, and inequalities in

resources. People carry varying levels of cultural capital, emotional energy, material wealth, prestige, and power; and they use these resources in face-to-face interaction, with those high in these resources generally able to dominate others and augment their shares of resources. True to his Weberian roots, Collins then analyzes the varying cultures of social classes, the power of the state, the ideologies used to legitimate state power, the economy, and even the geopolitics between nations in terms of the relative resources of actors. Those who receive deference because of their resources will have different cultures and orientations than those who must give deference; the nature of control in organizational systems will vary depending on the relative reliance on coercion, material resources, or symbolic resources; the scale of the state depends on a surplus of economic resources, the degree of consensus over symbols, and the ability to use resources to expand the administrative and coercive bases of power; and geopolitics will reflect the technological, productive, geographical, and military advantages of states. Thus, like Marx, Weber's ideas stand at the core of new forms of conflict theorizing.

Historical-Comparative Analysis

The ideas of Marx and Weber are often combined in historical-comparative analysis of conflict processes. These analyses tend to focus on several classes of historical events, particularly the rise of democracies, revolutionary conflict, and empire formation and collapse. All of these theories focus on the state and the mobilization of masses (and often factions of elites) for conflict against the state. There are two lines of argument in these theories. One lists the conditions that lead masses and elites to mobilize for conflict against the state, while the other specifies the forces weakening the state's power and its capacity to repress dissent and conflict (Li and Turner 1998). The first line of argument owes more inspiration to Marx, and to a lesser extent to Weber, while the second is more indebted to Weber than to Marx. Some adopt Marx's ideas and extend them to nonindustrial societies, as is the case with Jeffrey Paige's (1975) analysis of agrarian revolutions in which cultivators (agricultural workers) and noncultivators (owners of land and their allies in government) evidence a clear conflict of interest, with revolution most likely when cultivators can communicate, develop ideologies, and mobilize for collective action and when noncultivators do not enjoy large resource advantages over cultivators. Barrington Moore's (1966) analysis of the rise of democracy employs an argument very similar to that developed by abstracted Marxian theories, emphasizing that subordinates can effectively engage in conflict when they live in propinquity, communicate, avoid competition with each other, and perceive that they are being exploited by elites who no longer honor traditional forms of relations with subordinates (primarily because of the effects of markets in breaking down traditional patterns of social

relations). Charles Tilly (1978, 1993) similarly develops a model of resource mobilization that draws from Marx and Weber, emphasizing that when subordinates have been kept out of the political arena, when segments of elites have similarly been disenfranchised, and when the state has been weakened (due to fiscal crises, inefficient tax collection, and poor administration), mobilization for conflict is likely. Theda Skocpol's (1979) analysis of revolution draws from Weber the effects of losing prestige in the world system, which comes with defeat in war, coupled with fiscal crises, which give subordinates opportunities to mobilize for conflict. Jack Goldstone (1991) introduces a demographic variable into these theories of revolutionary conflict, arguing that population growth will over the course of a century cause price inflation, displacement of peasants from the land, urban migrations, disaffection of some elites, and fiscal crises for the state. In turn, these lagged outcomes of population growth weaken the power of the state to repress mobilizations by peasants, migrations of restive peasants to urban areas, and disaffection of some elites. Finally, Randall Collins (1986) develops a Weber-inspired model of empire formation, arguing that expansion of empires increases when a society has a marchland advantage (natural barriers protecting its backside and flanks) and when, compared with its neighbors, it has a larger population, greater wealth, higher levels of productivity, more advanced technologies, and better-organized armies. But, as the empire expands, it will eventually lose its marchland and military advantages (as enemies copy its technology) while increasing its logistical loads to sustain the empire. Eventually, an empire will have a showdown war with another empire, causing it to collapse and implode back to its original home base. As is evident, then, Marx and Weber's theoretical legacy lives on in yet another theoretical venue, historical-comparative analysis of state and empire formation, revolutionary conflict, and war.

CRITICAL THEORIZING

From sociology's very beginnings, thinkers have often argued that sociology could be used to reconstruct society. Comte, for example, viewed positivism as a means for creating a better society, but his approach as well as that of his followers, such as Spencer and Durkheim, was not sufficiently critical of the condition of early industrial societies. Instead, it was Marx's critique of the evils of capitalism that pushed for a critical edge to theorizing, but as critical theorists in the early twentieth century sought to retain the emancipatory thrust of Marx's ideas, they had to take into account Weber's prediction that the state would increasingly dominate social relations through rational legal authority.

At the University of Frankfurt, early critical theorists like Max Horkheimer ([1947] 1972, [1947] 1974) and Theodor Adorno [1966] (1973) emphasized that critical

theory must describe the social forces that work against human freedom and expose the ideological justifications of these forces. Theorists must confront each other, debating ideas, and from these debates "truth" will emerge, but this truth is not that of science but a practical knowledge that comes from human struggles against the forces of oppression. Others in the Frankfurt School, as it became known, took a more idealist turn. György Lukács [1922] (1968), for example, borrowed from Marx the idea of the "fetishism of commodities" and converted it into a notion of "reification" in which all objects, including people, become commodities to be marketed, whose worth is determined by their "exchange value," another concept taken from Marx and Adam Smith ([1776] 1976). Lukács saw this process of reification to be an evolutionary trend, coming to a similar conclusion as Weber's "steel cage" argument, but he proposed a way out: There are limits to how far human consciousness will tolerate reification, and so it is necessary to unlock this innate source of resistance to reification—a theoretical position that pushes critical theory into subjectivism.

Outside the Frankfurt School proper, critical theory also took a cultural turn. For example, in Italy, Antonio Gramsci [1928] (1971) returned to the early Marx, where the importance of ideology was emphasized in the critique of the Young Hegelians. For Gramsci, the power of the state is used to manipulate workers and others through the propagation of ideologies about civic culture that are seemingly inoffensive but that nonetheless become the dominant views of even those who are oppressed. Thus, workers come to believe in the appropriateness of markets, the commodification of objects and symbols, the buying and selling of labor as a commodity, the rule of law to enforce contracts unfavorable to workers, the encouragement of private charities (rather than structural reform) to eliminate suffering, the curriculum in schools, the state's definition of a "good citizen," and many other taken-for-granted beliefs of the oppressed population. Thus, the state controls a population not so much by a "steel cage" of repression and rational-legal domination as by a "soft" world of symbols that the oppressed accept as "natural and appropriate"—a more sophisticated version of Marx's arguments about "false consciousness." In France, Louis Althusser (1965) adopted a structuralist metaphor, seeing the individual as trapped in a "deeper" structural order dominated by the state, capitalist economic relations, and capitalist ideologies; and because people see this order as the way things must be, they do not perceive that they can escape from this structure. By failing to see the state and ideology as crude tools of power and by seeing self as subordinate to deep structures directing all social life, individuals come to believe that resistance to these oppressive structures is futile.

The tradition of the Frankfurt School has been carried forth by a number of scholars, the most notable being Jürgen Habermas (1981/1984), who begins by seeing science as one form of domination as the state propagates

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an ideology revolving around “technocratic consciousness.” Habermas develops a broad evolutionary view of human history, incorporating theoretical elements from many contemporary theoretical traditions, but the basic argument is that the “lifeworld” (an idea borrowed from phenomenology) is being “colonized” by the state and economy; as this process proceeds, people’s capacity for “communicative action” is reduced. For Habermas, communicative action is the process whereby meanings are formed, creating the lifeworld that is the principal means of integration for societies. As the lifeworld is colonized, the reproduction of the lifeworld is interrupted; and societal integration is maintained only by “delinguistified media” such as money and power. Habermas develops a larger philosophical scheme, but his arguments carry forth the legacy of the Frankfurt School.

Within the United States, the issues raised by the old and new Frankfurt School, and those outside Germany working with its legacy, have been less influential than the rise of a wide variety of more specific critical approaches. These critical approaches often borrow from Marx and philosophy, but they owe more inspiration to prominent social movements, particularly the civil rights and women’s movements. These theories are generally philosophical, often anti-science, and critical of the social relations and ideologies that oppress specific subpopulations, such as members of ethnic minorities, women, and workers. Over the last two decades, this line of theorizing, if it can be called theory proper, has gained a strong foothold not only in sociology but also in many other disciplines such as English. Just how successful these ideologically loaded “theories” will be in the next decades is an open question, although they are now well established throughout academia and thus have a resource base that can sustain them. The result is that the debate of earlier generations of sociologists over the prospects for scientific theorizing has taken on a new polemical intensity, exceeding by far the comparatively muted debates among the founding generation of sociologists over the prospects for scientific sociology.

POSTMODERN THEORIZING

One of the most prominent new lines of theorizing in sociology is postmodernism, which, like critical theories, tends to be hostile to science (Lyotard 1979; Rorty 1979) and often takes a cultural turn from its Marxist origins. Economic postmodernism draws ideas not only from Marx but also from early theorists who were concerned about the “pathologies” of modernization, whereas cultural postmodernism emphasizes the increasing dominance of culture at the same time that symbols have become fragmented, commodified, and at times trivialized in ways that make individuals overly reflexive and unable to sustain a stable identity. Both economic and cultural postmodernists emphasize the dramatic transformations that come with

global markets driven by capitalism; indeed, these transformations are so fundamental as to mark a new stage of human evolution: the postmodern.

Economic postmodernists stress particular dimensions of the transformation that come with globalization (Harvey 1989; Jameson 1984; Lash and Urry 1987). One point of emphasis is the effect of high volume, velocity, and global markets fueled by advertising. The result has been the commodification of objects, people, and, most important, cultural symbols that are ripped from their indigenous locations, commodified, and marketed across the globe. Marxist-oriented postmodernists, who often overlap with world-systems theorists, emphasize the rapid movement of capital over the world and its deconcentration from historical centers of capital. Advances in transportation and communication technology have also compressed time and space in ways that facilitate the flow not only of capital but also of goods, people, and symbols around the globe. Finally, economic postmodernists tend to emphasize the growing dominance of imaging technologies of reproduction over those for production.

Cultural postmodernists focus on the consequences of the transformations described by economic postmodernists (Baudrillard 1981/1994; Gergen 1991; Kellner 1995). The first significant consequence is the increasing dominance of culture and symbols over material structures. People increasingly live in a world of fragmented symbols, which has more impact on their identities and behaviors than material conditions. The increase in the power of culture is made possible by media technologies and markets that detach culture from local groups, local time, and local space and that send commodified cultural elements via media technologies or via markets around the global system. Indeed, humans live in a simulated world of symbolizations of symbols, viewed through the eyeglass of the media (Baudrillard 1981/1994). As a result of its detachment from its material base and free-floating signifiers, culture loses its capacity to provide stable meanings for individuals. As an outcome of this inability of culture to provide meanings and anchorage of individuals in local groups, self becomes more salient than group, leading to increased reflexivity about self in an endless loop of searching for meanings and for a true sense of self. Thus, at the very time that self is ascendant, it reveals less stability, coherence, and viability.

These themes in contemporary postmodern theory can all be found in the founding generations of sociologists. For example, Durkheim’s concern over anomie and egoism; Marx’s views on alienation; Simmel’s analysis of the marginal and fractured self; Smith’s, Comte’s, Spencer’s, and Durkheim’s concerns about the differentiation and fragmentation of society; Weber’s portrayal of rationalization and emphasis on efficiency over other types of action; Marx’s and the later critical theorists’ view of the power of ideology; and many other “pathologies” of modern societies that early theorists emphasized have all been recast in postmodern theory. In a very real sense, then,

postmodern theorizing represents an extension of the concerns of early theorists about the effects of modernization on society and humans. Yet much postmodern theory consists of conjectures that have not been seriously tested, although many postmodernists, particularly the cultural postmodernists, would consider empirical tests in the mode of science to impose a “failed epistemology” on their modes of inquiry. Moreover, a great deal of postmodern theory overlaps with critical theorizing because few consider the “postmodern condition” to be a good thing; thus, postmodernism is heavily ideological in critiquing the contemporary world, often assuming implicitly that human nature has somehow been violated.

Like critical theorizing, postmodern theory is part of a much larger intellectual and cultural movement that extends across disciplines as diverse as architecture, social sciences, and the humanities. Within sociology, it has enjoyed a strong following for the last two decades, although there are signs that cultural postmodernists are losing ground, with the economic postmodernists moving more squarely into Marxian-inspired world-systems analysis.

INTERACTIONIST THEORIZING

Contemporary interactionist theorizing reveals a number of variants, each of which draws from a different theoretical tradition. Symbolic interactionism carries forth the pragmatist tradition synthesized by George Herbert Mead (1934); dramaturgical theory draws primarily from Durkheim’s ([1912] 1947) analysis of rituals; interaction ritual theory also draws from Durkheim and dramaturgy while introducing elements from other modern theories; ethnomethodology represents the modern application of phenomenology (Husserl [1913] 1969; Schütz [1932] 1967), coupled with elements from other traditions; and there are several efforts to develop syntheses among all these strands of theorizing about face-to-face interaction.

Symbolic Interactionism

The ideas of Mead have been applied to a wide variety of topics, from roles (Turner 1968) and identity processes (McCall and Simmons 1978; Stryker 1980, 2001) through the sociology of emotions (Burke 1991; Heise 1979; Scheff 1988) to theories of collective behavior (Snow and Benford 1988; Turner and Killian 1987). The basic argument is that social reality is ultimately constructed from face-to-face interactions among individuals who communicate symbolically, develop definitions of situations, draw on cultural resources, play roles, and seek to verify self and identity (Blumer 1969). Identity theories are perhaps the most prominent theoretical wing of interactionist theory today (for recent statements by various theorists, see Burke 2006; Burke et al. 2003). Here, theorists view more global self-conceptions and situational role identities as a

cybernetic control system, with individuals presenting gestures so as to get others to verify their self and identity. These theories also overlap with theories of emotions, since verification of self arouses positive emotions, whereas failure to verify self generates negative emotional arousal and leads to adjustments in behaviors or identities that bring identity, behavior, and responses of others into line. Some versions of symbolic interactionism extend these Gestalt dynamics not only to person but also to others, the identity of others, and the situation, with individuals seen as motivated to keep sentiments about these aspects of interaction consistent with each other (Heise 1979; Smith-Lovin and Heise 1988). As noted earlier, another set of symbolic interactionist theories incorporates Freudian dynamics to explain the activation of defense mechanisms when self and identity are not confirmed or when individuals fail to realize expectations or experience negative sanctions (Scheff 1988; J. Turner 2002). Role theory has also been influenced by symbolic interactionism, with each individual reading the gestures of others to determine the latter’s role and with individuals also seeking to have others verify their roles and the self and identity presented in these roles (R. Turner 2001). Theories of collective behavior and social movements also adopt symbolic interactionists ideas, emphasizing the collective contagion and emotional arousal of crowd behaviors and the processes by which members of social movements frame situations in ways that direct collective actions (Snow and Benford 1988).

Dramaturgical Theories

Erving Goffman (1959, 1967) was the first to downsize Durkheim’s ([1912] 1947) analysis of rituals and emotions as the basis of social solidarity in the most elemental social unit, the encounter, or episode of interaction. While Goffman was often seen as a symbolic interactionist, he was a Durkheimian who emphasized the importance of the cultural script, the dramatic presentations of self to an audience, and the strategic behaviors that individuals employ in presenting self on a stage in which props, sets, space and ecology, and interpersonal demography are employed to make a dramatic presentation and to realize strategic goals. In contrast to most symbolic interactionists, dramaturgy views self as purely situational and as something that individuals “put on” in presenting a “line” or in strategic acts of “impression management.” Thus, in addition to the use of the front stage to manage a line, forms of talk, use of rituals, presentations of roles, and keying of frames (of what is to be included and excluded from the interaction) are all synchronized to present self in a particular light and to achieve strategic ends.

Interaction Ritual Theorizing

Randall Collins (2004) has extended Durkheim’s and Goffman’s analysis to a more general theory of ritual. For

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Collins, the elements of what Goffman termed the “encounter” constitute a more inclusive ritual where individuals reveal a focus of attention, common mood, rhythmic synchronization of bodies and talk, symbolization of the positive emotional energy from rhythmic synchronization, and enhanced solidarity. When these elements of the ritual do not unfold, however, negative emotional energy is aroused, and solidarity becomes more problematic. Unlike most interactionists, Collins does not see self as a critical motivational force in these rituals. Moreover, he tries to develop a more general theory of meso and macro structures using interaction rituals as the “micro foundation” of all social structures (Collins 1981). More recent theories (Summer-Effler 2002, 2004a, 2004b) in this tradition have blended more symbolic interactionist elements into interaction ritual theory by expanding the analysis of emotions and introducing self and identity as key forces.

Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology emphasizes the methods or interpersonal techniques, especially in talk and conversation, that individuals employ to construct, maintain, or change their presumptions about what they share. This basic idea is adopted from phenomenology, a philosophical tradition (e.g., Husserl [1913] 1969) given a sociological character by Alfred Schütz ([1932] 1967). For Schütz, much interaction involves signaling to others not to question the presumption that parties to an interaction share a common view of reality. For ethnomethodologists, the gestures and signals that individuals exchange are “indexical” in that they have meaning only in particular contexts; and these signs are used to construct a sense of common meaning among individuals. Most ethnomethodological research examines finely coded transcripts of conversations to determine the ethno or folk methods that individuals employ to create or sustain a sense of reality. For example, turn-taking in conversations, gestures searching for a normal conversational form, ignoring gestures that may disconfirm reciprocity of perspectives, patterns of overlaps in conversations, allowing ambiguities in meanings to pass, or repairing in subsequent turns minor misunderstandings are all techniques that individuals employ to create and sustain the sense that they share a common intersubjective world (Garfinkel 1967; Sacks 1992; Schegloff 2001). The data presented by ethnomethodologists have been adopted by other theories, but unfortunately, the theoretical arguments of ethnomethodology appear to have taken a backseat to empirical analyses of conversations, often moving ethnomethodology into some version of linguistics.

Integrative Approaches

All of the above theoretical approaches involved some integration of both classic and contemporary theories. But some contemporary theorists have sought to develop more general and robust theories of interpersonal processes by

integrating concepts and propositions from a variety of interactionist theories. Jonathan Turner (2002), for example, has blended elements from symbolic interactionism, dramaturgy, interaction ritual theory, the sociology of emotions, role theory, expectation states theory, and ethnomethodology into a view of encounters as driven fundamental forces: emotions, transactional needs, symbols, status, roles, demography, and ecology. Yet relatively few theories are as integrative as Turner’s efforts; most microsociology tends to remain narrow in focus, producing a delimited set of generalizations and data sets designed to test these generalizations.

EXCHANGE THEORIZING

Exchange theory draws from both the behaviorist tradition of Edward Thorndike, Ivan Pavlov, John B. Watson (1913), and B. F. Skinner (1938) and the utilitarian tradition of the Scottish moralists. The basic argument is that individuals seek to gain profits in exchanges of resources with others, with profit being a function of the resources received, less the costs and investments spent in seeking these resources. All exchanges are also mediated by norms of fair exchange and justice, with the most prevalent norm of justice emphasizing equity or the distribution of rewards in proportion to relative costs and investments among actors. However, all exchange theories introduce the notion of power, in which one actor has the capacity to receive more rewards than others. Power is typically defined as the dependence of other actors on a powerful actor for valued resources, and the greater is the dependence of actors, the greater is the power of resource-holders over them.

Over the last four decades, exchange analysis has ventured into other areas of theorizing. Initially, exchange theory and network analysis were combined to understand the dynamics of networks in terms of the exchange dynamics that arise from power dependence (Cook and Rice 2001). The general finding is that power-advantaged actors use their advantage to exploit dependent actors by demanding additional resources. Under these conditions, dependent actors will seek other exchange partners, leave the exchange, learn to do without resources, or introduce new resources into the exchange that are highly valued by the previously advantaged actor (thus creating mutual dependence). Other findings emphasize that actors will develop commitments to exchanges, or engage in suboptimal exchanges, in return for certainty of exchange payoffs.

Another area where exchange theory has more recently penetrated is the sociology of emotions, in which power-dependence processes and network structures are analyzed in terms of the emotions that are aroused during the process of exchange (Lawler 2001). From theory and research, several generalizations emerge (Turner and Stets 2005). When payoffs are profitable and meted out in accordance with the norms of justice, positive emotions are aroused, whereas when payoffs are unprofitable, below

expectations, and violate the norms of justice, negative emotions are aroused. If individuals are over-rewarded or their over-reward leads to unfair under-reward for others, they will experience guilt. Positive rewards in negotiated and reciprocal exchanges reveal a proximal bias in attributions (leading to feelings of pride), while negative rewards or under-rewards in such exchanges evidence a distal bias (arousing anger toward others, the situation, or group). High-power individuals are more likely to make self-attributions for success in profitable exchanges and external attributions for under-rewards than are low-power actors. The more profits are received in dense networks engaged in coordinated actions, the more likely are positive exchange outcomes to cause actors to make external attributions to the group, and the more they will become attached to the group. These and other generalizations document that exchange theories are becoming integrative, crossing over into other areas of theory and research in sociology.

STRUCTURALIST THEORY

All sociologists study social structures, but structuralist theorizing in sociology has special connotations. There are, in essence, two branches of structuralist theorizing, both of which derive considerable inspiration from Durkheimian sociology. One branch emphasizes material conditions as influencing the nature of social relations among individuals and collective actors. Marx, Georg Simmel, and especially the early Durkheim all agreed that structure is a set of connections among parts, with the goal of theorizing being to discover the cause of these connections and their dynamic properties. The other branch of structuralism seeks to discover the “deep structures” or “generative rules” guiding the formation of culture systems and social structural arrangements. What is observable empirically is seen as a surface manifestation of a deeper underlying system of generative rules and, in some theorists’ minds (e.g., Lévi-Strauss [1958] 1963, 1979), rules directed by the neurology of the human brain.

The materialist version of structural analysis can be found in any theory that tries to explain the properties of social relations. One of the more prominent approaches in this tradition is network analysis, which views structures as nodes connected by relationships involving the flow of resources. In network theory, the form of the relationship is critical because different forms will reveal varying dynamic properties (for a review, see Turner 2002). The structuralism that also comes from Durkheim, via structural linguistics (de Saussure [1915] 1966; Jakobson 1962–1971) and structural anthropology, has inspired a revival of cultural sociology, even though some theories oftentimes see structure as being generated by the biology of the brain. But structuralism inspired a new concern with cultural codes and the practices that carry these codes to situations and that change or reinforce them. The

structuralism movement enjoyed a certain cache during the 1970s and 1980s, but by the turn into the twenty-first century, the interests of structuralists had been incorporated into the “cultural turn” of sociological theorizing. The more materialist versions of structural analysis continue, as they always have, in a wide variety of theoretical perspectives, although network analysis—the most formal of these materialist approaches—has become ever more concerned with computer algorithms for describing rather than explaining network structures.

THE CULTURAL TURN IN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Over the last decades of the twentieth century, sociological theory has taken a cultural turn. There were, of course, classical antecedents to this turn, but all of them tended to see culture as a dependent variable, as something that is shaped by social structural arrangements. For Marx, culture is a “superstructure” driven by the material “substructure”; for Durkheim, the collective conscience is related to the nature, number, and relationships among system parts, although his work did inspire cultural structuralism; and for the modern functionalists, culture is conceptualized in highly analytical terms as a system composed of abstract elements such as value orientations. Only Weber ([1905] 1958) appeared to emphasize culture as a causal force, as illustrated by his analysis of the Protestant Ethic and the rise of capitalism (although his analysis in terms of ideal types tended to reduce the culture of Protestantism and capitalism to a few analytical elements). As we saw, the critical theories of the Frankfurt School and others in this tradition like Gramsci often migrated to the analysis of ideologies, but again, culture was always connected to material and political interests. And during the 1960s, as Marxism and conflict sociology reemerged in the United States, culture was once again seen as an ideology reflecting the material interests of contending groups.

Jeffrey Alexander and Philip Smith (2001) have termed most sociological analyses of culture a “weak program” because culture is not explored as an autonomous system but, instead, as a dependent variable or superstructure to material conditions. They even criticize work that focuses explicitly on culture, including the Birmingham School’s analysis of symbols in terms of Marxian structural categories, the efforts of Pierre Bourdieu (1977) to understand “habitus” and its connection to material conditions, and the works of poststructuralists like Michel Foucault (1972), whose “archeology” of knowledge ultimately uncovers the effects of power on culture. Similar cultural programs, such as Wuthnow’s (1987) analysis of the moral order, are seen to emphasize the connection between the moral order and the material resource bases generated by wealth, leadership communication networks, political authority, and other structural properties. Likewise, Michèle

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Lamont's (1999) analysis of culture as marking group boundaries is viewed as explaining culture by its attachment to stratification and economic systems.

In contrast to these "weak programs," Alexander and Smith (2001) propose a "strong program" where culture is treated initially as an autonomous sphere with deep textual analysis of its symbols in their specific context. Both the weak and strong programs emphasize cultural codes, discursive practices by which these codes are used, rituals directed at the code, and the objects denoted by codes, discourse, and rituals, but the strong program avoids connecting cultural analysis to material conditions, at least until the full exploration of the cultural codes has been completed. For example, Alexander's (2004) strong program of "cultural pragmatics" emphasizes that there are deep background "representations" that generate "scripts" and "texts" that actors decode and interpret; and these need to be analyzed before they are connected to individuals' actions in front of audiences. Although power and productive relations influence how actors extend culture to audiences through ritual performances, the elements of culture need to be analytically separated from their structural contexts, and their scripts and texts need to be thickly described. Only then can they be reattached to ritual, social structure, and audience to explain ritual practices and audience reactions. And as actors extend culture to audiences, they experience cathexis, which, in turn, influences the nature of the texts, discourse, and rituals.

Whatever the merits of these kinds of arguments, it is clear that cultural sociology has made an enormous comeback over the last decade of the twentieth century, and indeed, theorizing about culture is becoming as prominent in the first decade of this century as conceptualizations of material conditions were at the height of conflict theory in the 1960s and 1970s. Yet, for all the emphasis on thick description of texts, most analyses eventually become highly analytical, abstracting from these texts particular sets of codes that, in turn, are attached to material conditions.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Decline of Grand Theory When It Is Most Needed

At the very time when sociological theory has differentiated into a variety of approaches, general and integrative theorizing has declined. All of the early theorists, especially Spencer, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, were generalists who sought to explain a wide range of phenomena across long reaches of history. Functional theory in the modern era, particularly that practiced by Talcott Parsons and Niklas Luhmann, was also grand, but with the demise of these versions of grand theory, such theorizing fell out

of favor and has been replaced by narrower theories confined to one level of analysis and held in check by scope conditions. Relatively few theories today seek to explain all phenomena at the micro, meso, and macro levels. There are some exceptions, however. For example, Anthony Giddens's (1984) structuration theory is grand in the sense that it attempts to explain all levels of reality, although his scheme is more of a conceptual framework for describing a wide range of empirical cases. Jonathan Turner's (1995, 2002) efforts of theorizing approximate a grand approach because he consciously seeks to integrate existing theories at all levels of social reality. Randall Collins's (1975, 2004) interaction ritual theory is another approach that seeks to explain reality at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Still, most theorists shy away from this kind of integrative effort, at the very time that sociological theory is fragmenting into diverse and often hostile camps. In the future, it will be necessary for more integrative and, indeed, grand approaches to make a comeback if sociological theory is to reveal any coherence in the twenty-first century.

The Continuing Debate over Science

From the beginning, sociologists have debated the prospects for scientific sociology resembling that in the natural sciences. The founders were split, with Comte, Spencer, Simmel, and Durkheim pushing for scientific sociology, while Marx and Weber had doubts about the prospects for universal laws that could explain reality at all times and in all places. This split over the prospects for scientific sociology continued through the whole of the twentieth century and divides sociological theory (Turner and Turner 1990).

There are those who wish to perform rigorous analytical work but who view a sociology that apes the natural sciences as impossible; there are those who see the epistemology of the natural sciences as not only impossible but as a tool of repression; there are still others who see science as proposing grand narratives when the world does not reveal such an obdurate character; there are many who seek sociology as an art form or as a clinical field in which investigators use their intuiting to solve problems; and there are many who argue that sociology should be explicitly ideological, seeking to change the world. There is, then, a rather large collection of anti-scientists within sociology, especially sociological theory.

The end result is that scientific sociology is not accepted by many sociologists. Yet an enormous amount of theoretical growth and accumulation of knowledge has occurred over the last four decades, at the very time when many were having doubts about the appropriateness or possibility of a natural science of society. Thus, much of the new scientific understanding about the dynamics of the social world is ignored or viewed with hostility by those who have other agendas. Indeed, should sociology ever have its Einstein, only a few would take notice.

Chauvinism and Intolerance

Even among those who are committed to the epistemology of science, there is both chauvinism and intolerance. Some proclaim that certain processes occurring at a particular level of reality are the key properties and processes of the social universe, while being dismissive of those who think otherwise. And among those who do not believe that science is possible or even desirable, there is a smug condescension that is equally dismissive. For the former, theory becomes narrow and focused, building up barriers to other theoretical approaches, while for the latter group, theory becomes anything and everything—ideology, practice, philosophizing, textual analysis, moral crusading, critique, and virtually any activity. In being anything and everything, it becomes nothing in the sense of accumulating knowledge about the social world. Social theory, when not disciplined by the epistemology of science, becomes driven by intellectual fads and foibles, constantly changing with new social, cultural, and intellectual movements but never establishing a base of knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

This summary cannot really do justice to the diversity of activity that occurs under the rubrics of “social” and, more narrowly, “sociological” theory. Humpty Dumpty has

fallen off the wall, split into so many pieces that even grand theorists may never be able to put him back together again. In one sense, the proliferation of theories is a sign of vitality, especially among those narrow theories that seek to develop cumulative knowledge. But it is also an indicator of weakness because at some point, sociological theory will need to develop a more integrated set of principles and models about social reality. This effort is hindered by those who simply do not accept the epistemology of science. As a result, efforts to integrate theories will often be sidetracked by debate and acrimony as factions become intolerant of each other. As a consequence, at a time when enormous progress has been made in denoting the basic properties of the social universe, in developing abstract models and principles on the operative dynamics of these properties, and in assessing these theories with systematically collected data, it is not clear how many sociologists are listening. Fifty years ago, it seemed that sociology was ready to take its place at the table of science; today, this prospect seems more remote, despite the fact that sociology is far more sophisticated theoretically than five decades ago. Thus, as we move toward the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, it is not clear just what the prospects for sociological theory will be. Will the scientists prevail? Will the anti-science factions win out? Or will the fight continue for another 100 years? Realistically speaking, this last prognosis is the most likely scenario.

