

EDITOR'S REMARKS

THE PLAGUE OF POLYPRAGMASY

"The ultimate causes of mental disorder, it would seem, have to be sought in the social order itself" (Sullivan 1953: 294).

Because *The New York Times* has become the lingua franca of academic chatter worldwide, you may recall not long ago seeing "The Antidepressant Generation" (Iarovici 2014). The author is a psychiatrist whose patients are Duke University students, and who seems genuinely concerned about their welfare. Her piece quickly garnered 280 responses, many of them replete with names and city of residence. Most wrote at length and passionately about the connections they had discovered among pills, talk therapy, and mental health. Everybody has a story and is not afraid to "share." The general conclusion from this varied testimony is this: pills can be useful, sometimes necessary to prevent suicide, but talk therapy is also required for longterm "cure," for learning "coping mechanisms" when dealing with today's harsh socio-economic world. But because insurance companies do not want to pay for longterm talk therapy, and since patients want quick fixes, and Big Pharma has over 600 lobbyists in DC who push their cure-alls as hard as they can—all within the shadow of constant televised commercials promising pill-based cures for newly invented ailments—talk therapy has been abandoned in medical psychiatric training. Its practice has migrated to lower-status social workers and other counselors who by law cannot prescribe pills. As one of the respondents put it, psychiatrists now must argue forcefully with insurers on behalf of those patients who could benefit from conversational analysis, since pills are the expected "therapy."

Iarovici repeats what is widely known: "From 1994 to 2006, the percentage of students treated at college counseling centers who were using antidepressants nearly tripled, from 9 percent to over 23 percent." By

the time they reach campus, as some administrators have noted, they have become either "crispies" (burned out from anxiety and overwork) or "teacups" (hyper-fragile and fearful of life's normal strains) partly in response to, and reflecting, their dependence on psychotropics. There used to be a word for this situation: "*Polypragmasy*: simultaneous administration of many drugs or of an excessive quantity of drugs" (Thompson et al. 1955: 618). Revealingly, current medical dictionaries treat the word differently than was the case during the apogee of Freudianism in the United States. *Sege's Medical Dictionary* (2012) calls it "an obsolete term for the use of multiple therapeutic modalities to manage a single condition." Notice that the term "modalities" has been substituted for "drugs." *Polypragmasy* has lost ground to *polypharmacy*: "administration of many drugs together" or "administration of excessive medication" (*Dorland's Medical Dictionary for Health Consumers*, 2007).

This change in vocabulary, the alleged "obsolescence" of polypragmasy meaning a drug-induced condition, illustrates the depth of our society's mainstream shift from discourse, discussion, dialogue, or chatting—from paying for an attentive, presumably caring listener—to the isolating and often costly dominance of drug-based therapy. "Mere" talk can indeed be frustrating in duration and effectiveness, but unlike pills, it does not rearrange brain chemistry, particularly among those whose gray matter is still developing. One nurse who responded to the *Times* piece had this to say: "Resiliency studies: Yes, after working with very high risk youths and doing some research on resiliency, we are shown that sometimes it only takes a relationship with one effective person that can make a difference to create resiliency. That person does not, by the way, have to be a psychiatrist. . . in the population I worked with, grandparents were extremely influential in well being."

Her point of view is nothing new, of course. In fact, sociologists long ago were

routinely taught to think along these lines, to view mental disturbances as the product of social life far more often than pathological imbalances in brain chemistry. It was not just "Mom's fault" that people suffered emotional problems, but "our entire way of life" that was culpable. Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, Paul Goodman, Herbert Marcuse, and others of that era pounded this message into the cultural subconscious for decades. R.D. Laing was the extreme case. However, the micro-theoretical analyses of Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead, or Jean Piaget, had plainly indicated long before that humans in fortunate circumstances (within an attentive, adoring, often affluent family) are more likely to mature into "well-adjusted" adults than those who learn about being human from abusers or under conditions of deep poverty. Nothing is guaranteed in these matters, of course, but the odds lie in favor of the former, lucky child.

Sociologists used to read one particular psychiatrist whose clinical work revolved around the vital role that intimate social contact plays in mental health. He has been called "the most original, creative American-born psychiatrist" (Chapman 1980: vii) and "the psychiatrist of America" (Perry 1982). He was a fierce empiricist, and based his theories on clinical work with patients at St. Elizabeth's Hospital (DC) and the Sheppard-Pratt Hospital (MD) between November 12, 1921 and June 30, 1930 (among biographical accounts, see Perry 1982: 179, 284; also Wake 2011: 13ff). One reason why Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills quoted Harry Stack Sullivan in *Character and Social Structure* (Gerth and Mills 1953: xvii, 12, 84, 143, 147, 149), and why David Riesman also invoked him in *Faces in the Crowd* (Riesman with Glazer 1952: 7n, 50n, 210–211, 527n, 663) is because Sullivan and his staff at Sheppard-Pratt carefully collected extended interview data on 1,696 patients, many of whom personally known to Sullivan, who was director clinical research. These interviews, involving a group of psychiatrists, the patient, and several note-takers, were scrupulously recorded and typed up by professionals (Wake 2011: 20–21). His theories and practical therapeutic advice, unlike those of Freud and many other therapists of the period, were therefore based on

massive, longitudinal data, in concert with clinical experience that led apparently to high success rates, all of it tied to talk therapy and a virtuosic empathic sense. Whereas Sullivan was well-known to most sociologists in the 1930s through the 1960s, his name and influence dispersed thereafter, partly no doubt to the developing psychiatric penchant for drug-dependent therapeutic procedures for which Sullivan had no use.

His principal biographer calls one chapter "Discovering the Chicago School of Sociology," which details Sullivan's close intellectual connections with Edward Sapir and from him, W. I. Thomas, Louis Wirth, and other famous sociologists of the period, in addition to the political theorist Harold Lasswell (Perry 1982: 251–60). Wirth commented on an article Sullivan published in *AJS* (Sullivan 1938–39): "he comes to the problem of the individual and society with a rich clinical experience which might be expected to predispose him to a view which emphasizes the primacy of the organism. It is therefore gratifying to note that the universe of interpersonal relations, which constitutes his central field of interest, is almost identical with the modern sociological approach" (Sullivan 1964: 66).

Having studied the writings of Cooley, Mead, William James, and other students of micro-analysis, but with the augmented sensitivity to patients' dilemmas that only a long-term clinician can possess, Sullivan became "the sociologist's psychiatrist" for reasons that become obvious after reading the essays collected posthumously in *The Fusion of Psychiatry and Social Science*. Like Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, and the later Freud, Sullivan was not content to think only about the singular pain of schizophrenics or obsessional neurotics. As a medical corps Captain in the First World War, and witnessing the rapid advance of World War II, Sullivan began to wonder in the 1930s if psychiatry might not help analyze human aggression of the largest scale. To that end he wrote essays like "Anti-Semitism," "Propaganda and Censorship," "Psychiatry and the National Defense," "Leadership, Mobilization, and Postwar Change," "Psychiatry and Morale," and "Tensions Interpersonal and International: A Psychiatrist's View." Some of these works shocked his more clinically-bound colleagues.

These essays and much of his other work are saturated with sociological underpinnings, as for instance when he writes in one of his most famous essays, "The Illusion of Personal Individuality" (much of it in italics): "The self is the content of consciousness at all times when one is thoroughly comfortable about one's self-respect, the prestige that one enjoys among one's fellows, and the respect and deference which they pay one. . . the self is a system within a personality, built up from innumerable experiences from early life, the central notion of which is that we satisfy the people that matter to us and therefore satisfy ourselves, and are spared the experience of anxiety. . . the self does not 'learn' very readily because anxiety is just so busy and so effective at choking off inquiries where there is any little risk of loss of face with one's self or others" (Sullivan 1964: 217, 218, 219). In "The Meaning of Anxiety in Psychiatry and Life," Sullivan observes that "Anxiety as a *functionally effective* element in interpersonal relations has to be mild in degree or gradual in its increasing severity. Sudden severe anxiety, or anxiety which increases very swiftly in severity is undergone in later life as what I call *uncanny emotion*, chilly crawling sensations, and the like, often meant by the words 'awe,' 'dread,' 'loathing,' and 'horror.' Uncanny emotion is an all but *functionally ineffective* element in interpersonal relations; it arrests useful transformations of energy..." (*ibid.*, 249).

One rhetorician has written persuasively about Sullivan's remarkably idiosyncratic use of terms, some of them quite common in ordinary discourse but almost unrecognizable when he puts them to his own uses (Glaser 1975). Sullivan (much like his contemporary, the great American poet Wallace Stevens) converted ordinary observations, experiences, and terms into revelatory instruments that resist conversion into comforting platitudes. His observations recorded above do not pose any hermeneutic problems, but this was not always the case, especially the closer Sullivan got to the "core" of the schizophrenic process: the more familiar he became with the terror of losing one's mind. A partial lexicon of his analytic terms with his own definitions gives a taste, if only a nibble, of what Sullivan's vocabulary entailed (Sica

1972: 20–25). *Anxiety* meant "the product restraints on freedom. . . used in the teaching of some of the personal habits that the culture requires. . . a disintegrative tendency" (Sullivan 1953: 113; 95). *Sign*: "A particular pattern in the experience of events which is differentiated from or within the general flux of experience; occurring in terms of recall and foresight of a particular frequent sequence of satisfaction or of increasing distress" (*ibid.*, 77). *Parataxic Distortion* is Sullivan's neologism, borrowed from Greek scholarship of the nineteenth century: "What is experienced is assumed to be the 'natural' way of such occurrences, without reflection or comparison. . . There is no logical movement of thought from one idea to another. . . Experience is undergone as momentary" (*ibid.*, 28). Part of his motivation for creating new terminology or refashioning the old was to stay faithful to the experiences of his patients, as best he could intuit and communicate them to others. If his students at the White Psychiatric Foundation hinted at condescension toward patients, Sullivan would exercise his explosive Irish temper, verbally humiliating them for their inability to enter with proper insight and respect into the realm of consciousness inhabited by the schizophrenic patients (Perry 1982: 257).

The range of Sullivan's theorizing at both micro and macro levels makes contemporary notions about mental illness seem puny, almost childish. Even a superficial recounting of his realizations would require book-length treatment, and indeed has occasioned a range of monographs and articles (see References below; also Wake 2011: 222n16 for a representative list of recent studies). For instance, from his best known work, a few passages: "Decision, about which many patients have much trouble—their indecisiveness—is intimately connected with the illusion of choice, in turn entangled with dogmatic assertions about 'freedom of the will,' and of one's ability to choose between good and evil. . . It will be a long time indeed before any group of people shall have come to a fully rational way of life, and in the meanwhile, man must have normative rules to govern his behavior with others, *especially in the fields most modified by culture* (Sullivan 1953: 192; emphases added). The clearly sociological

awareness Sullivan brought to his clinical practice made him virtually unique in his time, and becomes ever more so as mental health treatment veers ever deeper into the dark forest of medications without attendant talk therapies.

Such sentiments, like so much in the history of social theory, had deep autobiographical roots. "Loneliness" for Sullivan was a clinical category, not an incidental accompaniment to an unresolved adolescence. His solitary childhood in rural New York State was by our standards miserable, his brief Cornell experience as a scholarship student a disaster, his self-exile to Chicago and manual labor a terror to a shy young man, and his lack of close friends, with a single childhood exception, practically Dickensian at its worst. By rights, and by the determinative logic of sociological reasoning, he should have become the *American Tragedy* of Theodore Dreiser's imagination, written at about the same time. But somehow he did not.

In fact, Sullivan in the recent past has acquired an entirely new persona, one hardly mentioned by earlier biographers. According to Wake and others, he has become "the gay psychiatrist," or "the psychiatrist of male homosexuality" to use his own terms. This discovery came from records only recently examined in which his clinical interactions with some male patients (he claimed not to understand female schizophrenia well) strongly suggest that he felt "at home" administering to them based on his own youthful relations with a "chum."

He famously observed that a "preadolescent" boy who establishes a deep comradeship with an older boy, such that for the first time someone else's needs and desires are weighted more heavily than his own, will be able to develop deeper and more enduring mature relationships of trust and affection than would otherwise be the case (Sullivan 1953: 46–49). Though impossible to acknowledge during his lifetime, Sullivan's homoerotic interests—complicated by his close personal relation with certain women, like Clara Thompson—are now easily recognized as such, and his passionate concern for the welfare of homosexual males in a very hostile world takes on new meaning. He becomes in essence, in addition to being a grand theorist and practitioner in the

realms of schizophrenia and obsessional neuroses, the first psychiatrist of note for whom homosexuality was not a disease to be cured, a deviation to escape. This fairly new attribution has renewed interest in Sullivan's ideas once again, after several decades of neglect.

The fine points of Sullivan's theorizing about mental illness and his practical guidance in the clinic, in concert with his special lexicon, require patient study, even book-length explication. They point to an appreciation for mental and emotional disturbances that are substantially sociological and interpersonal in nature, and not susceptible to treatment by the expeditious, simple-minded administration of drugs. If it is too much to expect all therapists to possess Sullivan's extraordinary sensitivity, his ear for the strangled voices emanating from the mentally troubled, it is delinquent to ignore his hard-won insights into the language and behavior of the supremely Other—those who look like "us," like "normal" social actors, but whose realities swirl in a vortex of their own making, lost to sustaining social interaction. If for no other reason than to stymie the onslaught of polypharmacy, especially as it attacks the developing brains of the young, Sullivan's work deserves attention from a generation who may well never have heard his name.

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CRITICAL-RETROSPECTIVE ESSAY

The Emergence of Socio-Genomics

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Editor's Note:

"Critical-Retrospective Essays" for the most part have analyzed "the best books" published in a given field during the last decade or so. But in the case of genetics and sociology, there are not yet enough important books, so I am told, to constitute a representative or superior body of work. For that reason Conley, Fletcher, and Dawes have written about this pressing topic mostly with reference to essential articles which they regard as useful in understanding this difficult topic, particularly for novices.

Ever since Darwin penned *The Descent of Man* in 1871, there has been a contentious relationship between biologists and many of us who seek to explain human difference—i.e., social scientists. There was, of course, Herbert Spencer, who applied natural selection as a metaphor to human society. And there was Darwin himself, who became embroiled in a debate about whether blacks and whites constituted separate species.¹ The controversy surrounding the relationship between evolution, genes, and society

¹ Ethnocentrists of the nineteenth century had sought to use Darwin's concepts to argue for fundamental biological differences between the groups we call races. When Darwin countered these claims, he curiously found himself allied with his one-time foes: the religious conservatives of the day who also argued for the unity of humankind.

has ebbed and flowed over the 150 years since *Descent*. Most recently, the revelation that the Beijing Genomics Institute is sequencing the genomes of 2,000 individuals with IQs over 150 in search of intelligence genes has led to renewed concerns in the West of an emerging program of eugenics through embryo testing and selective abortion (Normile 2002).

Part of the reason for such trepidation when it comes to the examination of genetics as it relates to human behavior is that it is commonly assumed that the answers obtained by examining genetics are deterministic ones: to the extent that genes explain any social outcome, this "naturalizes" any inequality in that outcome. For example, many queer activists have cheered the search for the "gay gene" in hopes that if the innate, genetic bases of homosexuality were found, it would increase tolerance since LGBT individuals will be shown not to be making a lifestyle (i.e., moral) choice about their orientation (Hamer et al. 1993).

Conversely, in the best-selling book, *The Bell Curve*, Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray argued that thanks to meritocracy, today class stratification is based on innate (i.e., genetic) endowment (Herrnstein and Murray 1994). Meanwhile, by selectively breeding with others of similar genetic stock, parents reinforce their offspring's advantages or disadvantages. In their view, social policy to promote equal opportunity is counterproductive since each individual has reached the level of social status best suited

to his/her native abilities. This is the nightmare conclusion of progressive social scientists and the reason why most avoid genetic data like it was the plague.

If all of our human outcomes and traits are now increasingly explained by discoveries in genetics, and some of our basic social constructs becoming complicated by incorporating findings from genetics and the biological sciences, will the social sciences lose their relevance to understanding human social behavior? Put another way, if heritability measures are large and accurate or if genetics is pointing the way toward new and better kinds of "racial" and social classification, why do we still need sociologists, economists, and political scientists?

As it turns out, however, the more serious empirical investigations of genes and society that these new data afford often yield counterintuitive results. For example, it turns out that while genes matter for both IQ and social class, they are just as much an engine of social mobility as they are of social reproduction thanks to the mixing up that takes place through chromosomal recombination when sperm and eggs are formed.

Meanwhile, a deeper look at race shows that genetic analysis does not reify our racial categories but instead destroys them: thanks to the population bottleneck coming out of Africa, we Caucasian authors of this article are most likely more genetically similar to Eskimos than are two Ugandans 200 miles apart (Tishkoff et al. 2009). The vastly greater genetic diversity within African descended populations does not just mean that race as we knew it is a mirage. It also has real life and death consequences today: it is much harder for an African American in need of an organ transplant to obtain one (Daw 2013). This longer waiting list for blacks is not primarily due to racism on the part of anonymous donors or transplant surgeons. Nor is it due to the "dissolution" of the black family—i.e., lack of relatives willing to donate. It is simply a result of the greater difficulty in finding a good match when the genetics of a group vary so much, even among siblings.

Something as simple as the effect of sin taxes takes on a more complicated spin when viewed through the prism of genetics. Do cigarette taxes lower smoking rates?

Well, yes and no. As it turns out, some of us have a variant of the nicotine receptor that makes us very sensitive to price. Smoking is a luxury that we can give up when its price rises. For those of us with a different version of that same protein, we might keep our two-pack a day habit even if the price rose to \$100 a pop. Below we highlight some interesting work in this area that speaks to these and related issues. It is by no means meant to be a "best of" nor a comprehensive review of the literature but rather a non-representative buffet of interesting (to us) research:

The rise of professional social sciences was in many ways a response to Darwinistic interpretations of human behavior. Efforts by scholars like Galton and others to establish a science of eugenics engendered social scientific responses attempting to show the importance of the environment in shaping outcomes ranging from delinquency to class attainment to family relations. However, the science of genetics never gave up on trying to show the genetic bases of many human tendencies. During the 1970s, a spate of studies emerged suggesting that between a third and a half of socioeconomic outcomes could be explained by "genetic" differences. Even though it was some of their own who authored many of these studies, social scientists wasted no time in questioning both the core assumptions in the models that gave rise to these estimates of "heritability" as well as the utility of such estimates themselves. The fire was further fanned by the publication of *The Bell Curve* during the 1990s, which argued that meritocracy had led to the perverse outcome that inequalities were largely based in innate ability—and thus resistant to being remedied by public policy. *The Bell Curve* was, in short order, attacked for its poor methodology and ideological spin. However, the truth is that all of these studies—which utilized twins, adoptees, separated family members, and so on—were really just trying to estimate the size of a black box called genotype without being able to peer inside it. Meanwhile, until recently, no social scientists even bothered to defend the concept of "heritability" as a useful datum in the designing of policy. But recently, a new group of sociologists, political scientists, and economists have

joined forces with statistical geneticists to make serious arguments about the utility of genetic information toward understanding social dynamics and about the right ways to get that information.

Fast forward to today and that black box has been cracked by cheap DNA genotyping platforms that allow a researcher to actually measure around a half-million or more of the base-pair differences between individuals for a few hundred dollars (and impute up to three million more markers of human difference). The genomics revolution ran into some stumbling blocks early out of the gate, however. These included inadequate sample sizes for studies that would search for statistically meaningful effects with hundreds of thousands of discrete “hypotheses” (i.e., for each marker) and the fact that the markers typically measured by the big chip companies (Affymetrix, Illumina, and so on) were common variants and ignored rarer and potentially more powerful sites of difference among humans. The result of these and other challenges was that these measured markers did not seem to explain the level of variation in outcomes—ranging from schizophrenia to height to IQ—that was meant to be due to “genetics” according to the prior generation of twin studies. Slowly but surely, statistical geneticists have made significant progress in solving this “missing heritability” mystery using a range of newly developed tools. For example, did the earlier twin studies overestimate the role of genes to begin with? That is, the key assumption of 40 years of twin studies (and their would-be Achilles heel) is the fact that the estimation of genetic influences rest on the notion that the reason identical twins demonstrate more similar outcomes than do their same-sex fraternal twin counterparts is that they share more DNA in common. However, plaguing this research is the fact that these twins are probably experiencing more similar environments as well, both because of how others treat them (confusing them, for example) and because they may be closer to each other as well and thus mutually influence each other’s choices and experiences than fraternal twins do. This “equal environments assumption” has been the weak link in genetic studies—until now. Now that we have actual DNA markers of

twin sets, a natural experiment emerged: some twins were misinformed about whether they were monozygotic or dizygotic. These “misclassified” twins allowed us to see if those twins who lived their entire lives as identical but were genetically fraternal (and vice versa) led us to the same results as those earlier studies. That is, if there was indeed any conflating of environmental effects with genetic ones, these misclassified twin sets should tease that out (Conley, Rauscher, and Dawes 2013). As it turned out, the equal environment assumption of the 1970s held, and the case of missing heritability remained unsolved. For now, at least. . .

Meanwhile, statistical geneticists have developed a number of innovative techniques to solve this missing heritability problem. For example, while on average siblings share 50 percent of their genome, there is significant variability in that figure thanks to the randomness of recombination and segregation of the grandparental alleles when parents form sperm and eggs. So one pair of siblings may share 45 percent of their genome while another (even in the same family) may share 60 percent. By correlating these differences in relatedness among siblings to differences in their outcomes, we are able to generate an unbiased estimate of the genetic contribution to a given trait—i.e., heritability (Visscher, Medland, and Ferreira 2006). And lo and behold, those 1970s estimates again hold up. Using this sibling and other approaches, earlier heritabilities were confirmed. And while any individual DNA base (or entire gene for that matter) may not explain much in terms of how we turn out, the sum total of all nucleotide differences did provide a measure of genetic stock—if you will—that was predictive of important social outcomes, directly measurable and, to a certain extent, randomly assigned at birth (Rietveld et al. 2013).

At the same time, more and more national surveys were asking respondents to spit into a cup, adding genotype data to the rich tapestry of social variables that economists, sociologists, and political scientists had worked with for decades. It seemed that genetics has once and for all gained a foothold in social science. And why not? Why should we be afraid of additional data that may help scientists better understand patterns of human behavior, enhance

individuals' self-understanding, and design optimal public policy? Especially when the answers we get from peering into the black box are not always—or even often—the kind that reify existing inequalities, assumptions, and policies. As it turns out, adding genetic data to social science upends the apple cart on many of our assumptions. For example, were Herrnstein and Murray right in *The Bell Curve* when they argued that meritocracy has perversely resulted in more intransigent inequalities today because we are now sorted by genetic ability? As it turns out, the data show that thanks to the magic of sexual reproduction—where the deck of genetic cards is reshuffled each generation—genetics does as much (if not more) to upset existing inequalities (i.e., create social mobility) than it does to reinforce social reproduction.

So far, we have focused our attention on what new discoveries in genetics can tell us about very thorny issues and ideas in modern society such as racial identity or IQ. In general we have neglected a focus on the environment—specifically how environmental factors upend (again) received wisdom about genetic determination and the naturalization of human behaviors and societal structures. However, we now bring the environment back into the conversation and discuss the many complications that emerge. Indeed, genetics and environmental factors seem to interplay with one another in a complex and dynamic feedback loop that begins to explain further several aspects of the behavior of humans and societies—leading to terms and concepts like gene-environment interactions and gene-environment correlation.

One aspect of human behavior that is puzzling is the range of resilience and vulnerability to environmental conditions that we see. Two people (e.g., siblings) who experience the same negative life event (famine, war, neglect, abuse) can have wildly different outcomes. Additionally, two people with the same genotype (identical twins) often have wildly different life outcomes. These simple observations lead to the (potentially obvious) suggestions that genetics and environments may interact to determine what we see in human behavior—it is not “nature vs. nurture” as much as “nature and nurture.”

This idea of nature and nurture dynamically interacting and interplaying with one another has also led to various ideas that feed back into our understanding and theorizing in genetics and evolution. An early suggestion was the stress-diathesis hypothesis, where the idea was that some individuals were born with “risky” genetic variants and others were born with “safe” genetic variants—but both individuals would have similar outcomes if placed in a neutral environment. However, if individuals with “risky” genetic variants were placed in “risky” environments, we would see disproportionately different outcomes—a gene-environment interaction. Indeed, there is quite a bit of (still controversial) evidence that children who are abused and have “risky” gene variants related to the serotonin or dopamine systems in our brains experience incredible reductions in life outcomes, while abused children with alternate gene variants are worse off, but not multiplicatively so (Caspi, Sugden, and Moffitt 2003; Risch, Herrell, and Lehner 2009; Conley and Rauscher 2013; Karg and Burmeister 2011; Conley, Rauscher, and Siegal 2013).

The next question for the stress-diathesis hypothesis, though, comes from an evolutionary perspective—why would humans have “risky” genetic variants at all, if there were no benefits? Why would evolutionary pressures fail to wipe out these variants? Two theories have been proposed. The first set of theories is that these “risky” variants were, in the not-too-distant past, beneficial. Perhaps the genetic variants that we seem to see producing “over-reactions” to current stressful environments would have been excellent variants to have in the dangerous Serengeti, and humans are too recently displaced from these environments for the variants to have disappeared through evolution. Or perhaps these “risky” variants are risky for some outcomes but actually protective for other, often unmeasured, outcomes.

A second theory considers the gene at the level of the species rather than individual and supposes that there are variants which are “orchids” and other variants which are “dandelions.” The dandelions do fine in most environmental circumstances, within a reasonable range. However, the orchids thrive in some environments but wilt in

others. Again, this is gene/environment interaction, and at the level of a species, humans would like to have both types of genes in our pool in case of larger changes in the environment (e.g., climate change) that might wipe out all the dandelions and most of the orchids, but allow some orchids to thrive (Conley, Rauscher, and Siegal 2013).

These theories and the evidence for gene/environmental interactions also potentially have more pressing implications: while we are waiting for evolution to change genotype distributions, we would also like to figure out how the purposeful shaping of our environment that is under human control may affect us. This leads us into thinking about the built environment, schooling, health policies, energy use, and the whole array of government action.

Specifically, we might ask what allows some policies to be effective and others to fail? Many policies are guided by theory and data. We tax products we do not want people to use because economic theory posits a Law of Demand—when prices go up, people consume less of the product. And this theory is often verified by data—when states increase taxes on cigarettes (or soda or whatever), people shift their choices away from these products. We give people housing vouchers to move away from impoverished neighborhoods following sociological and economic theories about the presence of poverty traps and the importance of neighborhoods. However, our policies have a very mixed success rate. Some are successful for some people or during some periods of time but not others. New evidence merging genetics and public policy has started to uncover *why* we see such different impacts of the same policy for different people and how future policies might be targeted—taking the concept of “personalized medicine” to allow “personalized policy.”

A case in point is the example of tobacco taxes in the United States. The Institute of Medicine and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among others, have ranked this policy as one of the top ten most impactful on increasing public health in the past century. This is because the United States has witnessed enormous changes in smoking—which have been cut in half since the first taxes were introduced following the

Surgeon General’s report in the mid-1960s. And raising taxes is cheap for the government, so the cost/benefit ratio is incredibly favorable. But . . . the last decade has seen a reversal. In the face of the largest tax increases in our history, tobacco use has remained virtually unchanged. Has the Law of Demand been repealed? New evidence that combines genetics and social policy evaluation points to an explanation: the pool of smokers in the 1960 was genetically different from the pool of smokers now. People carry around different variants of a group of nicotinic receptor genes with them—and as the name suggests, these genes decide how much dopamine (a pleasure chemical) is released when you smoke; how much you “like” smoking. These genetic variants also interact with our environments. It looks like many of the smokers in the 1960s did not need a big push (tax increase or social pressure) to quit smoking (or never start). But over time, these small pushes have mostly pushed people to stop smoking if their genes did not put up a big fight. And what we have left in the smoking pool are disproportionately folks whose genes are fighting back, partly because nicotine is so pleasurable. This shows up in evaluations of tobacco tax policy, where only adults with low genetic risk of smoking will still respond to taxation and adults at higher genetic risk seem to be unshaken (Fletcher 2012).

What does this mean for policy? Should we keep increasing taxes—forcing the remaining smokers to pay a greater and greater share of their incomes in part because they were unlucky in the parental (genetic) lottery of life? Or should we subsidize their smoking because they love it so much (due in part to their genetics)? Smoking is not the only area where “personalized” policy may come into play. Evidence has shown that some educational interventions have greater or lesser effects depending on targeted students’ genotypes. Ditto for crime prevention policy. And even the Earned Income Tax Credit spurs low-wage workers to labor more or less depending on their genes. While personalized medicine may be just over the horizon, the potential for custom-tailored social policy is here today. Whether we want to go down that path is another question altogether.

Genetic analysis not only can inform micro-level analysis of human behavior, it can also add to macro-historical analysis of social phenomena. For example, a fundamental question in macroeconomics is why some countries have thrived and others have stagnated over the past several hundred years. There has been a revival of interest in this topic in the past few decades and many novel and stark hypotheses have been proposed. Jared Diamond, in a series of books and articles, has suggested that environmental factors that contribute to differences in disease burden, soil efficiency, and similar “endowments” across countries are a primary source of difference in what we currently see between rich and poor countries. For example, tropical diseases reduce life expectancy in places like Zambia so that trained workers can expect to have only 10 years of economic productivity—the same figure for the United States is over 35 years (Diamond 1997). Agricultural grain yields in U.S. soil are about 10 times greater per acre than for their African counterpart. And African River Blindness means that Africa is the only continent where populations concentrated *away* from the rivers and coasts, where the most fertile soil is and where growth-stimulating trade is facilitated.

More recently, economists Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson and others are dismissive that the environment is a key factor explaining economic success and instead consider the development and expansion of institutions (legal systems, democracy, property rights, corruption, and so on) as the key set of factors explaining why some countries are rich and others are poor (Easterly and Levine 2003; Easterly et al. 1993; Acemoglu 2002). Some countries arrive at having “extractive” institutions in which small groups of individuals exploit the rest of the population (think diamond mines in Sierra Leone or Congo) while other countries arrive at “inclusive” institutions where many people are included in governance (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). Key to this argument are examples where geography is held constant but institutions differ. For example, North Korea and South Korea share a peninsula and a micro environment. The land is of similar quality, the topology of the

environment not too different, even the populations are nearly identical. However, a history of inclusive governance in South Korea, and one of non-inclusive (extractive) governance in North Korea, Acemoglu and Johnson argue, shines a bright light on the importance of institutions and not geography as the key to development. Think also about the economic performance of East vs. West Germany or economic growth trajectories in towns on the U.S. versus Mexico side of the Rio Grande—similar environments, similar people, similar disease burden, but different institutions and different growth and development.

As these new ideas are being sorted out, economists interested in the intersection of economic development, institutions, and geography have begun to explore another aspect of populations that might fit into these grand theories: Population Genetics. In particular, a new breed of macroeconomists has posited that genetic diversity within countries is a key to development. Quamrul Ashraf and Oded Galor published a paper providing evidence that a “goldilocks” level of genetic diversity within countries might lead to higher incomes and better growth trajectories (Ashraf and Galor 2013). The authors discuss the observation that there are many countries with low diversity (e.g., Native Americans) as well as populations with high diversity (e.g., many sub-Saharan African countries) that have experienced low economic growth, while many countries with intermediate (just right) diversity (European and Asian populations) have been conducive for development in the pre-colonial as well as modern eras. Basically areas/countries face a tradeoff with genetic diversity between cooperation and innovation. The idea is that areas with genetic diversity that is “too high” have higher likelihoods of disarray and mistrust, which would reduce cooperation and disrupt socioeconomic order and lead to low productivity. However, areas with genetic diversity that is “too low” might have less innovation, fewer new ideas and therefore reduced technological capacity. The authors argue that higher diversity “enhances society’s capability to integrate advanced and more efficient production methods, expanding the economy’s production possibility

frontier and conferring the benefits of improved productivity”—an idea motivated by Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection. These conflicting costs and benefits of genetic diversity lead to the proposition that a “middle level” of diversity will lead to the highest growth and development patterns. The authors find that, for countries that have low genetic diversity, small increases in diversity (one percentage point) could increase their population density (a measure of economic development) by 58 percent; likewise countries with current high genetic diversity who reduced this diversity by one percentage point might see an increase in population density of 23 percent.

In addition to considering the “optimal” level of genetic diversity in populations to maximize economic development, other economists have considered the role of population genetics as it interacts with environmental resources to affect growth patterns across countries. Justin Cook has shown that populations with the (genetic) ability to digest milk after weaning that appeared early in human history conferred large advantages in population density around 1500 CE (Cook 2013a). As other studies have shown that economic development differences in history have been remarkably persistent, the implication is that (relatively) small changes in the genome, at the right time and in the right place (during the Neolithic Revolution in areas able to raise cattle) can lead to large, persistent, and accumulating differences in economic development across countries.

Macroeconomists have also begun exploring how population genetics might affect economic development through the health of populations which then would affect productivity and incomes. For example, Justin Cook has also shown that populations with immune systems that are “genetically diverse” have had a health advantage in the pre-modern period (Cook 2013b). The idea is that pathogens evolve to target specific immune function weaknesses, and populations with limited genetic diversity (and hence limited diversity in immune response) are at particular risk of infectious pathogens spreading and reducing the health of wide swaths of the population. However, at the population level, genetic diversity can be

beneficial in inoculating against such widespread health insults by constraining epidemic spreads of illness. Because many pathogens specialize in their attack strategy, populations with multiple defenses (through genetic diversity) can potentially reduce the long-run effects of infectious diseases on population health. Indeed, Cook finds that increases in immune genetic diversity (through the human leukocyte antigen [HLA] system) leads to increases in population (country-level) life expectancies. He then further documents this causal argument by showing that the invention and widespread use of modern vaccinations and other medical technologies has led to a decline in the genetic advantage. That is, modern science and medicine is substituting for “natural” (genetic) defenses against illnesses—at the population level—and in doing so is promoting convergence in life expectancy, and eventually growth and income, across rich and poor countries. This is another example of gene-environment interactions, at the population level. In earlier times (in diseased environments with lack of medications), genetic variation acted as a buffer against disease—leading to country-level differences in life expectancy based in part on genetic differences. But now that the environment has changed, with new medications/vaccinations, the previous genetic advantages have been largely eliminated, so that genes interact with the larger environment in producing outcomes. Likewise, in our earlier example of the “milk genes”—these genes only confer advantages when in environments which have the ability to foster agriculture. With no cows, goats, or other domesticable mammals, the gene confers no population advantage.

Conclusion

Until recently, the study of human genetic variation has consisted mainly of behavior genetics studies, where twin and adoption designs were used to identify heritable, or genetic, variation in various traits (e.g., Björklund, Lindahl, and Plug 2006; Plomin, Owen, and McGuffin 1994; Plomin 2009; Plug 2004; Sacerdote 2007). These studies are controversial and the assumptions underlying them have been questioned

(e.g., Goldberger 1979; for a defense see Conley, Rauscher, and Dawes 2013; Scarr and Carter-Saltzman 1979). Whether or not one believes the estimates of genetic influence on phenotypes that emerge from such studies, the fact remains that they do not directly measure genotypes and thus have limited utility for social scientists.

But now, the cost of human genotyping is dropping faster than Moore's law is bringing down the price of computer chips (Benjamin and Cesarini 2012), and Americans are genotyping themselves in record numbers using consumer services like 23andme, Navigenics, and Knome.² And they, in turn, are acting on the information they receive—as recently demonstrated by Angelina Jolie's preventative, bilateral mastectomy. Meanwhile, genetic data is pouring into what were once purely social scientific studies, raising old debates about genes and IQ, racial differences, risk profiling, criminal justice, political polarization, and privacy. If sociologists seek to remain relevant to the study of human behavior, we must embrace, not flee, this deluge of data. Whether social scientists are interested in modeling gene-by-environment interaction effects to better understand heterogeneity in response to social influences, or rather, if they merely wish to parse out the genetic effects on behavior in order to gain a less biased estimate of purely social effects, they would do well to integrate genotypic

data into their analyses—and ignore it at their peril.

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² In addition to citizen/consumer genotyping databanks, major funding bodies, including those in the social and behavioral sciences, have now begun to incorporate genetic and biological markers into major social surveys. For example, in addition to the pioneering study—the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health (Add Health)—more recently the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS) and the Health and Retirement Survey (HRS) have released datasets with comprehensively genotyped subjects. Similar efforts are also underway in Europe, for example with the Biobank Project in the United Kingdom (Ollier, Sprosen, and Peakman 2005; Platt et al. 2010) and large-scale genotyping of subjects at several European twin registries (Rønningen and Paltiel 2006). These datasets provide new opportunities for asking scientific questions that could not be explored until very recently.

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SYMPOSIUM

Seeds beneath the Snow: The Sociological Anarchy of Paul Goodman, Colin Ward, and James C. Scott

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Sociology as a discipline has largely forgotten or overlooked the tendencies of anarchism in its midst historically, as anarchism has overlooked its sociological influences. While some may note the influence of anarchism on Max Weber (recall his defense of anarchism in "Science as a Vocation"), or cite the resonance with anarchism of some of Herbert Spencer's work, or acknowledge Peter Kropotkin's social insights, the legacies and ongoing contributions of anarchist thought to sociology remain largely in the shadows. Yet as recent developments in social science scholarship point out, there is a growing recognition of the intersections of anarchy and sociology—outlines of a sociological anarchy are taking clear shape. Recent volumes of work by Paul Goodman, Colin Ward, and James C. Scott bring into sharp focus the substance of a "tradition" or stream of anarchist sociology.

Paul Goodman

Perhaps the most influential contributor to a sociological anarchy is Paul Goodman. Throughout *Drawing the Line Once Again*, Goodman displays a strong sociological imagination. In the preface, his colleague and editor Taylor Stoehr explains that Goodman's approach offered not lessons to be learned and stashed but "rather an attitude toward life and the world" (p. 5). For Stoehr, this deeply rooted attitude is best exemplified in Goodman's anarchism (p. 6). In his writings, he analyzes the intersection of the political and the personal. His work shares C. Wright Mills' commitment to seeing the connections of public issues and personal troubles. His work focused especially on struggles of youth in organized, managed

Drawing the Line Once Again: Paul Goodman's Anarchist Writings, by **Paul Goodman**. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010. 122pp. \$14.95 paper. ISBN: 9781604860573.

Autonomy, Solidarity, Possibility: The Colin Ward Reader, by **Colin Ward**. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2011. 337pp. \$21.95 paper. ISBN: 9781849350204.

Two Cheers for Anarchism: Six Easy Pieces on Autonomy, Dignity, and Meaningful Work and Play, by **James C. Scott**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012. 169pp. \$17.95 paper. ISBN: 9780691161037.

society which resonated potently with the emerging youth movements and became crucial in the developing perspectives of the New Left.

At the same time, Goodman did not view himself as political. Concerns beyond the political motivated his thinking in a manner that moved him out of the mainstream currents of anarchist writing at the time (p. 13). He maintained interests in a variety of issues, from psychology, to community planning, to ecology. Goodman defines the anarchist approach as social-psychological, though having political ramifications.

Goodman is critical of the political sociologists who, in "following the popular Leviathan like a jolly-boat" take part in power rather than helping to solve problems (p. 116). They devote their research to analysis and simulation of power struggles as if this is the only possible subject (which is

taken for granted) rather than looking at real world alternatives and their meanings. In this, they take a base and impractical state of affairs as if they were right and, even more, inevitable (p. 116).

Yet anarchists have always pointed out that the majority of social relations are made up of alternatives to state power: most people survive through mutual aid. As Kropotkin has argued, the state is but one way of ordering life. For anarchists like Goodman, the proper subject of political sociology is "the constitutional relations of functional interests and interest groups in the community in which they transact. This is the bread-and-butter of ancient political theory and obviously has nothing to do with sovereignty or even power—for the ancients the existence of Power implies unconstitutionality, tyranny" (p. 117).

For Goodman, anarchism is the only *safe* polity (p. 57). People have a right to be arrogant and stupid, even reckless or crazy. The mistake we make is to *arm* anyone with collective power (p. 57). Goodman notes that it is a typical misconception of anarchy that anarchists believe that human nature is good and thus people can be trusted to do right. In his view, conversely, anarchists take a more pessimistic view: "people are not to be trusted, so prevent the concentration of power" (p. 58). In fact, for Goodman, the situation is even more dire for those who have power, who occupy positions of authority. As he suggests: "Men in authority are especially likely to be stupid because they are out of touch with concrete finite experience and instead keep interfering with other people's initiative and making them stupid and anxious" (p. 58). In the present context, authority is rejected not only because it is immoral but because it is incompetent as well (p. 91). For anarchists, the proper response is to reduce motivations of power and abolish the sovereignties (p. 114).

Participatory democracy reflects, for Goodman, a certain social psychological hypothesis. That is, people who actually perform something know best how it should be done and learn how to improve it. On the whole, the decision freely undertaken and engaged will be efficient, creative, forceful, and graceful (p. 94). Because people under such circumstances are active and gaining

in self-confidence, they will cooperate with others with minimal anxiety, envy, aggression or a need to control or dominate (p. 94). They will learn patience and empathy. Even more, such an organization is self-improving. That is, people learn by doing and they will educate themselves, and each other, in practice (p. 94).

For Goodman, power must be surrendered to the people themselves in their neighborhoods, allowing them to initiate, decide, and carry out those matters that concern them intimately (p. 98). As Goodman notes, the affairs that concern people most closely are local neighborhood functions such as housing, schooling, welfare, services, and jobs or occupations. These people have knowledge and are, or could readily be, competent to govern themselves directly. They *do* need resources and practice, though. This focus on locally developed self-managed solutions in specific geographic contexts informs much of the work of Colin Ward.

Colin Ward

Generally regarded as the most influential anarchist thinker of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century in Britain, Colin Ward, like Paul Goodman, held a wide range of interests and commented on varied aspects of social life, from urban planning to (de)schooling, from play and leisure to squatting. Influenced by social anarchist thinkers from Kropotkin to Goodman himself, Ward also drew insights from planners and designers, from Mumford to Geddes, and philosophers such as Martin Buber. Unlike other key contributors to New Left and post-New Left social thought essential in the development of libertarian socialism (such as Lefebvre, Castoriadis, Marcuse, and Goodman himself), Ward has received relatively little notice.

For our interests, Ward was one of the anarchist writers most influenced by sociology. Indeed, his works drew heavily on sociological research and theory and he regularly brought his sociological journal readings into his anarchist analysis and argumentation. In place of the forceful critique of the state preferred by many anarchist theorists of the nineteenth century, Ward preferred

to understand the positive contributions of self-organization, anti-authoritarian politics, and self-directed solutions (p. ix). This serves both to undermine the claims of statist and coercive responses to social problems while providing people with reasonable alternatives (p. ix).

Unlike most social reformers, and certainly most radicals and anarchists, Ward argues against the desirability of a society organized and run according to a single overarching logic—whether it be the market (capitalism), the plan (socialism), or mutual aid (anarchism). His emphasis is instead on human pluralism. His studies suggest that all societies but the most totalitarian are plural in character. They pursue diverse, often contradictory, logics (p. xxiii). For Ward, anarchism is necessary as a form of everyday life that emphasizes, encourages, and nurtures plurality.

Ward's studies on housing and land focus on unofficial, informal, or illegal uses of land. He expresses a commitment to dweller control. In this he moves beyond conventional approaches of Left (or collective or council control) and Right (free market housing and speculation). He also moves beyond much green thought and notions of wild nature and preservation. Ward emphasizes squatters movements in providing people shelter, contributing to urban renewal, and offering alternatives for a better life for the poor and working class.

Sociology has until fairly recently overlooked play and holidays as secondary to the study of work. This is perhaps not too surprising given the centrality of work in the production of surplus value in capitalist political economy. Ward analyzes the social histories of workers' self-organized play and leisure. He writes on the British holiday camps run as cooperatives by unions or working-class families. Prior to the rise of the mass commercial camps in the twentieth century, holiday camps were supported by mutual aid societies and working-class membership groups.

Conventional sociology, as Goodman too points out, has privileged the establishment and expansion of authoritarian structures (developed from above). For Ward, as for Goodman, more can be learned by giving attention to autonomous organization and

forms of mutual aid developed from below. Ward shares with Goodman a distrust of bureaucracy and managers. What Ward points to is a too often obscured or hidden history of people addressing their own needs and solving problems through collective actions undertaken voluntarily. This can include the building of institutions or infrastructures of some durability. And it happens in the absence of outside professionals, experts, or managers.

By overlooking these vast ongoing examples, sociologists play into a narrative that reinforces reliance on, and deference to, authorities, managers, and officials, as being necessary. At the same time, these real world examples of day-to-day creativity and cooperation in the present are obscured or downplayed or viewed as atypical, momentary, naive, or doomed to fail—or worse, as misguided vigilantism.

Ward's work investigates spaces and places of everyday life. These are spaces and practices that had been largely overlooked by sociology until relatively recently. In Ward's view, the politics of everyday life and its spaces cannot be understood from the heights of government or "free markets" and have been missed within much of radical theory, focused as it is on states and capital. Indeed, what managers and experts, including sociologists, identify as social problems needing solutions are not necessarily those issues identified by regular people living their lives.

In his writings on design and creativity, popular topics in recent sociology, Ward again avoids the conventional approaches of mainstream social science which focus on professional practices and organizations in the production of objects or artefacts. Arguing that design capacity is widespread, certainly more than is acknowledged by professionals, Ward explains that non-experts have done most of the world's building construction and still do. The rise of professional creative and design experts is a recent development. Ward looks to a world in which professionals do not exist as elites separated from people addressing their concerns, as distinct "experts" in other words.

Throughout, Ward's works emphasize the creativity of ordinary people in their everyday lives. Like Goodman, his social analysis

is based on an understanding of practices of self-management from below. In the absence of the state, people can and do self-organize to meet collective and individual needs. For Ward, people are capable of organizing their own affairs in cooperative and humane ways and will find creative and resourceful ways to do so when given a chance.

Without seeking an absolute anarchism, Ward suggests that anarchism always emerges in self-organizing projects and decentralizing infrastructures. These contest authoritarian or archic practices and perspectives.

James C. Scott

James C. Scott too gives his attentions to a wide range of social activities from play to urban planning to education to industrial relations, poaching and desertion. Through it all, he, like Goodman and Ward, identifies and analyzes forms of social organization that provide alternatives and often opposition to the dominant institutions of states and capital. Indeed, Scott is explicitly influenced by Ward whom he quotes on various issues. Scott focuses on the vernacular—the local knowledge, sensibility, and creative problem solving of ordinary people in the activities of everyday life.

Scott came to anarchism somewhat organically (as many do), recognizing over time that the observations drawn from his own work in various contexts brought him to perspectives that coincided with what anarchists consistently argue. He then taught a large undergraduate course in the 1990s to formulate his views through direct engagement with anarchist theory and practice.

Scott is, by his own admission, less theoretically consistent or developed than some other anarchist commentators. His work is in some ways more anarchistically impressionistic than the systematic anarchist analyses offered by Goodman and Ward. In his words, he is “wary of nomothetic ways of seeing” (p. xii). Scott seeks an “anarchist squint”—a look at everyday events through anarchist lenses to see things that might otherwise be obscured. This is akin to the sociological imagination as an orientation to the world. Scott believes anarchism is methodologically useful for social scientists. In his view the anarchist “tolerance for confusion

and improvisation” is a central part of social learning (p. xii). His anarchist squint is based in a defense of debate and conflict—perpetual uncertainty—as a means of learning. Scott opposes positivist domination in social sciences. He also rejects what he calls “utopian scientism” that has dominated the progressive Left—especially certain variants of Marxism, but some anarchism, as well.

For Scott, anarchism is constructive, calling into question taken-for-granted assumptions of hierarchy in diverse spheres of social activity—both in private realms of the home or workplace and in public realms like government agencies as well as larger spaces such as urban neighborhoods. Based on his own extensive fieldwork, Scott notes that most villages and neighborhoods function on the basis of “informal, transient networks of cooperation that do not require formal organization, let alone hierarchy” (p. xxi). Scott notes that the experience of anarchistic mutuality is the ubiquitous experience of everyday life for most people, even within capitalist liberal democracies. So why have sociologists given it less attention than it might warrant?

Experiences of anarchist mutuality are everywhere. They do not usually express an explicit opposition to states or legal systems. They *do* provide necessary means of survival for much of the world’s population. Much of social order is achieved without and in the absence of the state or state intervention. According to Scott, as for Goodman and Ward, “anarchist principles are active in the aspirations and political action of people who have never heard of anarchism or anarchist philosophy” (p. xii).

For Scott, anarchism makes a key contribution when rethinking political sociology. As Goodman and Ward argue, from their distinct analyses of mutual aid and everyday resistance, Scott suggests anarchism helps to overcome the false dichotomies between revolution and reform. Anarchism recasts what is “political.” His work probes overlooked aspects of social revolt—those that exist in the shadows or are overlooked due to their undramatic, even mundane character. Like Ward, he analyzes the do-it-yourself activities by which ordinary people subvert dominant relations of property, ownership,

and authority. For example, he offers a sociological analysis of desertion, poaching, and like Ward, squatting.

Scott's fieldwork and research have focused on political practices undertaken by members of subordinate classes. He notes that most of the activities of subordinate groups have taken extra-institutional forms. It has not involved formal organizations and public manifestations. Scott develops the term "infrapolitics" to identify subordinate or subaltern politics—that is, politics practiced beyond the visible spectrum of what is seen and viewed as political activity (p. xx).

Infrapolitics include poaching (against property relations), sabotage, desertion (against militarism), absenteeism (against coerced labor), squatting (for housing, social centers), and flight. Rather than openly taking land or housing—which will bring reprisals—squatting can achieve "de facto land rights," actually housing people or providing sustenance resources (p. xx). Rather than petitioning elites for rights to wood or game or fish, poaching will secure the needed resource without drawing attention. What Scott emphasizes is that these are often organized and planned activities.

Such activities have been largely overlooked or marginalized within political sociology and social movement studies, particularly within American sociology. Look at the vast body of work on collective behavior or resource mobilization theories in sociology. They assume the presence of formal organizational infrastructures and tend to dismiss alternative forms.

Scott argues that the basic respect for the agency of non-elites, expressed in the anarchist emphasis on autonomy, self-organization, and cooperation, and the insistence on workers and peasants as political thinkers and actors, has been betrayed not only by states but by social science, itself overwhelmingly state centric (p. xxiii). While elites are presented as unique actors (with history, philosophy, culture) non-elites are often rendered as statistical markers (socio-economic status, occupation, place of residence, ethnicity, rates of crime, etc.). For social scientists, as for authoritarian Leftists, the non-elite or "masses" are rendered "ciphers of their socioeconomic

characteristics" (p. xxiii). Yet their behavior cannot be understood without listening systematically to how they analyze the world and how they act in it.

Scott is rightly cautious in his approach, reminding anarchists that life in non-state communities has not been an unbroken landscape of communal property, cooperation, and peace (p. xiv). In the end, Scott is unable to explain how relative equality can be guaranteed on the basis of extended mutuality. He understands the power of huge economic oligarchies and their control of media and political influence, and like Durkheim sees the reworked state as a necessary (at least temporary) counterweight to that economic power. Because his focus is so attuned to small-scale experiments and acts of disruption or desertion, he cannot theorize possibilities for any broad, allied force of the multitude of oppressed and exploited people—what autonomist Marxists like Antonio Negri call a counterpower rooted in what I have termed "infrastructures of resistance."

Scott identifies his anarchism as an anarchism of praxis. His text is admittedly less theoretical or analytical than the works offered by Goodman and Ward in their respective collections. This is not too surprising given that Scott's work is designed as a conversational effort to reorient social perspective while the Goodman and Ward collections are compendiums of analytical works.

Conclusion

There has been great diversity in anarchist approaches historically, depending on social conditions and contexts. Yet, in this diversity, anarchists have kept a big tent. The works discussed here show a sociological thread running through anarchist theory—a sociological anarchism.

Each of these theorists insists that all of the problems of daily life pose a choice between anarchist or libertarian and authoritarian solutions. Potentialities for each must be assessed. Many of the gains of human social development, the freedoms most cherished, have been anarchist in character. They are anarchist successes of human development, even if only slightly having direct or explicit influences. These freedoms must always be defended.

The diverse thought and writing of Paul Goodman, James C. Scott, and Colin Ward, like C. Wright Mills, have a convergent focus on the rise of post-war technology and managerialism, social dominance by the professional strata, and monopolized knowledge by credentialized experts. Each of them takes a pragmatic approach to anarchy. There is no revolutionary romanticism or insurrectionist adventurism.

For each writer, an anarchist impulse is always in competition with forces of authoritarianism and bureaucracy. According to Ward: "The choice between libertarian and authoritarian solutions is not a once-and-for-all cataclysmic struggle, it is a series of running engagements, most of them never concluded, which occur, and have occurred,

throughout history" (p. x). Their work speaks to the character of anarchism as sociological, a sociological anarchy, as opposed to a moral system or even political position or perspective.

At the same time they have not been fully successful in explaining how mutualist sustenance of social bonds might be expanded more broadly in contemporary market societies in which mobility, anonymity, and cultural differences have weakened broad social ties. How, for example, can mutualist institutions be built across cultural communities and enclaves? By shifting focus, by enacting an anarchist squint, they move us, as sociologists, along paths toward better answers and better questions.

The Foundations of an Anarchist Sociology: Max Stirner and the Alternative to the Collective Human Project

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"Farwell, thou dream of so many millions; farewell, thou who hast tyrannized over thy children for a thousand years! To-morrow they carry thee to the grave; soon thy sisters, the peoples, will follow thee. But, when they have all followed, then—mankind is buried, and I am my own, I am the laughing heir!" (p. 217).

Originally published by the Leipzig publishing house Otto Wigand in 1844, Max Stirner's *The Ego and His Own* is a challenging work of philosophical proto-sociology that seeks to explicate the rationality of privileging the prerogative of the individual over that of the collective. Stirner's insights into the social functions of morality, his disillusionment about the possibility of ever settling on a set of social arrangements that will satisfy all persons, and his characterization of social life as self-interested exchange between individuals makes *The Ego and His Own* highly relevant to contemporary sociological theory. However, as we

The Ego and His Own: The Case of the Individual Against Authority, by **Max Stirner**. Translated by **Steven Byington**. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2005. 366pp. \$16.95 paper. ISBN: 9780486445816.

shall see, sociologists have failed to incorporate Max Stirner into their canon—not due to any fault in his wit or analysis, but because Stirner takes his insights in a direction that is diametrically opposed to those of Marx and Durkheim, who viewed the collective social project as the vehicle that would eventually liberate humanity. Stirner is especially challenging to sociology precisely because his sociological insights corroborate those of other classical sociological theorists, yet Stirner refuses to follow his contemporaries down either the liberal or the socialist paths, which he viewed as essentially similar and equally contemptible. In this essay I will review Stirner's social theory with an

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emphasis on his relevance for contemporary sociology.

Many readers of this journal will find much that is familiar and intuitive in Stirner's line of thought, but may also be uncomfortable with where he chooses to follow it. While both Durkheim and Marx (in their different ways) made use of their knowledge of social structure to attempt to build rationalized legitimate societies, Stirner understands that any kind of permanent social arrangement (whether clerical, liberal, or socialist) will eventually become oppressive because it places the interests of the collective above the interests of the individual. Because his philosophy revolves around the refutation of every kind of alien interest that preys upon the ego, Stirner is often regarded as an intellectual founder of individualist anarchism. At a time when theoretical socialism was just starting to gain momentum, *The Ego and His Own* was widely read but disconnected from a social reality in Europe which would see bitter class conflict in the decades to follow. The deplorable conditions of nineteenth century industrial life made collective action as a strategy for liberation an inevitability for the proletariat. The winds of socialism were gusting into the later nineteenth century, and a book dedicated to enumerating all of the reasons why one ought *not* to try to find satisfaction in a collective fate was doomed to be underappreciated in its time.

However, the failure of state socialism and the ensuing triumph of neoliberal capitalism has broken the labor movement and fractured the Left. Every major socialist project has been destroyed, devolved into totalitarianism, or co-opted by neoliberal capitalism. From our current historical perspective, Stirner's cynicism toward all higher causes that demand sacrifice from the individual seems ahead of its time. Now is the appropriate historical moment for sociology to reconsider Max Stirner's individualist philosophy.

Stirner's method of analysis involves explicating the relationship of the interests of the individual to those of higher alien principles that demand sacrifice from the individual. He relentlessly attacks *all obligations* on the grounds that the locus of reality is in the individual ego, and obligations to

higher principles (e.g., God, the State, family, even truth and justice) cheat individuals out of their happiness and are ultimately responsible for frustration with the social world—those who have a cause to fight and die for make themselves fodder for the principle that subjugates them. Stirner asserts a moral equivalence between the individual and the collective, boldly bestowing upon the ego the authority to determine for itself what is agreeable. Just as collectivities and higher causes exercise that authority at the expense of the individual, Stirner sees equivalence in satisfying the ego at the expense of the collectivity. God is selfish; mankind is selfish; all principles are selfish because they demand sacrifice from the individual: "God and mankind have concerned themselves for nothing, for nothing but themselves. Let me likewise concern myself for *myself*, who am equally with God the nothing of all others, who am my all, who am the only one. If God, if mankind . . . have substance enough in themselves to be all in all to themselves, then I feel that I shall still less lack that, and that I shall have no complaint to make of my 'emptiness'" (pp. 4–5).

The "emptiness" Stirner refers to is what remains after the ego is liberated from all parasitic obligations to alien interests. What Stirner calls "wheels in the head" (p. 43) are the effects of socialization that motivate individuals to abandon their own desires and view themselves as imperfect versions of an idealized collectivity, as "miserable sinners" (p. 203) in comparison to perfect morality. Stirner's conceptualization of "wheels in the head," or "spooks" as alien constructs that infect individuals and prey on them by coercing their thought and behavior to serve alien interests can be thought of as similar to how Richard Dawkins (1990) has characterized memes as carriers of culture that use individual bodies to facilitate their own (selfish) reproduction. Stirner sees this colonization with eyes wide open, and refuses to permit moral obligations of any kind stand between him and his own satisfaction.

The Ego and His Own can be described as a treatise against morality in general. Although David Ornstein (2013) has argued that Stirner and Durkheim come to diametrically opposed conclusions about the manner

in which morality bonds the individual to society, their analyses are fundamentally similar. In fact, Stirner anticipated many of Durkheim's insights into morality by nearly seventy years. Durkheim understood that the content of individuals' consciousness is bestowed by society in the form of a moral order,¹ which provides individuals with a sense of right and wrong and how to treat others based on their relation to the social order in question. Individuals strengthen the moral order by submitting completely to it through the veneration of sacred objects. In primitive times this prerogative of the collective was understood as God; now, thanks to social science, we understand that God is a metaphor for society, a personification of the moral order necessary for its internalization before its rationalization by social science.²

Stirner too understood this perfectly. These passages from *The Ego and His Own* are just a few examples showing how Stirner's and Durkheim's understandings of morality were fundamentally similar: "Before the sacred, people lose all sense of power and all confidence; they occupy a *powerless* and *humble* attitude toward it. And yet no thing is sacred of itself, but by my *declaring it sacred*, by my declaration, my judgment, my bending the knee; in short, by my—conscience. Sacred is everything which for the egoist is to be unapproachable, not to be touched, outside his *power—above him*; sacred, in a word, is every *matter of conscience*, for 'this is a matter of conscience to me' means simply, 'I hold this sacred'" (p. 72). "The principle of men exalts itself into a sovereign power over them, becomes their supreme essence, their God, and, as such—lawgiver. Communism gives this principle the strictest effect, and Christianity is the religion of society, for . . . All religion is a cult of society" (p. 310). "He on whom

the principles of morality have been duly inculcated never becomes free again from moralizing thoughts, and robbery, perjury, overreaching, and the like, remain to him fixed ideas against which no freedom of thought protects him. He has his thoughts 'from above'" (p. 341).

Although Stirner anticipated Durkheim's theory of morality, he parts ways with Durkheim's optimism that cultivating morality would eventually result in a pacified society of industrial automatons whose every desire is provided for by a benevolent collectivity. Because Durkheim understood morality to be the essence of the social, he could not conceive of a standard of legitimacy being applied by any actor *except* for the collectivity—society (formerly God) *is* Goodness, *is* Right, *is* morality, and therefore any individuals perusing egoistic interests will be unhappy (anomic) and dangerous (anti-social). While Stirner's arguments about the functions of morality are consistent with many of Durkheim's views, his assertion of moral equivalence between the collectivity and the individual casts a much more sinister light on Durkheimian collective morality. Rather than assuming the interests of the collectivity are the sole arbiter of what an individual *ought* to do, Stirner argues that because the ego is the seat of consciousness that corporeally experiences the reality that morality is imposing, it ultimately has the last word on what one *ought* to do. Stirner understands all moral orders to be fundamentally the same: the ego is tricked into subjugating itself in the interests of an alien construct. Stirner is smug in his observation that those who chase after these cultural "spooks" (that Durkheim would call the moral order) cause themselves a lot of danger and confusion and would do better to look out for themselves rather than give their entire existence to an external power; after all, that's what God, the State, Society, and every collective prerogative does: look out for *their "selves"*—inasmuch as they demand that all sacrifice to them.

Any defender of a collective human project would no doubt retort that the individual is not absolutely oppressed by every collective, and working together instead of as enemies provides benefits to the individual that could not be attained alone. Stirner's

¹ "For society can exist only if it penetrates the consciousness of individuals and fashions it in 'its image and resemblance.' We can say, therefore, with assurance and without being excessively dogmatic, that a great number of our mental states, including some of the most important ones, are of social origin" (Durkheim 1973: 149).

² See also Restivo (2011).

reply would be that the benefits bestowed by the collective are always conditional upon conformity of the individual to the goals of the collective project. *Mankind* [*sic*]³ respects individuals to the extent that its spiritual essence is manifest in them. The parts of us that do not conform to collective morality—the disgusting, embarrassing, shameful things we do when we are certain we can get away with them—are completely repudiated by the collective, the general category *Mankind*. And so we get no value by *Mankind* inasmuch as we fail to live up to the standards of collective morality—each individual has some attributes that satisfy *Mankind*, but there is in each of us what Stirner calls an “un-man”—all of our attributes that defy morality and rebel against the collective interest. This idea of the “un-man” in us Stirner explicitly links to the Christian idea of original sin: the passions of the individual (our “un-man”) must be overcome for God (collective morality) to fully realize itself. Society bestows rewards *in exchange for subjugation to the collective interest*.

Individuals who in the process of seeking rewards threaten collective morality are met with swift reproach—they are *criminals* and can no longer count on the largess of the collectivity, which is an alien power. “What is the ordinary criminal but one who has committed the fatal mistake of endeavoring after what is the people’s. . . ?” (p. 202). Society exploits individuals to secure its own self-existence, and will provide individuals with comfort inasmuch as individuals subjugate themselves to the moral order. Stirner’s position is that it is ultimately the ego’s decision whether or not the constructive effects of power are worth this sacrifice, and bestows upon his self the right to delegitimize moral injunctions as he sees fit.

Because each of us, to some extent, is an “un-man,” no society can ever be completely satisfying to an individual. Each individual is *unique* and cannot be fully expressed in a collective will. Stirner takes pains to point out that egoists are not a *class* with shared

interests, but unique individuals who do not necessarily share anything in common with other egoists. Egoism is not an ideology or a special interest, it is the complete negation of ideology, and expects nothing from no one; it is merely the expression of self-satisfaction. All moral orders are inherently oppressive to unique egos, which is to say that all forms of social structure are subject to possible annihilation at all times by the egoist. What Stirner calls the “principle of stability” (p. 337) expresses an understanding that any permanent social arrangement will eventually become oppressive because they all demand the individual to submit to society’s organizing principles: to its *institutions*. *In any society, individuals are colonized by an alien consciousness*. Stirner muses that “The whole condition of civilization is the *feudal system*, the property being Man’s or mankind’s, not *mine*. A monstrous feudal State was founded, the individual robbed of everything, everything left to ‘man.’ The individual had to appear at last as a ‘sinner through and through” (p. 290).

Though one might expect someone so aversive to the moral demands of collective life to also be aversive to social interaction, Stirner readily admits that he gets profit from social intercourse, and sees no reason necessarily to forsake sociation in the pursuit of self-interest; contrarily, Stirner recognizes that the ego can only be satisfied through the *use* of others. The point is not to sit alone and be “empty,” but to *enjoy life* without the fetter of the voice of conscience making one shamefaced. Stirner proposes social intercourse through a “union of egoists,” in which people sociate when it gives them pleasure and terminate the social relation when they no longer get profit from it. To modern sociologists, Stirner’s “union of egoists” may sound a lot like how exchange theorists conceptualize social relations. To Stirner, the egoist is satisfied through the enjoyment of others. Love, family, charity, and all types of relationships with others are useful inasmuch as they provide the individual with *enjoyment*. Once they become an *obligation* they subject the individual to alienation just as all moral orders do, and so the egoist abandons obligations to others at their whim. The rational choice model of social interaction is of course

³ I am sensitive to the gendered term “Mankind” to represent the collective human project, but to keep my language consistent with Stirner’s I will use the word *Man* and *Mankind* when I mean *Humanity* and *Humankind*.

completely compatible with Durkheimian morality, which Stirner implicitly acknowledges when he says that most people are half-egoists, allowing the colonization of their consciousness by higher principles, yet their selfishness is never totally obliterated. Instead of a rational-choice model of interaction in which individuals choose behaviors and interactions that satisfy their desire to fulfill the injunctions of collective morality, Stirner envisions a world where such parasitic obligations are ignored, and self-serving egoists live in tenuous balance between a war of all against all and selfish enjoyment of others.

Beyond this faint sketch of a "union of egoists," Stirner gives no real details on how social life without a moral order would actually transpire. Is social intercourse of any kind possible without a moral order? Stirner seems to think so. Durkheim (and Garfinkel) would disagree. Stirner makes the mistake of assuming that social relations are empirically separable from the moral order that makes them possible. Sociology has revealed that a moral order governs even the most basic social interactions. Unspoken rules (*principles*) such as "don't invade people's personal space" constitute the moral code of interaction that is ubiquitous down to the most basic elements of sociation. The very idea of a *union* of anything automatically implies a collective morality. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Stirner did not have the benefit of the insights of ethnomethodology. Stirner's arguments against morality are limited to the moral orders governing macro institutions (such as God and the State), and never address the micro dynamics of morality in individual-level interactions. In other words, Stirner's "union of egoists"—people who interact strictly for self-satisfaction and never out of obligation—is an impossibility because all interactions require obligations of some form.

But rather than the insights of ethnomethodology rendering Stirner's ideas inoperable, they instead provide the foundations for an even more radical Stirnerian critique of society than Stirner himself even thought possible. If we assume the moral order that governs individual-level interactions is as alien to the individual ego as the other moral

obligations Stirner takes to task, then the egoist would reject even this morality, and respect no principles in interactions with others. If all moral orders are equally illegitimate to the individual ego, and sociation is impossible without a moral order, then *all social relations are illegitimate*, at least from the perspective of the individual. If we all became egoists in the Stirnerian sense, the consequence would be *the complete annihilation of society*. This is the only possible outcome of completely abolishing all of the "wheels in the head" Stirner finds to be alienating and exploitative.

What can Max Stirner contribute to modern sociology? Our discipline has been built upon Durkheim's moral theory. I have argued that Stirner and Durkheim shared a fundamentally similar analysis of how morality colonizes the individual's consciousness and fashions it so that the individual comes to value what is best for the collective. Yet Stirner refuses to acquiesce to collective morality, while Durkheim felt doing so was inevitable. The major difference between Stirner and Durkheim then is ultimately a difference in *values*. Sociology (even so-called "value-free" sociology) is committed to a liberal paradigm in which submission to a collective moral code is taken as a matter of fact. Stirner's individualist philosophy teaches us that this submission is *not* inevitable; it is a choice for the individual ego to make, and each of us may refuse collective morality if we choose to. The outcome of this refusal would amount to nothing less than the death of society.

In his classic work on the structural determinants of personal ideologies, Karl Mannheim (1936) demonstrated that there can never be universal agreement on what constitutes a just society, because persons in different positions in a social structure will come to differing conclusions on what is "just." Although Stirner lacks Mannheim's structural analysis, he also concludes that any set of social arrangements will be oppressive because each individual is unique and cannot be completely expressed through the collectivity. Both Mannheim and Stirner agree that *any* society will be illegitimate from the perspective of at least some of its members. Inasmuch as sociologists are concerned with ameliorating

social problems such as patriarchy, racism, the runaway power of neoliberal capitalism, and so on, it may behoove us to take Stirner's arguments seriously. No matter how sociologists attempt to change society "for the better," there will always be someone who thinks such changes are for the worse. A solved social problem (or at least a *plan* to solve a social problem—let's be realistic!) from one perspective will always become a new social problem from another perspective. *All societies are always illegitimate*. The only way to truly permanently dissolve all social problems is to completely do away with society altogether.

Morality has always been at the heart of sociology. Approaching it from a fresh perspective can bring new insights to bear on old problems. Although there is not enough room here to completely describe what a Stirnerian sociology would look like, suffice it to say that it would include scientific techniques directed at the dismantling of morality. Sociologists understand that morality creates the conditions necessary for any kind of sociation. Throughout the history of our discipline we have taken the existence of society for granted, and therefore we have chosen to study the dynamics of morality

for the purpose of understanding how society is reproduced. We may, if we choose, direct our expertise at the problem of annihilating morality rather than reproducing it. To choose one or the other ultimately comes down to the *values* our discipline rests on. Given sociology's inability to solve social problems to the satisfaction of all, and given the State's reluctance to take sociology seriously, perhaps a new orientation toward destruction rather than reproducing an illegitimate society is just what sociology needs.

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A New, Complicated, and Discomforting Mission for the Discipline: The Radical Challenge to Study, Envision, and Practice Social Alternatives

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A few people have written the phrase “anarchist sociology,” but it does not really exist. Not yet. If we seek a window into what anarchist sociology *could be*, we need to imagine. In an established discipline like sociology we have to use our imaginations to see beyond its limitations, its blind spots. I argue—as I assume most anarchist sociologists would—that sociology’s blind spot is its myopic subject matter. The average sociologist might cringe at the suggestion that sociology is narrow—comparable to how mainstream media narrows the range of potential discussion—but it *is* limiting.

Sociology focuses all of its attention on a myriad of institutions and interactions, roles and organizations, trends and collectivities. We use qualitative and quantitative methods; we use small n-size observations and huge cross-national databases. Nevertheless, we usually seem to focus on the same things: social problems or things that result in social problems. While this is not bad—we clearly need to know what is going on in the world—it constrains our abilities to see a way out of the modern madness, to chart a better path.

Anarchist sociology ought to engage in good, old-fashioned dialectical work: critiquing hierarchical societies, but also trying to figure out how to reconstitute that society along more egalitarian, cooperative, and horizontal lines. This focus on social problems is not necessarily bad, per se. However, are we obsessed with this social problems project, in a rather unhealthy, masochistic way? We have a hard time doing the second, perhaps more important task: discovering, studying, and advocating for social alternatives.

Few sociologists are prefiguring a more just, revolutionary society, or analyzing strategies for achieving social change. Some study social policy, but they usually speak to or even for the powerful. Some are

Direct Action: An Ethnography, by **David Graeber**. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2009. 568pp. \$29.95 paper. ISBN: 9781904859796.

The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia, by **James C. Scott**. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009. 442pp. \$25.00 paper. ISBN: 9780300169171.

Anarchy in Action, by **Colin Ward**. London, UK: Freedom Press, 2001 (1973). 144pp. \$19.95 paper. ISBN: 9780900384202.

“applied sociologists,” but they will work for whoever pays them (states, corporations, or other bureaucracies). Even public sociology may be too vague; the world needs transforming, better examples, and provocation.

The few who are pursuing this anarchist sociology project rarely self-identify as sociologists. There are many sociological works by anarchists (Emma Goldman, Peter Kropotkin, Gustav Lauder, Paul Goodman, Murray Bookchin, and others quickly come to mind). Today, the few people who are writing scholarly works about how to transition to a revolutionary anarchist society or studying anarchist societies themselves are not sociologists—although they ought to be and probably need to be sociological in the future.

This review will focus on three books that do this kind of anarchist sociology: two new books, that focus on the recent and distant past, respectively, and one slightly older book that is time-period-neutral. Each asks questions of key sociological concern to anarchists: what is hierarchy, how does it work, and how to overcome it in practice? These are scholarly books, and while

authored by non-sociologists, they connect immediately and intimately to the sociological tradition (and thus ought to be appropriated). These three books are David Graeber's *Direct Action*, James C. Scott's *The Art of Not Being Governed*, and Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action*.

All three works share a common concern for "society"—they study it and some of the attempts to transform it—and social relationships in general. The authors consider efforts to create societies that aspire to the standards of egalitarianism, cooperativism, and horizontalism. Each describes efforts to keep the state and capitalism at bay, and how people work within newly liberated free spaces. These spaces are either vacated by those in power or occur when the powerful have been excluded or evicted, whether they be powerful nation states, police, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), ancient states, powerful warlords, or landlords.

Graeber and Scott concentrate upon very different populations, but both address highly analogous questions: communities organizing outside of state influence, using horizontalists and directly democratic decision-making structures. Graeber treats Western activists within the Global Justice movement who, while not always anarchists, consciously use anarchist practices (including direct action, prefiguration, and mutual aid) to gain further autonomy from large, bureaucratic institutions, like the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, or FTAA. Anarchists do appear most often in Graeber's narrative simply because of the high-frequency of anarchist activists involved in the global justice movement, and his focus on that movement's direct action wing. Scott's book addresses so-called "primitive" peoples, who are not consciously anarchist and who live outside the sphere of the state in Southeast Asia, in a region Scott calls "Zomia." While Graeber and Scott are anthropologists by training, they pose questions of deep concern to radical sociologists, who wish to both study and reconfigure social relationships, and thus to lessen and ultimately eliminate mechanisms of domination. The distinct subjects of these authors illustrate deliberate and incidental paths toward anarchist

sociality. Graeber considers how anarchist and non-anarchist activists created micro-communities and organizational structures, which permitted ideologically-consistent and anarchist value-based action. Activists hoped that such communities and structures could be transported and enlarged to absorb more social territory. Scott, instead, considers how people avoid being "legible" to the state (i.e., understandable, monitor-able, controllable), and how communities engage in a variety of passive and active forms of resistance to the external imposition and internal development of hierarchy.

Ward was not a sociologist or even an academic, but that did not stop him from name-dropping Emile Durkheim, George C. Homans, and Robert MacIver in *Anarchy in Action*. Also, since the book's first edition was published in 1973, Ward also references an older generation of famous sociologists, mostly forgotten today, including William Ogburn, Tom Bottomore, and Henry Fairchild. Although not himself a sociologist, a comparable intellectual mission drove Ward's work: to study society and explore alternative ways of acting without hierarchy and authority. His work—much of which was formulated from the 1940s through the 1960s on the pages of the British newspapers he helped edit, *Freedom and Anarchy*—is deeply indebted to the anarcho-communist Kropotkin, who wrote proto-sociological works during his day, especially *Modern Science and Anarchism* (1903; which debated Comte and Spencer). At the time he died, Ward was likely the most widely-read and identifiable British anarchist, and his *Anarchy in Action* is a modern classic in the anarchist pantheon. Although it might surprise some, a large cross-section of sociologists would doubtless appreciate this work. This is especially true for those sympathetic to critical theoretical tendencies who would recognize the book as fitting within their tradition. In contrast to the focused studies from Graeber and Scott, Ward presents a strong, sociologically-informed anarchism that could provide a theoretical anchor for the other two. Ward attends to the theoretical matters that the other two authors describe in empirical detail: non-coercive organization, top-less federations, complexity and social harmony, housing and

residence, education, play, leadership, and “spontaneous order.”

There are numerous dimensions across these three books that demonstrate the potential diversity in an anarchist-sociology. For example, each one uses different populations and times. Graeber concentrates on the global justice movement in the West during the 2000s, of whom many, but not all, are consciously anarchist. Scott, on the other hand, considers ethnic minorities in South East Asia over many centuries of history, who while behaving anarchistically, are not consciously anarchist. Ward writes a more ahistorical study (that uses historical and current day examples), which is more universally applicable. He mainly focuses upon Westerners who are often anarchistic, sometimes without an awareness of this fact. Thus, a commonality across all three books is an acknowledgment of the potential to *do anarchism* without having to be a self-avowed anarchist (although such a self-identification ought to be a central part of anarchist sociology, since it anchors anarchism not just in practice, but also in anarchist values and history).

These books also describe the creation of an anarchistic world, accomplished through diverse means. For Graeber, anarchists behave prefiguratively to create anarchist decision-making and action structures, while Scott's subjects are concerned with developing methods for evading the state. Graeber's subjects appear proactive, while Scott's appear reactive—but this is only partially correct, as both populations are acting defensively and offensively, simultaneously. Ward uses examples of “seeds underneath the snow” to show the countless pathways toward such a future society, that parts of it already exist—the seeds simply need conducive conditions to germinate. Widely varying quantities of social anarchist theory are present in each book. Graeber presents a bit of this theory in his chapter on “Direct Action,” but he mainly explores anarchistic practices that he connects in ad hoc fashion to anarchist theory. Scott eschews direct connections in his book, although previous works—particularly his *Seeing Like a State*—give a more deliberate nod to anarchist influences. Of course, Ward's work is a full-on interrogation of anarchist theory, where he

extracts key anarchist precepts, values, and practices, and then illuminates their many manifestations in society.

The kinds of relationships described in each book vary as well. Graeber describes the extent to which people possess social trust, mediated by deliberate mechanisms that constrain selfish ambitions, particularly in activist “general assemblies” where decisions are made by consensus. For Scott, trust occurs because others who live in the hills of Zomia are equally weak and unable to dominate. Ward describes average people as worthy of trust and by nature good, when given the proper conditions under which *to be* trustworthy and good. None of the authors' subjects collaborate or negotiate with the state (or other authority figures), choosing to interact only with social equals. The authors also address the question of how to avoid the stagnancy and bureaucracy so emblematic of modern life. Graeber's activists create collective structures in which autonomy is possible, and where spontaneity and small group initiative is welcome and essential. The state-fleeing characters in Scott's book respond to situations and pursue their needs whenever possible: centralized states will lose parts of their populations to the hills when there is disease, war, tyrannical rulers, natural disasters, or hard economic times. Ward dedicates an entire chapter to the anarchist idea of spontaneous order, where people develop and negotiate social relations, plans, and practices when and where needed, without top-down leadership.

Anarchist sociology attempts to see beyond the obscurantist features of contemporary social structure, to identify what is actually essential. There are necessary components of human societies, but they *do not* have to include centralized states, greed-driven economic enterprise, domination by certain racial or gender groups, or other institutions of stratification. In fact, all the needs that current systems provision (poorly, by the way) for people, may be done in alternative ways. According to Graeber, decisions can be deliberated in small groups (e.g., affinity groups) or larger communities (e.g., spokes-council meetings). Likewise, as Scott writes, people can consciously engineer communities—in economic, cultural,

psychological, even geographical terms—that help them to avoid the centrifugal forces of outside hierarchies, and forestall the development of internal hierarchies. Ward sees the evidence (and further potential) for people to manage their own lives and affairs, pursue their desires, and when needed develop stronger social bonds and even create far-reaching, but non-coercive, federations with others. These constitute a crucial intervention, because social scientists often accept as givens, prerequisites, or essential features of human societies these very *unnatural*, human-made institutions, which are in fact non-essential, like the state. Part of the mission of anarchist sociology is to reveal the un-necessity of these colonizing institutions and to point a way toward social practices that accomplish the ends we seek—food, shelter, human care, community—yet without the things that stunt or brutalize our humanity.

In summary, there are many books—in addition to these three—that feature central anarchist sociological concerns, even if they do not identify with that label. If anarchist sociology continues to develop, it will undoubtedly take on a more conscious, deliberate quality—and identify as such. There are many points of departure worth exploring in Graeber, Scott, and Ward, but a synthesis of the three shows a key anarchist sociological question: how do we develop anti-authoritarian alternatives, which empower horizontal communities and lead to individual self-management?

One could take these three authors to task for downplaying or neglecting the value in having active, self-identified anarchists and in studying explicitly anarchist movements. Surely, an anarchist sociologist might. By missing the actual practice of self-identified anarchists—the things they do, do not do, dream, and oppose—we are left guessing what behavior approximates that of those who do not accept that label, for whatever reason. Graeber's global justice activists seem influenced by anarchism (or at least ideas and practices that anarchists have

adopted from others since the 1960s), like affinity groups, consensus decision-making, and direct action street politics, but the gap between a conscious anarchist and an activist acting like an anarchist is, as Graeber himself notes, a gray area which may or may not be significant. Scott's anti-state peasants in Zomia may identify with "anarchism" if it had meaning to them, but it is more likely another Western philosophy that seems foreign in Southeast Asia (comparable to a Roman emperor identifying with "fascism"). Ward's analysis precludes worrying about what explicit anarchists do or do not do, since his focus is on the latent anarchism residing within much of social life. Sociologists have so rarely analyzed anarchists and the few anarchist communities that have existed, that it may be unwise to state with certainty what it means to act anarchistically.

Nevertheless, there is great value in having people act in non-hierarchical ways, expressing solidarity, directing their own affairs, regardless of the ideology that drives it. And anarchist theory and principles help to ground such practice and the application of these ideas among those who are trying to reconfigure their societies—this is still deserving of our attention. To be clear, Graeber, Scott, and Ward all identify as anarchists, of one sort or another, so they do have personal and intellectual experience with anarchism and the anarchist movement.

There are many places to expand these inquiries. For example, efforts could involve studies into anarchist movements, updating Kropotkin's analysis of mutual aid and social solidarity, or synthesizing anarchist and sociological theorists. Another significant project would be to apply social science research to anarchist projects, and directly study other subjects and phenomena that aim to supplant hierarchical social forces (e.g., capitalism, the state, patriarchy, White supremacy, militarism, and bureaucracy). In other words, much more writing (and action) remains to be done.