© American Sociological Association 2012
DOI: 10.1177/0094306112438186
http://cs.sagepub.com

EDITOR'S REMARKS
BEHIND THE SCENES: LEGITIMATING *CS* LABORS

Halfway through our tenure at the helm of *CS*, shepherding worthy books to suitable reviewers, with nineteen issues behind us and seventeen still to go, we have taken stock and tried to picture a better journal—-one that serves the authors of books and the readers of reviews more satisfactorily. ("We" and "our" are not used here in the royal sense: the journal is the editorial and physical production of six staffers, 43 Editorial Board members, plus a slew of able Sage employees, typesetters in India, and printers in North Carolina.) To this end the attending Editorial Board members who gathered last year for our annual breakfast at the ASA meeting thoughtfully considered several concerns that are peculiar to *CS*, and not so much the nine other ASA journals. Out of this discussion came good ideas for positive change.

When asked why writing reviews or review-essays does not normally take precedence over, or even compete with, other scholarly duties ordinarily carried out by sociologists, the Board acknowledged that relatively little credit is given to scholars who take a detour from their own research, altruistically reading and writing about someone else's. Administrators do not usually count short works of criticism as having the same value as "original" articles, book chapters, or grant proposals. Even a superbly composed review-essay does not win the same plaudits for its author that come with publishing an article in an "important" journal. So why do some of our brightest and best known colleagues bother with this time-consuming, "thankless" job? (And perusal of the journal over the last several years indicates that there are indeed stars in the sociological firmament who find it worthwhile to write for *CS*, in some cases repeatedly.)

It would also seem that a growing number of social scientists are more reluctant than in previous decades to write negatively about a book, and would rather not risk having to write unflatteringly about a book and its author, or, having read the book, announce after the fact that they cannot bring themselves to complete a review which might disturb the author or the author's colleages or the administrators at the author's college, and so on. ("The Courage to Publicize One's Convictions" in the November, 2010 issue of *CS* deals with this growing phenomenon.) This may reflect a sea change in scholarly etiquette and interpersonal relations, or something less profound, but whatever its causes, the reluctance to write frankly about another scholar's work poses a serious problem for intellectual discourse in general, and for a book review journal in particular. One notable sociologist wrote to me at length, explaining that they do indeed appreciate having their work reviewed in *CS*, but "don't see any personal advantage" to writing reviews themselves. Doing so takes time, and the results are likely to irritate some audience or another unless the analysis is wholly positive. Such a sentiment, which is probably common, bespeaks a "rational choice model" of action in bald form.

Yet the key to the Editorial Board's discussion in Las Vegas about the journal's future lay still elsewhere, in the overpowering administrative obsession with citation counts. Not so terribly long ago in academic history, this rabid concern was either nonexistent in the motivational vocabulary of scholars or was an enthusiasm of a fringe group in the hard sciences whose expertise was codified by the International Society of Scientometrics and Informetrics. In the early 1960s, Robert K. Merton inspired Eugene Garfield (the father of citation counts and impact factor measurement) to perfect the Social Science Citation Index, in part to benefit the former's work on the Matthew Effect

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com by guest on March 27, 2012

and related phenomena in the sociology of the physical sciences. But it was not until *U.S. News and World Report* began publishing its college rankings in the 1980s that ordinary administrators, who had never before thought to consult *Journal Citation Reports* and related outlets, realized they could use these "hard data" as a handy way to rank their peer institutions, colleges within their universities, departments within their colleges, and faculty within their departments. Rather than having to read material and consider its scholarly value—a time-consuming duty, and one which would usually call for cross-disciplinary knowledge which administrators lacked—citation counts stood in as proxy measures for "overall intellectual value," or at the least, "overall notoriety." That some scholars' work was cited repeatedly because it was badly done did not necessarily matter, for as they say in Hollywood and on Broadway, even a bad review is better than no review.

Realizing all this, the Editorial Board posed itself the following question: "How can scholars be persuaded more readily to write for *CS*?" and the answer immediately presented itself: "By raising the journal's 'impact factor' and citation count!" *CS*, like any review journal, has a low impact factor—and I doubt that Eugene Garfield thought in 1955 that his invention of this concept would be used in this way when he first proposed it in *Science* (Garfield 2006: 90). The Mertonian "unintended consequences" of such measurements are legion, but one is surely the diminished status of critical reviewing over the last few decades. There was a time when great reviewers—Edmund Wilson, Robert K. Merton (who published 70 reviews in the first few years of his career), George Steiner, Isaiah Berlin—influenced intellectual life at large as much by their criticism as by their "more substantive" works. It remains true, even if less openly acknowledged now, that a finely wrought review or review-essay will cause more scholars to pay attention to a given set of thoughts or data-analyses than will the monograph about which it is written. After all, an essay is quick and easy to read, and monographs are not.

Members of the Editorial Board, perhaps inspired by being in the Augustus Tower of Caesar's Palace, came up with a series of useful ideas, one of which in particular I have implemented. Beginning in the near future, *CS* will publish a series of long, titled essays, 4000 words and up, each one of which will canvass a subfield within sociology, composed by a noted expert in the area, and will answer the following question: "Which books published since 2000 have most powerfully shaped or otherwise influenced your area of expertise within sociology?" The authors of these essays—more than 20 have already agreed to take on this substantial scholarly task—will be given the opportunity and responsibility to define what is important to them and their colleagues within a specialized community of interest.

How did I identify these important authors? First, I asked my Editorial Board for nominations, but then, and more representatively, I asked the current chair, past chair, and chair-elect of most ASA sections to give me several names of potential authors who could write such an essay. Some chairs gave me many names, some none. But using the data at my disposal, I spent several months finding and signing up the best experts I could to write these "retrospective-critical essays," as they are being called. Several of the Editorial Board members explicitly requested that at least some of the books discussed in these essays be written by younger members of the guild whose "new ideas" promise to illuminate the most fruitful future paths of specialties, and I have transmitted this request to the essayists. So the "retrospective-critical" essays will not be an historical record of "greatest hits" so much as a blend of the past with a likely and desirable future.

Naturally, we at the journal hope these essays will be cited frequently, will improve the journal's impact score, will become staples of graduate student comprehensive reading lists, and will energize the discipline in ways that only excellently executed critical prose works can.

Stay tuned.

Reference

Garfield, Eugene. 2006: "The History and Meaning of the Journal Impact Factor." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 295:1, 90-93.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com by guest on March 27, 2012

© American Sociological Association 2012
DOI: 10.1177/0094306112438187
http://cs.sagepub.com

FEATURED REVIEW ESSAY

The Great American University

Michael Burawoy
University of California, Berkeley
burawoy@berkeley.edu

The Great American University: Its Rise to Preeminence, Its Indispensable National Role, Why It Must be Protected, by **Jonathan R. Cole.** New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2010**.** 616pp. $35.00 cloth. ISBN: 9781586484088.

''Save Our University!'' chanted the students (and some faculty) at the University of California, Berkeley as they valiantly protested the rise in student fees and the corporatization of the university. Their chant raised the question of who controls the university and for what ends? The Regents of the University of California? The business community? The legislature in Sacramento? The growing administrative apparatus now being restructured through ''operation excellence''? Or the faculty and students—the actual educators and educated? Whose university is this after all?

These rhetorical questions recall the Free Speech Movement and the 1960s protests that followed, which also condemned the university, its bureaucratization, its massification, and its ties to corporate capital. In those days, Clark Kerr, President of the University, was vilified as the devil, architect of the mass university, which he christened the multiversity. Today he is redeemer and radical. To chant ''save our university'' is to endorse his vision of access plus excellence for Californian higher education—a vision enshrined in the 1960 California Master Plan, now in shreds, a utopia from another epoch.

What has happened in the last 50 years to turn a devil into a redeemer, a liberal into a radical, to make state policy as unthinkable now as it was unquestioned then? The simple answer is that the university, worldwide, has entered a three-fold crisis. First and foremost, there is a *budgetary crisis*, occasioned by the withdrawal of public funding, that prompts universities to seek donors, build collaborative relations with industry, cash in on discoveries through patenting, increase part-time teaching, dilute education through distance learning, strip and outsource non-academic staff and, of course, above all, increase student fees and, where possible recruit high-paying foreign students. The resources of each university determine what combination of strategies it can deploy. The result is, indeed, that the university—public and private—looks ever more like a profit-seeking corporation with growing managerial ranks and salaries to match. These changes began with the broader turn to market fundamentalism, long before the current economic crisis sent shock waves through higher education and so much else.

The budgetary crisis stimulates state surveillance over the way universities use their public funds. Governments are increasingly suspicious of the university's lax managerial practices. Ironically, therefore, falling public funds coincide with more rather than less state surveillance and interference. A *regulatory crisis* ensues, compounded by the universities' own pursuit of prestige to attract high-paying students as well as extra-mural funds. To this end universities register themselves in national and international leagues that rank them according to their performance, productivity and reputation. There is no opting out, with the result that an audit culture sweeps into the university distorting the way it conducts teaching and research,

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

shrinking time horizons, and degrading the academic enterprise, except at the most elite levels.

There is a third crisis—a *legitimation crisis*—that underpins the budgetary and regulatory crises, namely the growing lack of public confidence in and comprehension of the university and the enormous funds it absorbs. As public universities dramatically increase student fees and as they pursue private funding, so the public wonders why it should be paying taxes to support higher education. A vicious cycle is set in motion as declining state expenditures intensify the search for private money which justifies further state withdrawal, and so on. The original social contract—taxes for free education—lies in tatters. Hitherto immune from legitimation problems, now, along with other public institutions, its sanctity is challenged, and its profligacy attacked. How have academics responded?

The Rise to Preeminence—A Whiggish History

Much soul-searching there is. A veritable cottage industry of books, many of them reviewed in *Contemporary Sociology*, has appeared that analyze and lament the decline of the university, not just in the United States, but across the world. These works document the evaporation of the Golden Age when universities were the pride of the nation—an essential and unquestioned feature of the national landscape. Where some lament, others see the crisis as an opportunity to exploit the market and develop the entrepreneurial university. Into this ferment wades Jonathan Cole, ignoring the critical literature to proclaim the preeminence of the American university. Playing with his title, *The Great American University*, Cole implies he is celebrating the ''American university'' in general, whereas he is only concerned with the top 100 U.S. research universities, and for the most part only with the top 10. How does he justify the concentration of resources at the apex of the vast complex of higher education, here and also abroad? How does he make the case for its indispensability and its necessary protection?

To establish the top 100 research universities, Cole draws on the Shanghai Jiao Tong University Ranking (SJT) created to evaluate the progress of Chinese Universities in relation to the world's best, but now used globally in the competition for ''world class'' status. The league table is constructed out of four factors with different weights:

- Quality of education measured by the number of alumni who have won Nobel Prizes or Fields Medals (10 percent)
- Quality of faculty as measured by the number of faculty who have won Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals as well as the number of highly-cited researchers in 21 fields (40 percent)
- Research output as measured by number of articles published in *Nature* and *Science* and the number of citations in Science Citation Index Expanded and the Social Sciences Citation Index (40 percent)
- Academic performance as measured by the foregoing indices adjusted according to the number of faculty in the institution (10 percent)

The United States dominates the rankings with 17 of the top 20, 40 of the top 50, 54 of the top 100, and 84 of the top 200. In contrast to the QS and Times Higher Education rankings, SJT is skewed toward the natural sciences and research, which suits Cole's purpose perfectly since for him the ''greatness'' of the American university is not its teaching but its research.

Part I of *The Great American University* gives us a short history. Drawing on European traditions and especially the great German universities of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the American research university developed through the first half of the twentieth century and came into its own in the post-war period with the exponential expansion of the system of higher education, especially its research apparatus, much of it from federal funding. The superiority of the American university is measured by countless discoveries and inventions across all disciplines that have transformed everyday life. The values that underpin the great university are multiple

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

and here Cole extends the four advanced by Robert Merton (1973[1942]) in his definition of the scientific ethos to a list of 12: universalism, organized skepticism, creation of new knowledge, free and open communication of ideas, disinterestedness, free inquiry and academic freedom, international communities, peer review, working for the common good, governance by authority, intellectual progeny, vitality of community. These values are represented by such great leaders of the American research university as Robert Hutchins of Chicago and James Conant of Harvard and, in the post-war period, by Frederick Emmons Terman who turned Stanford into a premier research university and Clark Kerr whose vision for California combined access and excellence, making the University of California a world leader in research.

As former Provost of Columbia University (1989–2003) and a sociologist of science, Cole is in a good position to evaluate the research conducted by great universities, which is just what he does in Part II of the book. He contacted presidents or provosts of the top 50 research universities and asked them for lists of discoveries over the previous four decades. In the first chapter of Part II, he ranges over the ever-more important medical and biological sciences concerned with health, food, and genes. In the second chapter he turns to the physical sciences and engineering: developments in physics and astronomy that led to lasers, radar, transistors, MRI technology; developments in earth sciences that brought advances in understanding earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, global warming, and ozone depletion; and then, of course, the birth and development of computer technology, the emergence of the internet, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, GPS (global positioning system), and surveillance. In the third chapter he turns to the humanities and social sciences, but here he has to rely on his own judgment as the presidents and provosts at the top universities did not pay much attention to these areas. Here he proposes five areas of advance: decision-making and reasoning; values and opinions; culture, economy and society; ourselves and our sensibilities; and thinking about thinking (philosophy and literary theory). If the reader wants a longer list of discoveries and contributions, he or she can find them at http://university-discoveries.com.

This Whiggish history sees the contemporary university as the ineluctable product and producer, creator and guarantor, of U.S. progress:

> In the future, virtually every new industry will depend on research conducted at America's universities. American higher education represents one of the few sectors of the U.S. economy with a favorable international balance of trade. These universities have evolved into creative machines unlike any other that we have known in our history—cranking out information and discoveries in a society increasingly dependent on knowledge as the source for its growth. Thus, a threat to the American research university is a threat to the health and well-being of our nation (p. 4).

To be sure there have been a few awkward moments, but these are mere wrinkles on the surface, slight reversals in an otherwise smooth trajectory that assumed take-off proportions after World War II. To threaten the research university is to tamper with American greatness. However, this is not everyone's view or the university would not be in such crisis, and Cole would not have to mount such an exhaustive accounting of the university's contributions to society.

Discoveries that Alter Our Lives—Is the University Worth It?

Cole does offer us an impressive array of discoveries. But at what cost? As he outlines in Chapter Six, since WWII there has been an exponential growth in the number of scientists on the planet (90 percent of all ever-existing scientists are alive now), the number of published papers doubles every decade, and he notes there is an ever greater concentration of productivity in a few individuals at the very top universities. University budgets have grown astronomically. Columbia's operating budget has increased from $11 million in 1944-45 to some $2.8 billion in

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

2007, more than doubling every decade.[1] The National Science Foundation's budget increased equivalently from $40 million in 1957 to $6.9 billion five decades later. The National Institute of Health's budget increased from $71 million in 1954 to $29.5 billion in 2009. Today, a junior scientist who requires labs and equipment needs a million dollars in start up costs.[2] The question is this: are we getting value for money? Impressive though the list of discoveries is, they come at a staggering financial cost. For how long could university funding increase at an exponential rate? One can see why legislatures raise their eyebrows, demanding that universities should tighten their belts, and that those great discoveries should pay their way through patenting, collaborations with industry, and the development of joint ventures. The danger of putting universities on a hard budget footing and making knowledge proprietary, however, is that this might limit the freedom of inquiry necessary to make the break throughs in the first place.

Whether he does not want to sully the waters, or because he is at a private university where the profit nexus is taken for granted, or he genuinely believes it is a problem at the margins, Cole passes lightly over the commodification of knowledge. Instead he steams ahead with those great contributions. He even tries to justify research in the humanities and social sciences in terms of the novel understandings they bring, but he is not very convincing. In the field of sociology, for example, he puts his teacher, Robert Merton, at the center—his self-fulfilling prophecy, his notion of unintended consequences, his focus group, and his theory of anomie—followed by Blau and Duncan on social mobility, Riesman's lonely crowd, Stouffer's study of the American soldier and the idea of reference group behavior, and Lauman's study of sexuality. It is all a bit parochial, quaint and dated and, with the exception of Lauman, a throw-back to the sociology of half-a-century ago. If the funding of sociology depended on Cole's account of its discoveries, I think we would disappear. The same applies to the humanities. We can not rest our laurels on Chomsky's linguistics, Said's literary criticism and Rawl's philosophy.

Economics, of course, is another story—here we have the development of a discipline that has proven very effective in disseminating its ideas about monetary policy, and efficient investment, the theory behind derivatives that propelled us into the Great Recession. But is our society better off as a result of neo-classical economics? Starting in the 1970s, the neoliberal era has been justified and propelled by the conventions of market fundamentalism, with few dissenting voices. A reasonable argument has been made—from Naomi Klein to Joseph Stigltiz—that shock therapy and structural adjustment have contributed to the destruction of economies and societies. Even if we do not worry about other countries—and Cole does not—neoliberal economics has hand-cuffed one administration after another, the pretext being cutting government spending and reducing taxes, especially on the rich. As Keynes once said, the ideas of economists rule the world, and politicians are unwittingly the "slaves of some defunct economist."

What is missing here is, a sociology of the university, a closer examination of the new societal context within which it operates and within which its products are received, a study of "unintended consequences" that have come home to roost in the "risk society" of the twenty-first century. To be sure the revolution in information technology has transformed many people's lives, but for better or worse? And for whom? Cole writes that as a sociologist he is committed to studying the production of knowledge as a social process (p. 204), but the reception, application and consumption of science is also a social process, which can no longer be easily separated from "discovery." Cole tends to assume that the existence of a discovery that transforms everyday life is *ipso*

[1] Assuming all these figures are in real rather than constant dollars, they still represent exponential increases.

[2] When writing of the inequality among the elite universities, Cole asks who will be able to fund world-class scientists whose recruitment packages run to "$40 or $50 million price tags, not including the investments of hundreds of millions of dollars in new laboratory buildings, scientific equipment, and highly trained personnel" (p. 476).

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

facto necessarily good, but as sociologists we know that any new technique or invention has consequences determined by the social relations into which they enter.[3] Nuclear power in the wrong hands can lead to massive destruction as we know from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not to mention Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima. What about the contributions of university research to biological warfare? Or the DNA revolution and genetic engineering with its many troubling aspects? Organ transplants, one of Cole's great medical inventions, are utilized to the disadvantage and exploitation of helpless donors in the Global South. Indeed, many medical discoveries are used by pharmaceuticals to make exorbitant profits that often benefit only the few.

Not only economic but also political interests define the context of reception. We may be better able to predict hurricanes but that did not stop the catastrophe that hit New Orleans. Many of our inventions create the disasters we live through, and global warming is obviously one. While it may not end the human race it will certainly kill off the vulnerable. Cole highlights the new technologies of surveillance as a weapon against terrorism, but they also are used to curtail civil liberties, even to impede scientists from pursuing their inquiries as Cole himself tells us in Part III of his book. Gone are the times when we can assume that science is benign, and the more a university depends on private funding the more likely it is to become malignant.

The Great American University in Context

The context within which the research university functions cannot be ignored. This applies to the reception of discoveries, and to the higher education hierarchy itself. While Cole announces the importance of the overall *system* of higher education (p. 5), his actual interest lies with the top 100 research universities, and even here he tends to focus primarily on Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT, Columbia, Stanford, Chicago, and the University of California. Left unexamined is the relation between the top 100 and the approximately 4,200 institutions that were created to protect the research university from the massive influx of students in the decades following World War II. These ''non-elite'' institutions—two-year colleges and state universities that do not award doctoral degrees—experience falling salaries, expanding workloads, casualization of employment, deskilling through on-line teaching as well as increased student fees. Impoverishment of the lower tiers supports improved conditions—ever higher salaries and lower teaching loads—in the top tier. Even within the top tier, tenured faculty are becoming an ever-shrinking proportion of the teaching staff.[4] Maintaining the research university comes at the cost of the degradation of university education more broadly. Perhaps there was a time when the elite, or better the dominant class of universities could present their interests as the interests of all, but with shrinking budgets, class compromise gives way to increased polarization, wealth at one pole and poverty at the other. And at all levels students are receiving less while paying more.

Instead of paying attention to the widening gap between the elite and the non-elite universities, Cole is concerned about the widening inequality *within* the top tier of research universities where private universities sit on huge and expanding endowments, while the vaunted public universities suffer annual budget cuts. Indeed, the concentration of resources around just a few Ivy League universities (Harvard dwarfing everyone) is astonishing. Thus, Cole reports that as of 2008, Harvard had an endowment of $37 billion, Yale $23 billion, and Stanford

3 As Robert Merton (1973 [1938]: 263) wrote long ago: ''There is a tendency for scientists to assume that the social effects of science *must* be beneficial in the long run. This article of faith performs the function of providing a rationale for scientific research, but it is manifestly not a statement of fact. It involves the confusion of truth and social utility which is characteristically found in the nonlogical penumbra of science.''

4 Overall the proportion of faculty in the tenure system has dropped from 55 percent in 1980 to 31 percent in 2007. See, Dan Clawson, ''Tenure and the Future of the University,'' *Science*, Vol. 324 (29 May, 2009), p. 1147.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

$17 billion. At $6 or $7 billion Chicago and Columbia's endowments are about the amount Harvard added to its endowment in 2006! Not surprisingly, the former Provost of Columbia is concerned about the concentration of resources at Yale and Stanford, and especially Harvard. This situation, Cole avers, endangers competition—the goose that lays the golden eggs.

We can study polarization within the system of higher education, but we should also look at implications for inequality in the wider society, inequality in access to the university. Cole points to increasing student enrollments with two-thirds of school leavers attending some form of higher education, but he overlooks the attrition rate and the debt accumulated en route to their degree.[5] Moreover, school leavers end up in very different places in an ever more differentiated hierarchy of higher education. The intensification of struggle for places in the ''best'' universities, where the costs can be crippling, notwithstanding the growth of scholarships, advantages students with cultural as well as economic capital. Cole does not look at the way elite universities continue to reproduce a dominant class—the line of argument taken by Jerome Karabel or Pierre Bourdieu. This is relevant to his concern with the survival of the research university, since endowments flow most easily to the elite universities that secure the reproduction of the dominant class.

Nor should we confine our attention to the national scene. The ascendancy of ''the great American university'' has increasing repercussions across the globe as it becomes the standard by which countries measure their own higher education. Cole's approach is to look for potential challenges to the supremacy of the American research university. He looks in the obvious places, the home of traditionally excellent universities—France, Germany, and Britain—and concludes in each case that they do not. Apart from limited funding, the best research, at least in the case of France and Germany, takes place outside universities in research institutes that, so he avers, could never compete with U.S. research universities. Their relative backwardness is reflected in the number of published scientific papers: individually Britain, France, and Germany do not publish more than 6 percent of the world's output compared to the United States' 29 percent.[6] Then, Cole considers China, one of the few places in the world that is pouring money into higher education, but even here, he argues, there is little chance of China catching up in the foreseeable future. It started from a low level of scientific research and is handicapped by limited academic freedom. Despite its rapid expansion of higher education, China still only contributes 6 percent of the world's scientific papers as determined by the Science Citation Index.

Of course, quantity does not imply quality. Still, by any measure, the concentration of global knowledge production in the United States is staggering. The total annual spending on higher education is $360 billion, which is 7 times the amount of the next big spender, Japan. In the SJT ranking system, 84 U.S. universities appear in the top 200 with the United Kingdom coming second with 23, and after that Japan with 9. Even taking into account all the biases of the Shanghai audit, this points to an extraordinary domination by the United States. Of course, by virtue of English becoming the lingua franca, U.S. and U.K. academies start out with a major advantage. They define the terms of global competition by controlling the vast majority of journal publications. In 2001, the United States produced between a quarter and a third of the world's scientific papers and accounted for 44 percent of the citations due, in part, to the prestige of their papers but also because U.S. scholars tend to cite each other. The United States had 3,885 ''highly cited researchers'' (the top 250 to 300 scholars in each field) while the next

[5] According to Sandra Ruppert (2003), the United States had fallen from first to thirteenth place in terms of college participation rates.

[6] Policy makers, on the other hand, who do not measure universities by the number of published scientific papers but by technological innovation, have been more skeptical of the superiority of U.S. science over that of other advanced industrial societies. See Michael Dertouzos et al. *Made in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

country, the United Kingdom, can claim only 443.[7]

The domination extends to the recruitment of students world-wide. In 2004 of the 2.7 million students enrolled outside their own country, 22 percent came to the United States, followed by 11 percent to the United Kingdom. Significantly, one-third of the U.S. in-take is at the doctoral level, 4.5 times the intake of foreign PhDs in the United Kingdom. Between 1977 and 1997 the proportion of foreign-born U.S. PhDs rose from 13.5 percent to 28.3 percent overall, and in engineering from 32.1 percent to 45.8 percent. Moreover, in 2001, 96 percent of Chinese students and 86 percent of Indian students graduating with an American PhD in science and engineering remained in the United States. Cole is all too well aware of U.S. dependence on foreign students, proudly announcing that the university sector has a positive balance of trade. Indeed, in 2001 for example, foreign students brought in $11.5 billion. He has concerns, therefore, with the effect of visa and travel restrictions on the continued supply of the world's best students.

Cole takes U.S. domination in higher education for granted without considering the consequences for the countries being dominated. It is a special form of domination, not "hegemony" in which the dominant take into account the interests of the dominated, but "distinction" in which the dominant do not even recognize the interests of the dominated—fed, in this case, by the desire of foreign students and faculty to join the U.S. super-league.

So what *are* the consequences for the rest of the world? The most obvious is an enormous drainage of the most talented students and researchers to the United States. No less serious are the consequences for national systems of higher education. The SJT and Times Higher rankings have an increasing grip on the national imagination of the "world class university." In aspiring to attain a place in the global arena, nation-states try to advance one or two of their universities into the top 500. This requires concentration of enormous material resources. Those countries that cannot compete may abandon their commitment to the research university as unsustainable and instead send their students abroad for PhD training. In this, they are encouraged by such international agencies as the World Bank. The data show that many students do not actually return. Those countries that do compete in the world rankings create a deep polarization within their own country, replicating the one inside U.S. academia, with lavish funding for one or two universities at the cost of minimal investment in the rest. An enormous gulf is created between, on the one side, the leading universities that are linked in to the lower levels of a global hierarchy and draw on the children of the wealthy and, on the other side, the large number of "second class" universities that are excluded from the global and rooted locally. The American Universities of Cairo and Beirut are prototypes of the elite side of this bifurcation.

The uneven investment of resources has multiple ramifications, one of which is that the educational elite, oriented to issues staked out in the United States and Europe becomes ever more detached from national and local problems. This is especially costly in the social sciences and humanities where submitting articles in English to Northern journals, not only puts them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their Northern colleagues but draws them into the vortex of Northern frameworks, questions, and issues and away from pressing national and local problems. Sari Hanafi (2011) has described the dilemma of the Global South as "publish globally and perish locally" versus "publish locally and perish globally." Few countries have the Brazilian state's resources and confidence in their own scientists and scholars to mark their own journals as world class and evaluate scholars in terms of their rank ordering of those journals, whether they appear in international citation indices or not.

In short, the ranking system has the effect of polarizing higher education within the United States, between the United States and other countries, and within other countries; for those countries which cannot compete it may mean the disappearance of the

[7] Data in this and the next paragraph are taken from an excellent article by Marginson and Ordorika (2011).

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

university as we have known it. So long as there is a single model for the university and that model is the U.S. research university, higher education around the world will necessarily suffer.

Trouble in Paradise—The Assault on the Public University

The first two parts of *The Great American University* celebrate the American research university—its rise to preeminence and then its contributions. The third part, focusing on the challenges, turns from the transformative powers of the university to the assault against the university.

For Cole, the biggest threat to the American University is the U.S. state itself. We are treated to three passionate chapters. The first defends academic freedom both as an intrinsic right and a condition of inquiry, citing the two Red Scares during and after World War I and McCarthyism, the evils of Stalinism and the Lysenko affair that destroyed Soviet genetics, and the public attacks on Columbia faculty for their criticisms of Israel. The second chapter catalogues state interference in the conduct of university affairs after 9/11 through the Patriot Act that extended FBI surveillance of research in biotechnology, visa applications, library records, and political views (such as the infamous hounding of the Ford Foundation for supporting Palestinian groups, leading Ford to require that recipients of their grants sign a loyalty oath). The third chapter, entitled "'Political' Science," documents the ways the Bush administration interfered with scientific projects that were deemed "politically sensitive"—embryonic stem cell research, global climate change, and reproductive health connected to HIV/AIDS. Finally, the administration monitored the content of university curricula through Title VI funding for area studies centers and tried to manipulate the peer review system for some federally-funded projects.

The fourth, and concluding chapter, is entitled "Trouble in Paradise?". It lists the various threats to the university—global competition and the concentration of resources in a few elite private universities—to which I have already referred. Only here does Cole express concern about the commercialization of knowledge production. He writes of academics whose research is affected, and even distorted, by their economic interests, engineers who own their own companies, medical scientists who have a vested interest in pharmaceutical companies, and physicians who exploit their base in the university to make millions of dollars. In Cole's account, however, the marketization of the university is less threatening than political interference, which perhaps reflects his position as Provost of an Ivy-League University, having to deal with the immediacy of major public cases of interference with academic freedom and taking for granted the search for funds as the *modus vivendi* of any private university.

In practice, the political and economic are closely intertwined, but the economic has the greater long-term consequences. The marketization of the university began in earnest with the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980, allowing universities to own the knowledge produced by faculty and funded by government research grants. Until then it was assumed that knowledge produced in the university was publicly accessible to all. Once the university could cash in on its discoveries, then the state could legitimately look upon it as a private enterprise and the demand for public funding began to lose its credibility, setting in motion not only the commodification of knowledge *production* but also the commodification of knowledge *consumption* (teaching) and *dissemination* (journals, books, media).[8] Competition turns from the hallowed motivator of originality and distinction evaluated by a community of peers to become the drive for proprietary knowledge, leading to secrecy and control over publication, thus threatening academic freedom and the open

[8] See, for example, Geiger (2004), Kirp (2003), Bok (2003), Slaughter and Rhodes (2004). The pricing of journals, especially in the hard sciences is an astonishing example of commodification. Preying on the absence of competition and the dependency of researchers on gaining immediate access to scientific papers, publishers appropriate public resources to charge exorbitant fees of access. Open access journals have hardly made any in-roads into this area.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

exchange of ideas. Still, this can be exaggerated. The writings of Walter Power, Diana Rhoten, and Jason Owen-Smith have emphasized that commercialization through patents is still confined to a few top universities and concentrated in certain fields, especially bio-medicine.

Nonetheless the market invades the university in other ways, often facilitated by regulatory mechanisms. University ranking systems, for example, now affect revenue: highly ranked universities (including measures of the jobs their students obtain) can justify hiking student fees, or they can be used in appeals to industries to support research. Donors, whether for research or the football stadium, usually have their own priorities. On the cost side, the decentralization of accounting through such schemes as Responsibility-Centered Management (RCM) turns departments into ''profit centers.'' Faculty and degrees too are increasingly rewarded according to their market value, thereby creating enormous disparities in incomes between universities, but also between disciplines within universities, as well as within disciplines. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Christopher Newfield (2008) argues that the disparities within the university come from the exploitation of the humanities and social sciences *by* the natural sciences and professional schools whose research is not covered by their grants, but depends on revenues garnered by those who do the most teaching.

Whether one sees the assault on the public university as a project of the dominant classes designed to destroy a new middle class whose incubator was the public university (viewed as a hotbed of subversion), as Newfield argues, or whether it is better seen as the result of the inherent conflict between university and society that has unraveled under fiscal austerity and new forms of knowledge production, the university as we know it and the ethos that underpins it are imperiled. Each one of Merton's principles is called into question: *universalism*, by external regulation whether indirectly through ranking or directly through state and public interference; *disinterestedness*, by economic ties to commercial establishments; *communism*, by the privatization of research; and *organized skepticism*, by the fear of government sanctions and short-term horizons. Does this mean we should reassert Merton's values, as Cole assumes, or should we forsake them as belonging to a bygone era when the university was segregated from society? Is it not time to replace Merton's scientific ethos, designed for an era when fascism loomed large in the political imagination, with a new set of values corresponding to the integration of the university into society—values that pay close attention to the accountability of the university to society, that recognize the movement toward the contextualization of scholarship and teaching, and that oppose the destructiveness of markets?

What is to be Done?

Cole's focus is on the top 100 universities rather than the whole system of higher education that supports it, and within the top 100 on the super-league, on discoveries rather than their reception, on research rather than teaching, on the United States rather than the world. In taking this partial view, he can sustain the euphoria of the third quarter of the twentieth century, the world of Jencks and Riesman's *Academic Revolution*. For him, the ''trouble in paradise'' is a temporary anomaly that he hopes Obama will rectify. It does not mark a new era of the university wherein the once thick membrane between university and society has been thinned, so that the university is not simply an agent of change, but is itself transformed by the society within which it swims. He does not consider the novelty of the reflexive relation between university and society, such as the view advanced by Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons in their widely discussed, *Re-Thinking Science*. Cole is so different from Clark Kerr who, until his dying day, revised his optimistic scenario in *The Uses of the University* (1963), wrestling with the enormous challenges he had never anticipated.

Instead of rethinking it, Cole celebrates the great American research university. No doubt the super-league will survive as elites tend to reproduce themselves, but in what form and at what cost to the rest, especially the public universities? Here we must return to the Berkeley students' chant, ''Whose University? Our University!'' They are nostalgic

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

for the public university of the past, with open access and academic autonomy. This university, however, is vanishing. We have to reconsider or re-imagine the public university. As the walls of the university are battered down by budgetary and regulatory forces, the university must fight back, designing its own engagement with the wider society. The university cannot simply declare itself off limits for outside intervention, as though it were some pristine, delicate flower; it has to advance into society, making itself publicly accountable but on its terms, not those of predatory states and corporations. It has to earn the trust and respect of the public. Moreover, it has to recognize that it is not the only sphere swamped by market fundamentalism, it is part of an archipelago sinking under a tsunami. It can no longer stand aloof but must partake, if not lead, a concerted countermovement that embraces a variety of publics and institutions.

In redefining the public university, we have to reintroduce what Cole side-steps, namely teaching. We have to rethink the meaning of teaching—to think of students as a public that educates us as we educate them. It means thinking of students who carry their own distinctive experiences into the university and partaking of their (re) interpretation and elaboration through disciplinary engagement. It means constituting a dialogic relation not just between students and teachers but among students themselves in a process of mutual education. When asked why he regularly came to teach at Berkeley, Michel Foucault used to say it was because the public sphere that is created within the university was abysmally absent in French universities. But the public sphere cannot be confined to the university. Teaching must also involve orchestrating a dialogue between students and secondary publics in society. This university extension can be enhanced by the use of digital media in a positive enriching way rather than the massification of education through ''distance'' learning. In this project the humanities and social sciences inevitably take the lead, correcting the imbalance in Cole's account.

We are living in a time of the university in crisis, and rather than harken to a presumptive Golden Age, we have to plan alternative visions. This applies to those Berkeley protestors as much as to Jonathan Cole. It is always tempting for academics when writing about the university to defend their turf, and in this we are no different from any other profession. Because we are so deeply invested in our disciplines, we harbor many illusions and partial understandings of the very place we inhabit. For this reason, we should be vigilant in recognizing and interrogating the assumptions we make, we should be doubly committed to ''organized skepticism'' with regard to our own claims. Otherwise it is just sales talk. Listening to the critics of the university, from without as well as from within, should be our first task in building a meaningful dialogue with wider publics. As sociologists, we are in a particularly strong position to go beyond simply the defense of the old, and forge a reflexive encounter with what could be.

References

Bok, Derek. 2003. *Universities in the Marketplace*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1996 [1989]. *The State Nobility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Clawson, Dan. 2009. ''Tenure and the Future of the University.'' *Science* 324: 1147–48.

Dertouzos, Michael et al. 1989. *Made in America*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Geiger, Roger. 2004. *Knowledge and Money: Research Universities and the Paradox of the Marketplace*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Hanafi, Sari. 2011. ''University Systems in the Arab East: Publish Globally and Perish Locally vs Publish Locally and Perish Globally.'' *Current Sociology* 59(3): 291–309.

Jencks, Christopher and David Riesman. 1968. *The Academic Revolution*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Karabel, Jerome. 2005. *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Kerr, Clark. 2001. *The Uses of the University*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kirp, David. 2003. *Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line: The Marketing of Higher Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Marginson, Simon and Imanol Ordorika. 2011. '''El central volumen de la fuerza': Global Hegemony in Higher Education and Research.'' Pp.67–129 in Diana Rhoten and

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

Craig Calhoun (editors), *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Research University*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Merton, Robert K. 1973 [1938]. ''Science and the Social Order.'' Pp.254–66 in Merton, *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

———. 1973 [1942]. ''The Normative Structure of Science.'' Pp.267–78 66 in Merton, *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Newfield, Christopher. 2008. *Unmaking the Public University*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nowotny, Helga, Peter Scott and Michael Gibbons. 2001. *Re-Thinking Science: Knowledge and the Public in the Age of Uncertainty*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Powell, Walter and Jason Owen-Smith. 2002. ''The New World of Knowledge Production in the Life Sciences.'' Pp.107–30 in Steven Brint (ed.), *The Future of the City of Intellect*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Rhoten, Diana and Walter Powell. 2011. ''From Land Grant to Federal Grant to Patent Grant Institutions.'' Pp.315-41 in Diana Rhoten and Craig Calhoun (editors), *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Research University*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Ruppert, Sandra. 2003. *Closing the College Participation Rate: A National Summary*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Slaughter, Sheila and Gary Rhoades. 2004. *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

© American Sociological Association 2012
DOI: 10.1177/0094306112438188
http://cs.sagepub.com

A SYMPOSIUM ON WEBER'S POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

Christopher Adair-Toteff
csa-t@web.de

Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe III/7: Allgemeine Staatslehre und Politik (Staatssoziologie). Unvollendet. Mit- und Nachschriften 1920 [General Theory of the State and Politics (State Sociology). Uncompleted. Lecture Notes and Postscripts 1920], by **Max Weber** (edited by **Gangolf Hübinger** with **Andreas Terwey**). Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2009. 136pp. $92.00 cloth. ISBN: 9783161499326.

During the last two years of his life Max Weber returned to teaching. He taught a probationary semester in 1918 in Vienna, but he wanted to remain in Germany. He then declined calls from Bonn and Berlin and for personal and professional reasons accepted the position at Munich. This was the Chair formerly held by Lujo Brentano and Weber was chosen ostensibly to teach economics. However, Weber accepted the offer with the condition that he also be allowed to teach social-political courses. During the Summer Semester of 1919, he held a one-hour lecture course on the ''most general categories of social science'' and in the Summer Semester of 1920, he offered a two-hour lecture course on ''socialism.'' Unfortunately, we do not have any accounts of these two courses, nor is it likely that we ever will. Fortunately, we do have an account of Weber's four-hour course that he held in the Winter Semester of 1919/1920 on the outline of the universal social and economic history. This is the volume entitled *Wirtschaftsgeschichte. Abriss der universalen Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* and we have had access to it for a long time. It was compiled by Siegmund Hellman and Melchior Palyi and was published in 1923; several years later Frank Knight published an English translation. We are now waiting for the new version that will be in the *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe* series devoted to Weber's lectures. We no longer have to wait for an account of Weber's four-hour lecture course which is entitled ''General Doctrine of the State and Politics'' (''Allgemeine Staatslehre und Politik''). Weber gave it the secondary title of ''Sociology of the State'' (''Staatssoziologie''). The record of Weber's course given the Summer Semester of 1920 is available as Volume Four of the *MWG* III series.

Max Weber began the ''Staatssoziologie'' lecture course on May 11, 1920 and it was scheduled to run through most of the summer. However, Weber became ill in early June thus forcing him to stop. He never resumed and died on June 14. Records show that he was of mixed opinions about the course; he was preoccupied with sections of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* and he seemed not to be looking forward to lecturing. But, he was famous and over 500 students and many more guests packed the auditorium to hear him. Some in the audience seemed disappointed that they did not hear some fiery political speech and instead heard a carefully reasoned lecture on specific political conceptions. Most in the audience were quite pleased and continued to attend in large numbers. They listened as Weber made the distinction between legal and sociological approaches to the notion of the state. They learned about his account of social interaction. And, they followed his discussion of the three types of legitimate

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

domination. Much of this can be found in certain sections of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* as well as his just completed short work ''Die drei reinen Typen der legitimen Herrschaften.'' However, there are a number of topics here that shed new light on Weber's political thinking and his conception of domination. The critical notion of legitimacy receives more attention than in the other writings. His treatment of the types of leadership is complimented by his discussion of the problems of contemporary leaders, including the problem of democratic resentment against them. Most exciting, however, is the increased attention that he gives to the notion of charisma. During the last decade of his life he began to appreciate the power of charisma and investigated its role in various groups. Now, shortly before his death, he calls it the revolutionary power from above and he places charisma on the same historically powerful level as his estimation of Western rationality. He states that these two are ''the great revolutionary powers: rationalism from outside, charisma from inside'' (pp. 94–95).

The fact that what we have is lecture notes may cast some doubt on their accuracy and certainly they should not be accorded the same weight as Weber's own published work. Furthermore, in contrast to some of the other volumes of Weber's lectures, we lack his own notes. Instead, we have the recorded notes from two students: Erwin Stölzl and Hans Ficker. They are not always in exact agreement but their accounts seem to agree on most points. Consequently, we should take these accounts in good conscience and should be able to make considerable use of them. However, the biggest potential problem may be the form of the lecture notes themselves. These are simply notes and are not usually even full sentences. Those who read these notes who are not familiar with Weber's conceptions of the state, domination, and charisma, may not be able to grasp fully what Weber means. However, they are easily understood when read in conjunction with Weber's published writings on these topics. It is always prudent to read as much of Weber's writings as possible and not to single out one or two works. It is always worthwhile to remember that Weber was struggling to provide a comprehensive account of almost every aspect of social-political-economic life.

The introduction by Gangolf Hübinger is well-focused, clearly written, and extremely valuable. Although compact, it offers many helpful things to the reader. To single out two: first, it is a rather full account of many of Weber's important sources. Hübinger draws needed attention to Weber's reliance on Georg Jellinek, his great friend and former colleague at Heidelberg. Even Weber's choice of the name ''Allgemeine Staatslehre'' derives from the title of Jellinek's massive book that was first published in 1900 and partially rewritten in 1905. Second, and equally important, Hübinger places Weber's lecture course within the political and economic context of Munich. This context included problems with large numbers of returning soldiers, great material sacrifices, and the significant disruptions of post-revolutionary life.

This book provides a clear picture of Weber's style of lecturing and it offers the latest and perhaps most provocative account of some of Weber's most important socio-political conceptions. *Allgemeine Staatslehre und Politik* is indispensible to anyone interested in Max Weber's political sociology.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

Ralf Jeremias
University of Constanz, Germany
Ralf.Jeremias@uni-konstanz.de

Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe III/7: Allgemeine Staatslehre und Politik (Staatssoziologie). Unvollendet. Mit- und Nachschriften 1920 [General Theory of the State and Politics (State Sociology). Uncompleted. Lecture Notes and Postscripts 1920], by **Max Weber** (edited by **Gangolf Hübinger** with **Andreas Terwey**). Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2009. 136pp. $92.00 cloth. ISBN: 9783161499326.

In the Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe [*Complete Works of Max Weber*], edited by Horst Baier, Gangolf Hübinger, M. Rainer Lepsius, Wolfgang Schluchter, and the late Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Johannes Winckelmann, two texts appeared in Section III, Vol. Seven that are in part notes of a lecture course given by Max Weber and in part elaborations of these lecture notes. The notes were made by two students, Erwin Stölzl and Hans Ficker, in a course on "Allgemeine Staatslehre und Politik (Staatssoziologie)" [General Theory of the State and Politics (State Sociology)] "[A] total of in all 546 student and 22 guest auditors ... [were] enrolled" in this course. (Translated from the original German. Editorial Report [Editorischer Bericht], p. 44. In the following all quotes from the book are translated from the original German.)

Among those who attended the lectures were scholars who were later active in the United States and Germany. One of the two students whose notes have survived, Hans Gerhard Ficker, later became a professor (ibid, p. 53). The lectures were given in the summer semester of 1920 at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, and unfortunately were not completed, due to Weber's illness and death in June 1920. It was so-to-speak the "endpoint" of his life's work. Preceding the lecture notes are a foreword, introduction and an Editorial Report. "The report of Weber's death on 14 June 1920 came as a complete surprise, particularly for many student course members [a student reports], and then came the day, in June 1920, when a notice on the door of the lecture hall announced that he was ill. Only a few days later he lay on a bier, a victim of pneumonia. Like all his students, I was present at the funeral ceremony in the East Cemetery [Ostfriedhof]" (Editorial Report [Editorischer Bericht] p. 51).

In the present edition, Stölzl's lecture notes are reproduced on one page and the corresponding section by Ficker on the facing page. Further searches for other surviving records were unsuccessful, "so that the two sets of lecture notes... must be regarded as the only evidence of Max Weber's last lectures on 'state sociology'." Johannes Winckelmann, one of the co-editors of the *Complete Works of Max Weber*, noted that there are "admittedly... a few gaps [in Stölzl's notes], because he skipped class." "The two sets of lecture notes have the identical wording in many cases, which is evidence of Weber's lecture style of in places speaking slowly in order for students 'to be able to take dictation'" (Editorial Report [Editorischer Bericht] p. 58f and p. 60f).

Not only the circumstance that this work consists of lecture notes in which students selectively wrote down only the essentials, but also that the lecture course was held at the end of his life's work, when he thus had had time to reconsider and reflect on several theses, makes the text more concise and concentrated. Thus he does not begin directly with the "Types of Legitimate Domination," but rather—after a definition of the concept of the "state"—with the definitions of social action [Sozialem Handeln] (p. 70), social relationships [Sozialen Beziehungen] (p. 70), and so on, in order to finally, with organized action [Verbandshandeln], arrive at the question of rule(rship) [Herrschaft] [Herrschaftsverband]. Only then does he present the well-known "Types of Legitimate Domination/ Rule(rship)/ Authority" [Typen der legitimen Herrschaft]. This

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

underscores the concise character of these lectures, permeated by the logic of the systematics. This is also shown by the fact that he states the reasons for the legitimacy of each of the three types of domination: The purest type of legal authority is the "modern bureaucratic state [moderne[r] Beamtenstaat]" (p. 78f). It has the "legitimacy of a legal order" (p. 79). It is the "*impersonal* character of obedience" (p. 76f) in the relationship of "superior-subordinate" (p. 76) that marks this type of rulership, with a "division between office and private dwelling!" (p. 78). In traditional authority, by contrast, a person is obeyed. "He/She rules. . . on the basis of tradition" (p. 76f). Thus, the legitimacy of the patriarchs is based on tradition (p. 82). It is the relationship of "master-servant [Herr-Diener]" (p. 76). Charismatic authority is based on "belief in the leadership. . . [and] on the sanctity and obligatoriness of the extraordinary [Außeralltäglichen]" in the relationship, for example, of "prophet-follower" (p. 78). Thereby charisma was "[o]riginally always understood as a magical quality" (p. 90, similar p. 91), and "[a]lso heroic power [is to be regarded] as likewise a magical quality" (p. 91). And likewise more concisely than in *Economy and Society* [Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft]: "The elements of compliance tend to be mixed or engaged in struggle with each other" (p. 98). "The *pure forms* very *rarely* [appear] in reality. . . Often 2 elements in conflict with each other" (p. 99).

Accordingly, with the tripartite division of each form of domination/rulership into ruler [Herrscher], administrative staff [Verwaltungsstab], and those ruled [Beherrschte], he names for each of his types of domination the concrete realization of this division: for legal authority this is superior, tenured civil servant [Beamter] and citizen (p. 78 and p. 91), in traditional authority, master, servant and subject (p. 82f, p. 91), and in charismatic authority, leader, disciple or follower in an administrative staff and supporters among the subjects (p. 90f). Weber had shortly before sent the relevant paragraphs from *Economy and Society* to the printer, that is to say they are of course not new and were long familiar to the public. But in contrast to the previously published texts, Weber includes essential additions and comments, for his aim was "to develop with regard to content aspects that he had only referred to in *Economy and Society* and present them to the listeners using current and topical [and historical, note RJ] examples" (Introduction [Einleitung], p. 2). Thus he explicitly names the Native Americans [Indianer] and Early Germans [Germanen] as examples for charismatic authority (p. 90f). In the "Types of Legitimate Domination" these are not mentioned, and in *Economy and Society* altogether he refers to them only marginally and only briefly to the Iroquois (*Economy and Society*, MWG I/22-4, p. 470f, p. 483f, and p. 736). For sources of charismatic authority among the North American Natives and Early Germans, he names hunting and war (p. 90f). The administrative staff is, in the case of the war hero, rewarded with booty (p. 92f). For the Early Germans, the example is the duke [Herzog], who arranges this (p. 90). Everyday domination and everyday economic leadership, to the contrary, is traditional (p. 90f). This shows that Weber had a "universal-historically extensive interest in the most remote rulership practices and their typification," and the state sociological lecture course is "at the same time an historical theory of politics" (Introduction [Einleitung], p. 18).

"There have been long periods of history in which both [traditional and charismatic authority, note RJ] divided up life among themselves" (p. 94). "Originally the life of man occurs traditionally, charisma first makes breaches in traditional loyalty" (p. 94). Unlike in *Economy and Society*, the topic of "charisma" is not followed by a discussion of feudalism, but rather feudalism is discussed after traditional authority, where it fits better. This again underlines the character of Weber's specification.

Due to the circumstances of his time, there is an extensive (and likewise more extensive than in *Economy and Society*) description of plebiscitary authority and of Ceasarism. One can clearly sense that precisely this theme concerned and captivated him. Weber himself was a member of a commission that in 1918 debated the basic principles of a new German constitution. He thereby spoke in favor of a president elected by the people and of strengthening Parliament. Thus he also names as a form of Caesarism, as well the American presidency,

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

whereby presidents are elected by the people or respectively by electors (p. 100). The notes end finally with a discussion of the ''party.''

In all this conciseness and specification, it is not only a matter of additions to the existing Weberian texts, but rather that the notes provide an indispensable and essential new source. ''Insofar the two sets of notes represent... the most important source for the direction in which Weber's [State Sociology] was concretely laid out, [which was] not explicated in the Compendium of Social Economics [Grundriß der Sozialökonomik], but was rather 'still to be written''' (Introduction [Einleitung], p. 3).

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

© American Sociological Association 2012
DOI: 10.1177/0094306112438189
http://cs.sagepub.com

REVIEW ESSAYS

Assessing the State of the Sociology of Religion

Christopher P. Scheitle
Pennsylvania State University
cps153@psu.edu

The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion, edited by **Peter B. Clarke.** New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011**.** 1,046pp. $55.00 paper. ISBN: 9780199588961.

The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion joins several existing ''handbooks'' and ''companions'' meant to serve those in the religion subdiscipline. The stated intent of this volume is ''to provide scholars with the opportunity to reflect critically on issues long discussed by sociology of religion, to introduce others long relevant but little researched, and to consider the implications for the subdiscipline of the sociology of religion of others that have begun to emerge only relatively recently'' (p. 10). As an overall evaluation based on these criteria, one would have to say that the book is largely successful. However, there are areas less satisfying than others. But to the extent that books such as these accurately represent a snapshot of a subdiscipline, examining weaknesses in them provides an opportunity to assess that subdiscipline.

Peter Clarke has gathered an impressively international group of contributors. Of the nearly sixty contributors, about half are European with several others residing in Asia. Although an admittedly vague characterization, the work has a European feel in its interests and approach. Given the ''handbook'' title, one might expect a more applied set of entries that a social scientist could frequently reference when designing an instrument to measure religion, to refresh one's memory about key concepts to consider when examining particular phenomena, or to review key findings in a particular research area. There is no doubt that these elements are present in this handbook, but there is often more weighting to philosophical and historical issues.

The essays are organized into ten categories, which Clarke is the first to admit are ''somewhat arbitrary.'' The first and largest section is devoted to ''Theory: Classical, Modern, and Postmodern.'' Of the eleven essays in this section, one is dedicated to Durkheim, three to Weber, and one for Habermas, Bourdieu, and Foucault, collectively. Many of the other theoretical chapters are framed so broadly (e.g., ''Religion and Power,'' ''Culture and Religion'') as to be detrimental to their authors' ability to provide distinct and in-depth contributions and\or the reader's ability to locate them. This does not mean that these chapters do not contain valuable insights. Although you would not know it from the ''Religion and Modernity Worldwide'' title, Robert Hefner's essay provides a nice overview and analysis of the vitality of Pentecostalism, Islam, and Hinduism.

Surprisingly, the theoretical perspective that has generated the most recent discussion and research in in the past twenty years, the so-called rational choice or economic perspective of religion, receives only a chapter of ''critique.'' In this critique, Malcolm Hamilton focuses almost exclusively on the macro-economic aspects of this theory (i.e., the relationship between pluralism and religious vitality), spending little time considering how it has shed light on more micro- and meso-level phenomena, such as religious switching and congregational commitment.

Some of the weakness of the theoretical section may be a product of chapter selection and labeling, but it is more likely a reflection of the weakness of sociological theories of

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

religion. If religion theories consist simply of historical individuals' names and ambiguous pseudo-concepts, then clearly this is not our strongest area.

While the theoretical section of the book suffers from the general state of "religion theory," the methodological section feels more like a lost opportunity. One of four essays in this section, Ole Preben Riis' "Methodology in the Sociology of Religion," provides a general overview that may be a bit too general, as significant portions are devoted to basic issues that most sociologists will already be familiar with. For example, in the "Quantitative Methods" portion of the essay are points like, "A regression coefficient expresses the degree of change in the dependent variable following from a unit change in an independent variable" (p. 233). Many will wish for guidance on more advanced methodological issues and their unique connection to the scientific study of religion, such as the clustering of adherents within congregations and the use of multilevel techniques to distinguish between individual and contextual effects. Still, such an overview may be of use as an assigned reading for those teaching an undergraduate sociology of religion course. The other three essays consist of an interesting but primarily philosophical essay by Jeppe Sinding Jenson on conceptual models and their use in understanding religion, a discussion of definitions of religion by André Droogers, and an oddly located critique of cognitive science explanations of religion by K. Helmut Reich.

One area that the handbook might have dedicated one or more chapters to is the issue of measurement. The empirical study of religion has grown tremendously in the past thirty years. While we used to be thrilled with one or two poorly worded questions on a national survey, there are now entire surveys devoted to religion across a wide range of populations. . . single nations, multiple nations, youth, congregations, congregational attendees, and so forth. Indeed, a chapter could have been devoted to discussing and evaluating the variety of data available. Despite the growth in data, we have often not been very systematic when it comes to considering what we attempt to measure, how we measure it, and what these measures really represent. For example, how do we and how should we measure religion cross-nationally? Are there more significant concepts underlying many of our standard measures of religion that we might tap into more directly? What is "spirituality" and how do we measure it beyond asking whether individuals do yoga? What *really* distinguishes the groups that we often lump together under categories like "Conservative Protestant" from other aggregations? How do we assess religious affiliation and identity in a time when nondenominationalism and "just Christian" identities appear to be growing?

These questions have begun to be touched upon in the literature. Recent work on the importance of God images has made us start to think about the underlying cognitive structures that influence many of our more traditional measures of religion and its impact (e.g., Froese and Bader 2010). Similarly, research attempting to examine the composition and significance of the growing number of religious "nones" in the United States has forced us to think about how we measure religious affiliation and identity (Baker and Smith 2009). The "Theories, Concepts and Measures" section of The Association of Religion Data Archives' Religion Research Hub represents an effort to begin connecting actual measures to common concepts used in research and to connect those concepts to related theories (ARDA 2011). Such efforts will hopefully serve as the foundation to evaluate what works, what does not, and where we are lacking in terms of measurement. The handbook, though, does not take up these issues in any systematic manner in its methodology section. Later essays focusing on various substantive topics do touch on some of these issues. For example, an essay in the "Religious Change" section by Eva M. Hamberg discusses some of the conceptual and measurement issues surrounding spirituality and unchurched religion. Still, a more concentrated treatment of measurement in the study of religion could have been a significant contribution.

The remaining essays are grouped by various research areas, ranging from "Religion and Boundaries: Morality, Science, Irreligion, Art, and Embodiment (Trance)" to "Religion and Ecology, Health, Social Issues,

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

and Violence'' to ''Globalization, Fundamentalism, Migration, and Religious Diversity.'' As is bound to happen in such a far-reaching volume as this, some of these substantive sections feel a little potpourri-like.

However, the essays falling under the ''Religion and the State, the Nation, the Law'' section are particularly strong and tightly-connected. Indeed, in general this area of research has proved theoretically and empirically rich in recent years as we have come to fully appreciate the complex relationships between religion and state actors across nations and the consequences of those relationships (Gill 1998; Fox 2008; Grim and Finke 2010). Phillip E. Hammond and David W. Machacek contribute an overview of different types of religion-state relationships using case-studies. Christophe Jaffrelot discusses how religion can both fuel nationalism as well as be a target of it. Similarly, James T. Richardson's essay explores the complex connections between religion and legal systems within nations, noting how religion can both influence and be constrained by the law. Finally, Enzo Pace examines the relationship between religious beliefs and the treatment of human rights. What makes this group of essays so strong is the way in which each builds upon the other by examining different aspects of the same religion-state dynamic. For those looking for an introduction to this area, brushing up on their knowledge, or teaching a course related to these issues, I would highly recommend all four essays.

Another stand-out group of essays is found in the section on ''Religious Collectivities and the Status and Role of the Religious Professionals (The Clergy).'' Lorne L. Dawson explores the history and future potential of church-sect-cult typologies. He concludes that, despite criticisms of such typologies, distinctions between groups based on their membership exclusivity or ''mode of membership'' will continue to prove useful even in international contexts, although the specific labels of church-sect-cult might be of less use. Following this point nicely is an essay by Sami Zubaida providing an overview of sects within Islam. This is a particularly useful entry given that Islam is sometimes presented in a fairly homogeneous manner in popular forums, and even many sociologists of religion are not fully aware of its diversity and the history of that diversity (admittedly, including this writer). Also in this section is an essay by Nancy T. Ammerman providing an excellent overview of what congregations do and how they are structured in the United States, and a companion entry by Dean R. Hoge examining research and issues concerning congregational leaders. Again, all four essays are highly recommended for anyone interested in the organizational aspects of religion, particularly in the United States.

As noted in the beginning, despite what this reviewer views as some missed opportunities to make this a true ''handbook'' that would have a permanent place on desks where it would become well-worn from use, this handbook on the whole successfully provides a thorough and useful exploration of the sub-discipline. I am sure that many will find it useful in both their research and teaching.

References

ARDA. 2011. ''Religion Research Hub.'' *The Association of Religion Data Archives*. Accessible at http://www.thearda.com/rrh/.

Baker, Joseph O'Brian and Buster Smith. 2009. ''None Too Simple: Examining Issues of Religious Nonbelief and Nonbelonging in the United States.'' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48: 719–733.

Fox, Jonathan. 2008. *A World Survey of Religion and State*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Froese, Paul and Christopher Bader. 2010. *America's Four Gods: What We Say about God—and What That Says about Us*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Gill, Anthony. 1998. *Rendering unto Caesar: The Catholic Church and the State in Latin America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Grim, Brian J. and Roger Finke. 2010. *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

Der Lubovitcher Rebbe: Messiah? Jewish St. Augustine?

SAMUEL Z. KLAUSNER
University of Pennsylvania
sklausner@comcast.net

The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson, by **Samuel Heilman** and **Menachem Friedman.** Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010. 343pp. $29.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780691138886.

In 1862 Moses Hess, a German Young Hegelian, commended the Hasidic movements as practical socialism. The Hasidic *geist* echoed not Hegel but the Lurianic kabbalah, summoning Jews to struggle against the ego, so that the soul might ascend to the light of the Creator.

Samuel Heilman and Menachem Friedman, co-authors of *The Rebbe*, have fulsome experience of sociological research on orthodox Jewish institutions. *The Rebbe* is a biography of the Seventh ruler of the Habad Hasidic sect, one of a family of Pietist sects that emerged within Judaism in the eighteenth century. In Anthony F.C. Wallace's terms these are revitalization movements. Here is a bit of historical background. They distinguish themselves from more general Jewish orthodoxy by their emotional, even ecstatic, worship practices and by intensifying hope of messianic materialization. Their leaders have been wonder-working rabbis infused with the Divine spirit. Their prayers are healing and their amulets bring good fortune. Hasidic leaders radiate what Weber called the charisma of office, in turn, derived from *gentil* charisma of dynastic succession.

Two mystically-oriented kabbalistic movements served as test runs for Hasidism. One was Sabbateanism, led by Shabbatai Zevi, crowned as Messiah, in the mid-seventeenth century Ottoman Empire. Arrested by the Sultan for his excesses, he converted to Islam and earned a pardon (Maciejko, p. 7). Jacob Frank (1726–1791), also drawing on the Lurianic kabbalah, opened a way to Christianity (Maciejko, p. 34). A number of Frank's followers converted to Roman Catholicism while seeking to preserve their Jewish cultural identity (Maciejko, pp. 107, 127). The non-Jewish community at the time was pursuing witches in Germany and blood libels in Eastern Europe. Demonological literature was popular among Jews and Christians.

Israel ben Eliezer (1698–1760) was born in Podolia into this environment. In his twenties he led a group of rabbis from town to town attempting to educate Jews in Judaism and planting the seeds of what would become Hasidism. He encouraged them to work the land and to study Torah. Purported magic forces could heal the sick and increase the fortunes of those he blessed. His followers cast him as the Ba'al Shem Tov, possessor of the good name, known by its acronym as the Besht. His knowledge of the Divine Names, especially the secret names of God, permitted him to call upon God for miracles. He, too, drew on the kabbalah, especially the Zohar, to channel the powers of an immanent God. Dov Ber, successor to the Ba'al Shem Tov, preached the kabbalistc annihilation of the self, the *ani* became the *ayin* (the I became nothing). Talmudically authorized rabbis were quick to condemn Hasidic rabbis for consorting with pagan gods.

Similar sectarian phenomena were occurring in Christian Europe. Jansenists called upon Christians to sense God's Grace and condemned Pelagians who would achieve Grace through their own acts. Jewish tradition is Pelagian through and through in its call to observe the commandments. Wesleyan Methodists, first in Europe and then in the American colonies, established a holiness church. They held that to be fulfilled is to be filled with the fullness of God. Hasidim certainly shared this characteristic.

Hasidic sects were structurally differentiated forms of traditional Judaism. Their leaders denounced the Sabbateans and Frankists who, in practice, crossed religious boundaries. The Hasidim shaped a separate

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

identity within Judaism by adopting the Lurianic prayer book, *Siddur HaAri* and by declaring that the knives used in traditional animal slaughter do not meet the standard of sharpness, among other practices. For Hasidim, animal slaughter for food also had a mystic side. Believing in reincarnation, they held that the returning souls could pass through animals which, if eaten by a *Zaddiq*, a righteous one, could cleanse the soul of the sins of its previous life (Shmeruk, p. 175).

Hasidic communities have emerged around individual rabbinic scholars facilitated by the agreement that a properly ordained rabbi could be a decider of law. Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), a Russian town, was so designated. Beyond his rabbinic education he also studied mathematics and science and kabbalah. His *Tanya* was an effort to apply kabbalistic concepts to everyday life. He was the founder of Habad. Other Hasidic dynastic founders included Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810), a town in the Ukraine, for whom faith trumped intellect. He preached relying on instinct and intuition rather than the subtle dialectics of study. Isaac Meir Rothenburg (1799–1866) was the first leader of the Gerer Hasidim, named for a town near Warsaw. He eschewed miracles and preached that Jews should become self supporting through work and called for them to settle the land in Palestine (Rabinowicz, pp. 227ff). The Satmar Hasidim, named for a town in Hungary, trace their beginnings to Rabbi Moses Teitelbaum (1759–1841). In principle they avoid as much contact as possible with the secular world.

Now let us open the book. The full title of the work reviewed here is *The Rebbe: The Life and After Life of Menachem Mendel Schneerson.* It is a biography in the traditional sense. "After Life," refers to the theophanous hope that Menachem Mendel, the dead Messiah, is destined to return to repair the world. Previous biographies, the authors tell us, have been hagiographies but Heilman and Friedman promise an objective and dispassionate treatment. This promise is kept until the final pages where the authors betray their displeasure with the messianists among the followers. Otherwise the work qualifies as non-judgmental.

The book opens with a dramatic depiction of an assembly in Brooklyn of Habad emissaries from around the world. In course, they visit the grave of the Rebbe's predecessor, sing, dance, and pray. From time to time the Rebbe shares a meditation. This opening is a flashback, a literary technique in which an opening scene anticipates the closing section of the drama. The book ends with an image of the dead Zaddiq, righteous Rabbi, who, unlike earlier leaders of Habad, was not simply the herald of the Messiah but has, by some followers, been declared the Messiah who is in hiding, awaiting a time to reappear. This is a good opener for a tale. An academic reader, though, might miss the expected statement of data gathering and data analysis methods. The authors are experienced ethnographers who observe widely and, as Clifford Geertz might say, deeply. By a close examination of the notes to the volume the reader can rescue a sense of method. Both authors have interviewed a range of leaders of the movement. They must have had some framework questions when they entered the interviews and, assumedly, would probe further. They probably recorded the interviews for later analysis. None of this is shared with us.

Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994), yeshiva educated, tested the world outside of the yeshiva while studying in Berlin and Paris. He married Mourissa, the daughter of Yosef Yitshaq Schneerson, the sixth leader of the Habad dynasty. When offered the role of the seventh leader of Habad, he delayed a year before responding. One longs for personality analysis here. Obviously, he was not mulling over other offers but was demonstrating seriousness about his fitness for the role.

Two devastating blows struck Habad and other Hasidic groups in Europe. The first was the indictment by the Soviet authorities for religious propaganda and the periodic jailing of the leadership. Then, the Holocaust all but eradicated the Hasidic rabbis and their followers. With outside help both Rabbis Yosef Yitshaq and Menachem Mendel were spirited out of Europe to the United States, leaving their flocks behind. Yosef Yitshaq was guilt ridden. While the Nazi invasion precipitated their flight, we do miss the day-to-day struggle for survival, the plans of

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

rescue developed and the hopes dashed. We know that some Hasidic leaders encouraged their men to join the partisans in the forest. How did they do as fighters? How did they relate to other Jewish fighters and to the gentile fighters?—a relation we know to have been complex.

After the death of Yosef Yitshaq, Menachem Mendel was appointed by a committee to be Rebbe of Habad in 1950. The committee did not invoke the term charisma but considered it in historical Hasidic terms as the quality of being infused with the divine presence. Apparently members of this Executive Committee were drawn from leaders of Habad institutions, schools, yeshivot, Habad embassies, and so forth.

Chapter Seven, entitled "From Resurrection to Death," is a brilliant presentation of his becoming a recognized leader in the wider world as major Israeli and American political figures beat a track to his door. Heilman and Friedman foreground those followers who identify the Rebbe as the King Messiah and suggest that, eventually, he came to accept this idea himself. The evidence for this is from several events in which some followers besought him to proclaim his messiahship. He moved his hand as if approving. To have approved would have been radically transgressive and a denial of his life as a messianic herald. At the age of 92, near the time of these events, he suffered a stroke. A psychological assessment of his condition at the time would have been helpful. He died in 1994 leaving a community divided between messianists and those who would simply carry on the work. Nowhere do the authors tell us the relative numbers in these two groups and their legitimacy in the eyes of the core group in Habad. The book overemphasizes Menachem Mendel's role as a putative Messiah.

The two important goals which Menachem Mendel pursued were the missionary program which revitalized young Jews, and the educational program which kept Habad within Orthodox Jewry. They maintain thrice daily prayer services, using a contemporary version of the *Siddur HaAri* called *Tehillat Hashem*, encouraging, indeed, insisting on, Sabbath observance, stringency in dietary laws and separating men and women during prayer. Emissaries were sent to various locations in the Americas and the world as a whole. Some 8,000 emissaries established about 2,000 Habad houses around the world. Some Habad houses are on college campuses. Others are in places such as Russia and the Far East. Most are maintained by a married couple who are encouraged to seek local support. The Mitzvah Tank Corps is an outreach program in which Members of Habad approach members of the secular, or less religious, community and teach elementary observance in an experiential fashion. The military metaphor is intentional.

Habad has remained a non-Zionist group but has established Kfar Habad, a settlement of Habad Hasidim in Israel. Prior to the 1967 war, the Rebbe sent 200 emissaries to Israel to teach elementary religious observances to soldiers. Jews would be served wherever they might be.

Habad missionary activities have been directed only to Jews. From the mid-eighties, the Rebbe began to spotlight the Noachide Laws, principles which gentiles are expected to abide, such as refraining from murder, incest, and blasphemy, in order to dwell with Jews. Habad believed that gestures to gentiles would hasten the coming of the Messiah.

Heilman and Friedman have written a good biography of the Rebbe. They chronicle his life defending against political threats so that he could be an organizational engineer. His business model involved attracting and socializing people with little Jewish education and dispatching them as emissaries to attract further members, an organizational multiplier effect. A more dynamic picture could have emerged had the social environment been conceived as a more independent actor. As it is, Habad members and actors in the wider community appear from time to time as a Greek chorus conducted by the Rebbe. One reason for this neglect of context is their adherence to an ethnographic frame of reference. Ethnography is good for revealing dynamic relations among internal actors but degrades external forces.

This internalist frame of reference mutes conflicts with outside groups. Hasidism's experiencing an immanent God was challenged by rabbis whose authority rested on

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

the law codes. Hasidic dynasties (they have never budged from their monarchical polity) came into conflict with one another. In 2001, David Berger warned that Habad's messianism is an imminent danger to Orthodox Jewry. A Messiah returning after death is a belief contrary to the Judaic idea that the Messiah does not die (Berger, p. 30). He need not have fretted. Messianists may linger in Israel but have little future in America and Europe.

What about St. Augustine? In his *Confessions*, this inspired teacher bemoans his misspent youth. In his *The City of God* he is the builder of the Church. The Rebbe wandered in the modern world and returned to build a Jewish revitalization movement.

References

Berger, David. 2001. *The Rebbe, the Messiah and the Scandal of Orthodox Indifference*. Portland, OR: Oxford.

Heilman, Samuel, and Menachem Friedman. 2010. *The Rebbe: The Life and After Life of Menachem Schneerson*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Maciejko, Pawel. 2011. *The Mixed Multitude: Jacob Frank and the Frankist Movement*, 1755–1816. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Rabinowicz, Harry M. 1988. *Hasidism: The Movement and Its Masters*. London, UK: Jason Aronson.

Shmeruk, Hana. 2001. ''The Social Meaning of Hasidic Slaughter.'' Pp. 160–85 in *Zaddiq and Devotees: Historical and Sociological Aspects of Hasidism*, David Asaf. Jerusalem, IL: The Hebrew University.

Varieties of Assimilation

Roger Waldinger
University of California, Los Angeles
waldinge@soc.ucla.edu

West Indian Immigrants: A Black Success Story?, by **Suzanne Model.** New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008. 235pp. $35.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780871546319.

From Immigrants to Americans: The Rise and Fall of Fitting In, by **Jacob L. Vigdor.** Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, 2009. $34.95 cloth. 217pp. ISBN: 9781442201361.

When mass migrations occur, the question of belonging inevitably arises. Just whether the issue is to be framed in terms of ''assimilation'' or ''integration'' varies from one national context to another. However, the underlying approach is essentially the same, as conventional social science and national (that is to say, folk, native, local, call it what you will) understandings largely overlap. In scholarly and popular views, nation-states normally contain societies (as implied by the concept of ''American society''), which is why both the appearance of foreigners as well as their foreign attachments are seen as anomalies expected to disappear.

Students of international migration to the United States typically understand the question as involving the remaking of the American ''mainstream,'' the sociological majority, in which membership remains determined by origins. In so doing, they highlight the peculiarities of Americans, as opposed to commonalities shared by the United States with other rich democracies on which international migrants have converged. Americans have constructed nationhood in terms that have been both *externally* and *internally* contrastive, excluding not just aliens but also the outsiders—most notably, African Americans—found within the territory of the state. While this combination of internal and external contrasts has parallels elsewhere, the American pattern takes a particular form: only here does one find so deep a conflict between the fundamentally liberal principles to which the American people have been committed, right from the beginning, and a contradictory, no less deeply held view, restricting legal or functional membership in people on the basis of origin and kind.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

The books under review here reflect these preoccupations. For readers of this journal, Suzanne Model's *West Indian Immigrants: A Black Success Story?* will be a volume to be savored and studied. Of the recognizably black descendants of the coerced migrations from Africa that peopled the Americas, both on the mainland as well as on the relatively small islands of the Caribbeans, the immigrants from the Caribbean have had a distinctively better experience in the United States than African Americans. As racism has been part of the Caribbean encounter with the United States, the question of how to account for this persistent disparity has long attracted scholarly attention.

Every so often, enduring and fascinating social science puzzles of this sort find their Sherlock Holmes. A generation ago it was Stanley Lieberson: motivated by his dissatisfaction with prior efforts to explain why the experiences of the immigrants from south and central Europe diverged so radically from those of African Americans, Lieberson attacked the question from every possible angle, marshalling a mass of data with extraordinary precision. With this book, Suzanne Model shows herself to be Lieberson's worthy successor. Like Lieberson, Model leaves no rock unturned: rare is the relevant data set that has not been usefully ransacked. Like Lieberson, she also displays a studied neutrality in a field beset by ideological divides, scrutinizing every hypothesis with equal care. Unlike Lieberson, Model's quest leads her beyond the United States to other countries—Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France—on which Caribbean immigrants converge.

As Model notes, the literature offers a variety of explanations. The cultural hypothesis, as she labels it, points to qualities imported from the Caribbean—a greater penchant for hard work, a self-confidence born of socialization in an all-black society, or a reverence for education, part of the inheritance from the experience of British colonialism—allowing the immigrants to surmount obstacles that impede African Americans. The selectivity hypothesis contends that what helps the migrants are not so much the qualities they share with the rank and file Caribbean, but rather the traits associated with the very selective group that leaves home in search of a better future abroad. The white favoritism hypothesis underscores the preferences and behavior of the ethnic majority, whose racist instincts are presumably mitigated when persons of African origin can play up their foreign background.

Wielding a razor-sharp scalpel, Model subjects each hypothesis to meticulous dissection, concluding that selectivity best explains the West Indian edge. For my taste, however, her assessment of the cultural hypothesis best illustrates the finesse with which she works. Thus, the argument for culture roots present-day differences in behaviors and expectations derived from deep-seated historical conditions. Under slavery, hypothesized Thomas Sowell, West Indian slave systems allowed for greater opportunity for self-provisioning, out of which may have come greater economic independence; the absence of a white working class may also have generated greater opportunities for skill acquisition. Reasonable enough, notes Model, but conditions were hardly as uniform as imagined by Sowell: Barbados provided a far less supportive environment than Jamaica; after slavery the South Carolina low countries offered distinctive opportunities for autonomous, self-provisioning black farming, much as in Jamaica. Hence, variation in historical background provides the basis for empirical tests: as Model shows, no historical legacy can be found in the comparative experience of Barbadian and Jamaican immigrants, as the latter do no better than the former in the United States; nor is that legacy to be found among black migrants from the South Carolina low countries as opposed to black migrants from elsewhere in the state. Perhaps, the West Indian advantage stems from the conditions associated with socialization in all-black society, as a result of which West Indians have a self-confidence not shared by their African American counterparts. But Model notes that this sensible sounding generalization clashes with the empirical reality: *some* West Indian societies are all-black, but *not* Trinidad or Guyana, where British imperialism brought a large, post-slavery population of migrant laborers from India. If composition is the crucial factor, the immigrants

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

from Trinidad and Guyana should be doing worse than other, West Indians living in the United States: again, the empirical evidence finds no such pattern. While space precludes a full summary of her no less skillful decapitation of the white favoritism hypothesis, it is one which readers will find well worth their attention.

Model homes in on a relatively small population, mainly focusing on the here and now. Jacob Vigdor looks at the broader picture, asking about the totality of the U.S. foreign-born population, with special attention to contrasts between the arrivals at the turn of the twentieth century and those of today. An economist, Vigdor bends over backward in his effort to develop an interdisciplinary perspective, one modifying his discipline's core rational action assumptions by adding insights drawn from the sociological corpus on migration and ethnicity. Mining publicly available census data from the 1850s to the present day, Vigdor relies on graphical techniques to present easily understood, descriptive statistics.

Students of American immigration will find valuable material in many of Vigdor's chapters. His chapter on "Fitting in Linguistically" begins with results that are no surprise: over time, the English skills of each cohort of contemporary immigrants improve, though the proportion arriving with no English skills at all has risen in recent years. We then learn something new as Vigdor shifts the lens back to the early twentieth century: *then* the immigrants were less likely to arrive knowing English, yet they also progressed more rapidly than their turn-of-the-twenty-first century counterparts. By contrast, the chapter on "Fitting in Officially" demonstrates that trends in naturalization show much less change: whether at the beginning of the twentieth or twenty-first centuries, immigrants acquire American citizenship at roughly the same rate, an unexpected result, since citizenship acquisition has become far more difficult over time.

Though each chapter yields interesting insights, this is a book that will satisfy neither specialists nor students. Students might have been the group most likely to have benefited from the impressive skills of this empirically-oriented labor economist who has sought to write a non-technical book that a non-expert public might appreciate. While the book abounds with data, the text often fails to do much more than summarize the information disclosed by the graphs. As the book is concerned with a broad range of ethnic differences, the author often compares across charts; however, the salient contrasts rarely leap off the page. When differences involve just a few percentage points, detecting the contrast takes a good deal of work, and when the comparisons require one to turn the page, one has to retain a picture in one's mind and I, at least, found that hard to do.

Those closer to the subject are likely to conclude that this book is one in which the whole is much less than the sum of the parts. To begin with, the title is poorly chosen for the issues at hand: while becoming American is a matter of discarding of one national identity and attachment for another, this is a question to which little of the book—its chapter on citizenship apart—is addressed. The subtitle, "the rise and fall of fitting in," does no more good, as one never learns whether and when "fitting in," whatever that might mean, ever rose or fell, let alone why these changes may have transpired.

Though interested in the longue durée, Vigdor is curiously unconcerned with history, treating the comparison of the earlier migrations from Europe with the contemporary population movements from the Americas and Asia as if they were just the same. Similarities are surely to be found, but at this point in time, the underlying differences appear salient, though not for the reasons usually suggested by the literature.

Consider the contrast between the migrations from Italy and Mexico, a recurring topic in Vigdor's book. The outflow from Italy occurred in a huge, but short burst. In 1890, fewer than 200,000 Italians lived in the United States; 20 years later, the population had mushroomed to 1,300,000 and the next few years saw an even greater tide before immigration controls brought trans-Atlantic migration to a halt. While the number of Italian immigrants topped out in 1930 at 1.7 million, as a proportion of the Italian population, the U.S. contingent had already peaked at 4.4 percent a decade before. By contrast, Mexican migration

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

entails a variable, but continuing century-long flow. Over the past 50 years, the size of the Mexican-born population residing in the United States has grown by a factor of more than 16; at over 11,000,000, Mexicans north of the *Rio Bravo* represent 11 percent of Mexico's population, up from 1.5 percent 40 years ago. Hence the ethnic density of this immigrant population is of a scale very much unlike that encountered by the Italians many decades ago, predictably increasing the odds of in-contacts, whether looking at the interpersonal level, via intermarriage, or the community level, via neighborhood segregation. And the legacy of *past* migrations from Mexico means that the latest arrivals enter an environment whose ethnic composition further facilitates in-group encounters.

In concluding, Vigdor turns to the policy debate, proposing an ''assimilation bond'' as a way of encouraging immigrants to make the changes that will allow them to fit in. While the proposal is intriguing, one has to question the root assumption: namely, that the transformation of immigrants into nationals is *really* what Americans want. Even as they wonder why the world does not stop at the water's edge, it is the Americans who keep opting for immigrants whenever they get a chance. After all, from the standpoint of growers, meatpackers, and cleaning contractors, far better are foreigners to whom one does not have to attend and whose voices will not ring in the public arena, at least in the short term. By contrast, fully assimilated, fully Americanized workers would be much harder to ignore. Hence, the question is not whether the immigrants are fitting in, but rather why so many Americans are intent on leaving them out.

Fractures

Richard Sennett
New York University
London School of Economics
richard.sennett@nyu.edu

Age of Fracture, by **Daniel T. Rodgers.** Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011. 352pp. $29.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780674057449.

As long as America has existed, Americans have worried about our society coming apart. Slavery, geographic expansion, immigration, and economic development have all threatened social cohesion; in 1840, Alexis de Tocqueville famously described American individualism the condition in which a person experiences the social world in bits and pieces of experience external to the self.

The distinguished Princeton historian Daniel T. Rodgers has written another chapter in the seemingly endless story of individualized America, bringing Tocqueville up to date. *Age of Fracture* focuses on the generation before our own, the era of Ronald Reagan marked by the end of the Cold War, the flourishing of the culture wars, the emergence of a new economics, and the erosion of the welfare state our grandparents knew. Rodgers is an historian of ideas, and although his recounting of late-twentieth-century America dwells on intellectuals, he makes cogent and sometimes surprising connections to popular beliefs. America is no longer a relatively isolated society, as it was in Tocqueville's time. Americans, in Rodgers' view, have lost the ability to understand people unlike themselves in a globalizing world. Rodgers' close reading of American writers, from novelists to sociologists, gives bite to this simple theme.

Ronald Reagan may seem too easy a figure on which to pin the old-new individualism. Unlike presidents from Roosevelt to Kennedy who emphasized personal sacrifice for the common good, Reagan dramatized the individual unshackled from larger obligations, a ''liberation'' epitomized by the declaration of his comrade-in-arms, the

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher that "There is no such thing as society... There are individual men and women and there are families" (p. 219). As a traditional small-government conservative, Reagan made gestures of getting government off people's backs but, as Rodgers points out, his efforts to shrink the state were often half-hearted, and inept.

Rodgers shows how in the late twentieth century, the tectonic plates of change shifted more decisively in economics than in electoral politics. *Age of Fracture* presents a clear account of how new economic ideas were put in service of the old individualism. This, he says, occurred through privileging micro-economics at the expense of macro-economics, producing a version of the market which was agent-centered and rationally-oriented, neglecting large structures and their dissonances: Milton Friedman stepped forward as John Kenneth Galbraith became a marginal figure. Economics became, in Rodgers' account, a profession smaller in human scope than in the time of Galbraith or earlier of Keynes by dwelling on, and rewarding, sheer calculation. This account is rich rather than crude, because Rodgers shows how a superficial character like Friedman embodied diverse cross-currents in other disciplines, from the legal thinker Ronald Coase to the sociologist James Coleman. "Agency" and "rational choice" in micro-economics particularly weakened the sociological imagination, dispelling the understanding of authority, lightening the recognition of personal limits, neglecting sociality.

Some sociologists will demur from taking Coleman as an emblem of individualism; more are not going to be happy with the bold move Rodgers makes by connecting "micro" in economics to "micro" in political thought. To Rodgers, figures like Michel Foucault and John Rawls are agents of intellectual fracture: Foucault, because he emphasized the "capillaries of power" at work in the smallest of daily transactions, an architecture of power built from the ground up, hard to discern in over-all shape; Rawls, because his "veil of ignorance" principle treats the social world as a blank slate and so reverts justice to the realm of choice.

Though imagining Milton Friedman, James Coleman, Michel Foucault, and John Rawls as cousins of a sort may seem an implausible family portrait, Rodgers commands the reader's serious engagement because of the way *Age of Fracture* is written. Though relentless in pursuit of its theme, the authorial voice is measured rather than hectoring; Rodgers advances a proposition and invites you to think about it, which is to say the book is cooperative in spirit—a politics of writing all too rare among academics.

Rodgers occupies more familiar ground in his analysis of discourses of race and gender in the late twentieth century, since the writers he treats were themselves so conscious of intellectual fragmentation. He makes a telling contrast, for instance between Toni Morrison, whose fictions like *Beloved* emphasized the distinctive "voice" of African Americans, to the sociologist William Julius Wilson, whose *The Declining Significance of Race*, articulated the class differences that by the later twentieth century were fragmenting that shared racial "voice." Rodgers sharpens this contrast by showing its exploitation by the American right-wing throughout the 1980s in arguments for "color-blind" justice, arguments eschewing the centrality of race in American life, dwelling instead on the black poor as themselves an isolated fragment in the American mosaic.

Similarly, the supposed essentialism of feminist works like the poet Adrienne Rich's *Of Women Born*, or the psychologist Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*, is set against the views of the historian Joan Scott about the construction of gender or the theorist Judith Butler's concept of gender as a performance. If I might re-phrase Rodgers' argument in other terms, racial and gender identities ceased to be narratives binding people together, becoming instead images, more particularly, collage images of identity, enacted by different people in discontinuous ways. Identities conceived as collage images rather than master narratives become, in general, vulnerable to attack from the political right, since no large, challenging claims can be advanced in the name of an oppressed group. The vulnerability is made worse when identity politics takes a liberal turn; admitting internal doubt or awareness of contingency makes for less forceful

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

argument than making essential claims about the human condition.

The ''culture wars'' as conceived in the 1980s and 1990s left out a great shift in American culture occurring at the end of the last century. That was the technological revolution in computing which transformed the landscape of social communication; Rodgers should have given this change a starring role—but technology, and science more largely, are absent from the pages of this book. When historians a generation after us look back to the late twentieth century, they may well see the technological revolution in communication as most prominently raising the issue of personalized fragmentation, which is Rodgers' big theme. On the one hand, life on screen has produced, as Sherry Turkle argues, social isolation of a profound sort; on the other hand, the communications revolution has enabled people to bond, and to act, in equally new ways.

I also wish Rodgers had taken on board a great sociological fact about late twentieth century America. This is the stagnation of the middle classes which set in during the Age of Reagan. Stagnation occurred in the wealth share of the middle classes, in occupational mobility and in educational attainment for men, and in the attitudes of both young men and women about opportunity and possibility for their life course. Rodgers notes the sheer facts of diminished horizons but does not make much of them, yet stagnation has a profound relationship to individualism.

People who sense they are stuck are not likely to look outward or forward; they will incline instead to look backward with regret, as Americans in the 1990s began to do by contrasting their present to ''the Great Generation'' of their parents who flourished after World War Two. Deprivation can draw people closer to one another socially, to share in whatever resources they do have; that impulse indeed animated many poor African American and immigrant families during the Great Depression. But at the end of the last century, middle-class Americans turned inward and backward, longing for that disappearing prosperous America. As is evident in today's Tea Party movement on the right, the impulse has withered to share, cooperate, participate, in the complex mosaic which is global America; instead, people want life to become smaller and simpler. ''Smaller'' is the political and social vision induced by stagnation: the small fragment of everyday life over which people struggle to re-assert agency and control.

Age of Fracture will call forth many other responses. It invites discussion by the gravity of its subject, its intelligence, its sometimes surprising associations, and the openness of its prose. Daniel Rodgers could have framed his argument as a call for a renewal of nationalism and patriotism; he has instead done something harder, and finer. He asks his readers to reflect on the thinking which has shaped this generation, to find a different way of thinking about a world which our country no longer dominates.

The Antinomies of Real Utopias

Jeff Manza
New York University
manza@nyu.edu

Envisioning Real Utopias, by **Erik Olin Wright.** London, UK: Verso Books, 2010. 394pp. $26.95 paper. ISBN: 9781844676170.

Left social theory has long faced a complicated set of unresolved dualisms: reform versus revolution? Social reproduction versus crisis? Democracy versus planning? Civil society versus the state? The tensions around these divides are palpable. On one side are the attractions of liberalism, market efficiencies, and freedom versus the dangers of compromise and retreat; on the other, the promise of certainty, coherence, and consistency but the dangers of determinism and

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

irrelevance. In those contexts where left political strength is significant (or at least appears so to intellectuals), the attractions of liberalism are regularly denounced in favor of uncompromising positions of social transformation. In such contexts, rhetorics of state-smashing and proletarian dictatorships appear romantic, not nightmarish. By contrast, periods of weakness make reformism (or retreat, as some would have it) the dominant position. Former revolutionaries and their offspring settle for programs of modest social change if they remain committed to egalitarianism at all. More than a century of sectarian name-calling has done little to resolve the underlying issues.

To be sure, since Marx many creative thinkers on the left have attempted to provide a bridge across these core tensions. The most successful among them, such as Gramsci, acknowledge and embrace them in all their messy detail while still seeking some kind of transcendence. Done well, with a kind of Millsian cool or Habermasian erudition, the inherent conflicts of radical thought are obscured by the promise of theoretical novelty. But these rarely come with any kind of programmatic or strategic specificity that has produced any theoretical momentum toward a fundamental reorientation of the historic project of the left.

Perhaps the most politically significant of the recent attempts at transcendence comes from work on what has come to be known as ''radical democracy.'' Central to the early New Left, only to be washed away by more orthodox urges in the post-1968 surge, the reemergence of radical democracy was popularized—if ''popularization'' can be applied to a body of work that most find impenetrable—by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in the mid-1980s. Here, the underlying problems of ''socialist strategy'' in an age in which command central planning no longer seems a plausible route to emancipation are solved by seeking social spaces in which discourse, uncontaminated by economic power, can occur. Through discursive practice, in such spaces citizens will presumably discover their inner-socialist, egalitarian selves. The triumph of socialism may be blocked from above, but through democratic practice from below the possibilities of a radical ''post-Marxist'' breakthrough are still possible.

The basic premises of radical democracy as a political strategy for citizen empowerment start from a surprising position of strength. Small-d ''democracy'' is perhaps the one idea that all social scientists to the left of public choice theory can agree upon as inherently preferable to any existing alternative. Efforts to get more citizens involved and participating in planning processes at the local level can be found all over the world, and a growing social science literature on the democratization of social life in many arenas has begun to appear. The most popular model of modern organizational management is the development of ''flattened'' hierarchies and ''participatory management.'' Much of the motivation in the latter case may be efficiency and increased profitability. But because capitalist interests are, at least potentially, threatened by too much democracy, radical democracy has a kind of anti-capitalist veneer that makes the ''radical'' part appear at least plausible. If this is a bad time for socialism, it is, at least in some respects, a good time for democracy.

In his new work, *Envisioning Real Utopias* (henceforth *ERU)*, Erik Olin Wright seeks to reinvigorate the radical democracy movement by explicitly (re-)attaching it to an anti-capitalist socialist agenda, albeit a form of socialism that is decidedly ''non-statist'' in character. Wright starts from the premise that socialism as central planning is no longer politically feasible or desirable as an economic alternative to capitalism. Instead, he envisions a future defined by ''radical democratic egalitarianism,'' in which citizens and civil society will find and use democratic means to achieve egalitarian ends. The task of ''emancipatory social science'' is to ''generate scientific knowledge relevant to the collective project of challenging various forms of human oppression'' (p. 10) and to make one or another of the radical democracy projects Wright describes convincing to an audience of disillusioned social scientists, as well as newcomers to the debates in search of a road map.

ERU is long book, building upon a 15-year project Wright has been organizing, in collaboration with Verso books and his research

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to hold conferences and publish volumes examining ''utopian'' proposals infusing classical left visions with fresh ideas. One immediately asks, why utopia? Especially in dark times when left-wing utopias seem ever so far from the possible, and the gains of the left in the twentieth century are under enormous threat? Wright asserts that projecting viable utopias is necessary to counter ''a cynicism about the human capacity to realize [left] values on a substantial scale'' (p. 8). He makes the very good point that right-wing thinkers have no hesitation in promoting ideals of radical free-market utopias and being taken seriously, so why not the left as well?

Fair enough.

Wright argues that ''real'' utopias, and the emancipatory social science which is to undergird it, require three steps: (1) elaborating a plausible critique of the existing social order, (2) envisioning a ''viable'' set of alternatives, and (3) outlining a strategy for getting there. The argument of the book unfolds in three parts that correspond roughly to this agenda. Part One provides an extended fifty-page analysis of what he thinks is wrong with capitalism. Part Two describes the various alternatives Wright has in mind, divided into two sections: one involving how exactly civil society might gain democratic control over the state, and the other how the economy might be reorganized along more ''democratic'' lines. The final part turns to an examination of the factors that maintain capitalism, and strategies for its demise.

It is impossible not to appreciate the sharpness of Wright's theoretical mind, his passion and willingness to engage grand themes otherwise so out of fashion these days, and his very open and pluralistic account. Yet I find much of *ERU* to be disappointing. In spite of its claims to be a contribution to scientific inquiry, to interrogate ''real'' utopias, the examination of actually existing alternative institutions is entirely superficial. For example, a discussion of the participatory budgeting in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre centers on a formal description of how it works but offers no good evidence that ''better'' outcomes are achieved elsewhere. If there has been more investment in poor neighborhoods and reduced tax avoidance since 1989 (when the participatory budgeting begun), claims of success that have been challenged by some analysts generally ignored by Wright, how do we know this is not the result of the end of the military dictatorship and the coming to power of center-left national and regional governments as opposed to local participatory budgeting? Further, how do we know Porto Alegre has done better than other Brazilian cities in this same period?

Or consider another example. Wikipedia is invoked by Wright as an example of how a non-capitalist cooperative venture could take on and achieve comparable results in terms of quality in for-profit encyclopedias, using the voluntarily labor of large numbers of citizens around the world. Wikipedia is indeed intriguing. But what is its larger significance? Perhaps it shows that collectively-run organizations can work as well as hierarchical organizations, but it is also possible that this is a one-off context in which people drawn to intellectual life find it pleasurable to spend time on the dissemination of knowledge (their own and others) that makes this venture work. If that is true, it may have no relevance for building houses or collecting garbage. It is frustrating that in the ''real world'' examples Wright points to, there is little systematic effort to sort through the issues and even pose the questions that need to be answered before serious readers might be convinced.

Modern social science has the analytical tools to investigate rigorously such questions: evaluation research with quasi-experimental is a flourishing subfield. If the feasibility of radical utopia is to be advanced one inch by existing examples, it is incumbent to test it using some of these tools. But none of that is on display here. It is possible to compare whether workers prefer working for a firm in which they have an ownership interest and elect their managers, or whether such firms are more efficient. In fact, there are literatures on these questions, and they are by no means uniformly favorable to worker cooperatives. What is discussed in the book raises plenty of doubts. For example, Wright (somewhat sheepishly) notes the fact that the famous worker-owned Mondragon cooperatives in northern Spain

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

now have a majority of non-owner employees, and that the worker-owners have often been reluctant to let the new workers become owners and sometimes have opposed unions for the regular employees. Kudos to Wright for forthrightly discussing it, but it brings sharply into focus some of the potentially non-egalitarian consequences of democratic processes even in the existing ''best case'' scenarios.

Wright's faith in forms of direct democracy, and criticisms of the limitations of existing forms of representative democracy, are also untested with any systematic evidence. Many questions need to be addressed here. ''All power to the Soviets'' proved rather difficult to implement in practice. Representative democracy may be flawed in many ways, but multi-party electoral systems with more or less equal resources and access to the media have proved remarkably robust. Most importantly, representative democracy is the most realistic vehicle (compared to any existing alternative) for communicating *all* citizens' preferences (not just those of activists) to elected officials. Further, many hard questions have been posed in the democracy literature that are not fully answered or even considered in *ERU*. For example, participation itself always has the potential to introduce new inequalities. The book reports that eight percent of the citizens of Porto Alegre participate in budget planning. Does this small group make it a more representative process than having elected city council members (chosen by all voters) decide? Perhaps. But not everybody is available for endless meetings, and not everybody has the tools to participate successfully even if they do.

Wright's assertions about the lack of ''human flourishing'' under capitalism is the bedrock claim of the book, the foundation for the argument that we should seek to go beyond capitalism as it exists today. Is this convincing? One problem is that much of the discussion of ''capitalism'' that Wright provides is far too abstract and general to test specifically the proposition. In spite of Wright's theoretical (but highly abstract) insistence that no social system is unitary in its logic, his discussion of capitalism rarely acknowledges or seems capable of appreciating its empirical varieties. A huge gulf has opened between a neo-classical model of capitalism or the model currently practiced in the United States versus the ''social market economies'' that have evolved in Western Europe over the past 50 years. The existence of SMEs suggests that market capitalism can co-exist with empowered workers in strong unions, dramatically reduced (although still not trivial) levels of income and wealth inequality, reduced working hours, and declining racial and gender inequality. In the SMEs working hours have fallen and citizens have more time to pursue ''human flourishing.'' Capitalism has not proven, in short, universally incapable of improving the prospects for human flourishing, and for all we know that may continue for the indefinite future. Failing to examine systematically the wide varieties of actually existing capitalisms around the world, Wright's critique leaves open the questions of just how far or how much better radical democracy might be.

Turning to the alternative institutional designs proposed in Part Two of the book, we find that Wright's discussion is admirably pluralistic, but vague. Readers seeking a blueprint of any kind will be sorely disappointed. In abandoning the classical pathways to socialism via public ownership and central planning in favor of radical democracy, he leaves indeterminate exactly how a radically democratic society might start to reduce the power of private investment in market economies without central planning. Few truly concrete policy agendas are endorsed in the book, with the exception of universal basic income grants (which are mentioned but not discussed in any detail as to how many grants might be provided, what kinds of existing government programs would be replaced by the grants, and so forth). The devil here lies in the details.

My biggest concerns about the book come in Part Three, where the political conditions for the ''social reproduction'' of capitalism are treated, along with three strategies of transition: rupture, building up alternative non-capitalist institutions, and finding models where workers' and capitalists' interests overlap. The discussion of social reproduction takes us back to an ''oldies but goodies'' 1970s literature on ideology and constraint,

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012

but largely ignores the vast literatures since then on how citizens and mass publics reason about political questions, and why, ultimately, the vision of democratic egalitarianism postulated in the entire book may be unpersuasive. The strategic discussion in Part Three is unsatisfying for a different reason. Wright argues that the three pathways are supposed to reinforce each other—important developments either within capitalism or institutional developments outside of it open up possibilities in the other, with rupture strategically invoked but only vague examples offered.

Social scientists today have, I think, largely abandoned utopian visions not because they have lost hope or concern for social change, or because equality has gone out of style, but rather because they are generally and appropriately skeptical that social science models exist (or can be found) in favor of any version of radical utopia. Further, there is a good deal more appreciation for the varieties of capitalisms and the equality-generating improvements represented by the rise of social market economies than there was a few decades ago. In an era of retrenchement, where welfare states are under attack, the challenge of simply maintaining and defending existing achievements, or building upon and incrementally improving them, has become the main priority. For all of these reasons, and in spite of its challenging erudition, I fear *ERU* will not be likely to motivate action in a different direction.

Downloaded from csx.sagepub.com at ASA - American Sociological Association on March 27, 2012