



Marxist Sociology Section

<http://marxistsociology.org/>

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Section of Marxist Sociology

American Sociological Association

Thinking Back and Looking Forward by Rich Hogan

Inside this issue:

As part of our continuing effort to reflect back on the history of the section while looking forward to our anniversary celebrations, Scott McNall, our fifteenth chair, has agreed to offer his reflections on our past, present, and future. We hope to continue this series with more contributions like this one.

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"Of one thing I am certain and that is I am not a Marxist." by Scott G. McNall

Marx once said, "Of one thing I am certain and that is I am not a Marxist." His remarks in 1880 stemmed from what has always been a central issue for Marxists—the tension between theory and praxis and how revolutionary change unfolds. Marx understood that a social democratic party could successfully implement demands of workers' movements, e.g., a limited work week, equal pay for equal work, and so forth. And he favored reform movements provided those involved did not lose sight of the goal—the disappearance of private property, classes, and the withering away of the state.¹ Of any political effort he asked, "What is the goal and who benefits?"

Marx might have posed the same question about the goals of the Marxist Sociology Section of the ASA in 1977, because those who signed up represented a very diverse group, in terms of how they understood Marx, how they thought his ideas could be used to understand the issues they confronted, and how his ideas could be used to transform society. This diversity of views and intentions among members is still true. As the ASA site for the Marxist section notes, "The Section on Marxist Sociology is not a narrowly focused group that mechanically applies Marxist rhetoric to complex sociological issues." In fact, "You don't have to 'be a Marxist' to be a member of the Marxist Section." One of the underlying questions I pose in this essay is what it means to be a member of the Section.

I will explore why the Section was formed, highlight the importance of the 1967, 1968, and 1969 ASA conventions for the Sociology Liberation Movement, and then examine the job market faced by those radical students who became radical professors in the 1970s. Then I note some of the many ways people tried to make theoretical sense of the 1960s and 1970s. Next, I turn to the formation of the section, the Balkanization of the larger profession of sociology, and offer some suggestions for the future.

A Confluence of Events: 1960s and 1970s

It is worth remembering the context within which the section was formed and why Marxism in its many manifestations served to bring people together in the mid-1970s. Sociology was originally, at least in its American incarnation, a liberal and progressive discipline. And it was assumed that sociological knowledge and "laws" could be used both to address and to *solve* problems such as injustice, social and economic inequality, and racial discrimination. Those who began graduate school in the early 1960s had a significant sociological tradition on which to draw, even if they were not Marxists. They could and did gain inspiration from C. Wright Mills's early work, e.g., *The Power Elite* (1956) and *The Sociological Imagination* (1956). Mills was a liberal pragmatist who stood for social justice and equality.¹¹ Sociology was a popular and growing

(Continued on page 2)



“I am not a Marxist” (Continued)

discipline. Some departments doubled the number of undergraduate majors and doubled or tripled the number of graduate students in their programs in the 1960s.

The 1960s, as a reminder to the younger members of the section, began with so much *hope*. Michael Harrington (1962) had published *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* and Harry M. Caudill came out with *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* in the same year. Both books received wide public acclaim, because they laid out in clear terms the grim social effects of poverty, and they posed solutions. President Kennedy publically embraced the ideas of Harrington and appointed advisers who were to mount a “War on Poverty.” For me, it meant that if we combined the prosperity of the United States, and the knowledge that could be brought to the table by sociologists, we really could eliminate poverty in one generation. A liberal and progressive social agenda could become a reality. But what unfolded during the 1960s was the assassination of liberalism, and the search for narratives that would explain what had happened. Traditional sociological theories, like functionalism, were simply inadequate to understand the transformations that were to come. Let me try to describe how we lost hope.

The 1960 election of the charismatic Kennedy over Richard Nixon promised much in the beginning. However, Kennedy had run on a “get tough” foreign policy position, claiming that under Eisenhower a missile gap had opened up with the Soviet Union, putting America at risk. Kennedy claimed we needed more nuclear missiles. In 1959, shortly before Kennedy was elected, Fidel Castro and a small guerrilla force had driven the corrupt Cuban Dictator, Batista, out of power. Castro then turned to the United States for help in rebuilding the Cuban economy based on socialist principles. His overtures were spurned, and Kennedy broke relations with Cuba in 1961. Castro then turned to the Soviet Union for help, while Kennedy and his staff prepared the ill-fated Bay of Pigs operation to oust Castro, in April 1961. The operation was a colossal failure and an embarrassment to Kennedy. The Soviets then placed long-range missiles in Cuba to “protect” the Cubans. The United States found out about the missiles and set up a naval blockade to prevent Russian ships, supposedly carrying additional missiles and warheads, from reaching Cuba. The Russians had been warned that all-out nuclear war between the Soviets and the Americans would ensue if they ran the blockade. This sparked a nightmarish 16-day standoff. Whether Khrushchev or Kennedy blinked first we will never really know but many of us, sitting by our radios listening to minute-by-minute updates of where the Russian ships were, *thought we were going to die*. An apocalypse was averted but the fact remained that under a “liberal” president we had invaded a country that had thrown out a dictator and come close to nuclear annihilation. Our policy then, as now, was MAD (mutual-assured destruction). If you shoot missiles at us, we have so many that we will retaliate and blow your country off the map. As some thought this was not a policy that could be effectively implemented, we developed one that supported it: we would fight proxy wars to demonstrate our resolve to show that if we were challenged we really could do crazy things. (Many of us thought our leaders were nuts.)

It was also under Kennedy that our involvement in Vietnam deepened. The number of U.S. “advisory” forces increased three-fold between 1960 and 1961. We were determined to contain communism around the globe, to “go anywhere and pay any price for freedom,” as Kennedy said. After Kennedy was shot and killed in Dallas (1963), Lyndon Johnson assumed the Presidency and fully implemented Kennedy’s “War on Poverty.” The policy changes were seismic because they legitimated virtually all of the demands that would be made by the Civil Rights demonstrators in the years to come—the right to vote and to equality before the law. Johnson was elected President in his own right, running against Barry Goldwater in 1964, receiving the greatest plurality (15 million votes) of any President in modern times. But Johnson also had to assume responsibility for Vietnam.

In August of 1964 Congress passed a joint resolution, “The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution” which allowed the President to use “all necessary steps” against North Vietnam without declaring an Act of War. He was granted these powers because of an alleged attack by North Vietnamese gunboats on the USS Maddox, a destroyer, in the Gulf. Only two Senators—Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska—voted against the resolution. Morse was a severe critic of the build-up in Vietnam and agreed to be a speaker at the University of Oregon, in what may have been the first teach-in against the war in the country (1964). Graduate and undergraduate students in sociology and students from other departments worked together to develop the teach-ins. In the future, it would be new faculty in the sociology department at Oregon who provided some of the heavy lifting in the establishment of the Marxist section of the ASA.

The total number of U.S. troops deployed to Vietnam numbered over 500,000, with U.S. casualties at the end totaling 58,220. Some estimates put civilian deaths of North and South Vietnamese at close to 4 million, and 1 million North Vietnamese soldiers died. The war and the human consequences figured prominently on evening television broadcasts. It was, as many commentators have noted, the first televised war. Although close to two-thirds of those who served in Vietnam volunteered, another third did not. The names of all males eligible for the draft were entered into a lottery and assigned a number, which determined the order in which they would be drafted. Those attending college at the time got no special treatment, which meant that some

(Continued on page 16)

Call For Papers and Upcoming Conference

American Sociological Association:

Submission deadline: January 8, 2014, at 3:00 p.m. EST.

The theme for the 2014, American Sociological Association meeting is, "Hard Times: The Impact of Economic Inequality on Families and Individuals." The meeting will convene from August 16-19, 2014, at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square and PARC55 Wyndham Hotel in San Francisco, California.

The Marxist Section will be hosting two different sessions. One session, organized by Kevin Anderson, is titled "From the Arab Uprisings to Occupy and Beyond: Marxist Perspectives." The second session, the Section on Marxist Sociology Roundtables, is being organized by Ann Strahm and Ryan Caldwell. All are encouraged to submit papers.

Nominations for 2014 Section on Marxist Sociology Awards

Nominations are now being accepted for the three awards that will be presented by our section at the annual meeting next year in San Francisco. Please note the due date of *February 14, 2014*.

Marxist Sociology Lifetime Achievement Award:

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes distinguished career achievement in Marxist sociology. Nominators should send all committee members an email letter stating the case for the nominee winning the award and attach a copy of the nominee's vitae. The award is for a body of work of sociological importance in the area of Marxist theory and research. The deadline for nominations is February 14, 2014. The chair in 2014 is Jeff Haley (jeffrey.halley@utsa.edu).

Marxist Sociology Lifetime Achievement Award Committee for 2014:

Jeff Haley (jeffrey.halley@utsa.edu)

Kevin Anderson (kanderson@soc.ucsb.edu)

Warren S. Goldstein (goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org)

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Nominations for 2014 (Continued)

Albert Szymanski-T.R. Young/*Critical Sociology* Marxist Sociology Graduate Student Paper Award

The Marxist Section of the ASA and *Critical Sociology* announce the Albert Szymanski-T.R. Young/*Critical Sociology* Marxist Sociology Graduate Student Paper Award. This award is presented to the author of the best graduate student paper in Marxist sociology. The competition is open to both published and unpublished article-length papers (roughly 25 pages in length without tables or references) written by a graduate student in the last few years (2011-2014). The committee will accept sole-authored and multiple-authored papers as long as the applicant is lead or senior author. No student-faculty collaborations can be accepted. The committee will select the paper that demonstrates the most thoughtful, competent, or innovative analysis of a theoretical, empirical, or activist issue(s) that is germane to Marxism, Marxist Sociology, and Marxist Praxis. The prize for the winner will be \$500 (\$250 from the Marxist Sociology section of the ASA and \$250 from *Critical Sociology*, which jointly underwrites the award). The deadline for submissions is February 14, 2014. All submissions must be received electronically. All papers and questions should be sent to the chair of the committee. The chair in 2014 is Lauren Langman (llangma@luc.edu).

Albert Szymanski-T.R. Young/*Critical Sociology* Marxist Sociology Graduate Student Paper Award for 2013:

Lauren Langman (llangma@luc.edu)

Lloyd Klein (lklein@york.cuny.edu)

Shane Elliott (celliot@live.unc.edu)

The Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award

The Sweezy Book Award goes to the author(s) of the best book published in the past two years in the area of Marxist theory and research. The committee will select the book that best demonstrates the most thoughtful, competent, or innovative analysis of a theoretical, empirical, or activist issue(s) that is germane to Marxism, Marxist Sociology, and Marxist Praxis. Nominations are now being sought for books that were published in 2012 or 2013. Nominations, by email, should include standard bibliographic information about the work and a brief comment on its merits. A copy of the book should be sent to all committee members. The deadline for receipt of all materials is February 14, 2014. All addresses for the delivery of books for consideration are included below. The chair in 2014 is Hans Bakker (hbakker@uoguelph.ca).

The Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award for 2014:

Hans Bakker (hbakker@uoguelph.ca)

Fred Schiff (fschiff@uh.edu)

Daniel Egan (daniel_egan@uml.edu)

(Continued on page 5)

Nominations for 2014 (continued)

Mail books to:

Hans Bakker
Room 616 Mackinnon Building
University of Guelph
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1
Canada

Mail books to:

Fred Schiff
University of Houston
101 Communications Building
Houston, TX 77204-3302

Mail books to:

Daniel Egan
Department of Sociology
University of Massachusetts Lowell
883 Broadway Street, Dugan Hall 205
Lowell, MA 01854

Harry and Fred Magdoff on the necessity of planning

The skepticism that people feel about the efficacy or even possibility of central planning admits only the shortcomings while denying the achievements. There is nothing in central planning that requires commandism and confining all aspects of planning to the central authorities. That occurs because of the influence of special bureaucratic interests and the overarching power of the state. Planning for the people has to involve the people. Plans of regions, cities, and towns need the active involvement of local populations, factories, and stores in worker and community councils. The overall program—especially deciding the distribution of resources between consumption goods and investment—calls for people's participation. And for that, the people must have the facts, a clear way to inform their thinking, and contribute to the basic decisions.

-Harry Magdoff and Fred Magdoff, "Approaching Socialism," *Monthly Review*, July-August 2005.

ASA Section on Marxist Sociology 2013 Award Winners:

Congratulations, again, to our winners of the 2013 awards!

Marxist Sociology Lifetime Achievement Award:

Dorothy E. Smith

Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award:

Charles Post, *The American Road to Capitalism: Studies in Class-Structure, Economic Development and Political Conflict, 1620-1877.*

Albert Szymanski-T.R. Young/Critical Sociology Marxist Sociology Graduate Student Paper Award:

Co-winners:

Alexander M. Stoner, "Sociobiophysicality and the Necessity of Critical Theory: Moving beyond Prevailing Conceptions of Environmental Sociology in the USA."

C. S. Elliott, "Actors or Puppets? Computer Control in a Product Distribution Facility."

Jose Saramago on understanding life's complexities

We would understand much more about life's complexities if we applied ourselves to an assiduous study of its contradictions, instead of wasting time on identities and coherences, seeing as these have a duty to provide their own explanations.

-Jose Saramago, *The Cave*

Jose Saramago on "nuggets of wisdom"

Authoritarian, paralyzing, circular, occasionally elliptical, stock phrases, also jocularly referred to as nuggets of wisdom, are malignant plague, one of the very worst ever to ravage the earth. We say to the confused, Know thyself, as if knowing yourself was not the fifth and most difficult of human arithmetical operations, we say to the apathetic, Where there's a will, there's a way, as if the brute realities of the world did not amuse themselves each day by turning that phrase on its head, we say to the indecisive, Begin at the beginning, as if that beginning were the clearly visible point of a loosely wound thread and that all we had to do was to keep pulling until we reached the other end.

-Jose Saramago, *The Cave*

“Dorothy E. Smith’s Work and the Writings of Karl Marx.”

by Roslyn Wallach Bologh

Tonight we honor Dorothy E. Smith for her contributions to the social sciences. We are not the first to do so. She has won the American Sociological Association’s *Award for Career of Distinguished Scholarship* and the *Jessie Bernard Award for Feminist Sociology* as well as the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association’s *Award for Outstanding Contribution* and the *John Porter Award*. She has recently won the *Leadership Award* from the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology. And she has received many other honors as well, but the award from the Marxist Sociology Section is particularly important, I think, because it calls attention to the profound connection between Dorothy E. Smith and Karl Marx.

Dorothy Smith is renowned for her contributions to feminist theory. Her publication list is endless. Her books include *The Everyday World as Problematic*, a book that singlehandedly reshaped the social sciences. This was followed by *Texts, Facts, and Femininity: Exploring the Relations of Ruling*; then came *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge*; and then *Writing the Social: Critique, Theory, and Investigations*. After this came *Mothering for Schooling* co-authored with Alison Griffith; and after this she wrote: *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. Her most recently published book with D.W. Livingstone and W. Smith is *Manufacturing Meltdown: Reshaping Steelwork*. And she has co-edited with Susan Marie Turner a forthcoming book titled *Texts in Action: Exploring Ruling Relations Ethnographically*. Included in that book is an article that she has written, titled “Discourse as Social Relations: Sociological Theory and the Dialogic of Sociology.”

Dorothy Smith is probably best known for developing the concept of “standpoint theory,” which encompasses race, class, and gender. She has also made famous the concept, “relations of ruling,” and the concept, “line of fault.” Her work has contributed to transforming the consciousness and the practice of social science researchers around the world.

Given the setting that brings us all together today, I would like to call attention to Dorothy Smith’s connection to Marx, a fact that may or may not be well known but is not well enough appreciated. That connection is foundational and hence critical to all her work. Particularly telling is that, like two bookends, Dorothy’s first published work and her latest published work both focus explicitly on Marx. Her first book was titled: *Feminism and Marxism: A Place to Begin, A Way to Go*. What a great title! Her last published article (unless the forthcoming one has already come out) is titled: “Ideology, Science, and Social Relations: A Reinterpretation of Marx’s Epistemology.”

She explains, “In seeking a method for a sociology that could begin from women’s standpoint, I have built on the method of inquiry I have learned from Marx.” In this article she returns to Marx to do a careful exploration of Marx’s writings, especially the long manuscript of the *German Ideology*. She writes, “I have sought to extract from this work and its later developments what I view as major methodological innovations that have been largely ignored in the social sciences.” She refers to these innovations as his “radically new and still largely unexploited epistemology.”

The key innovation is, as Smith points out, “In contrast to the ideological practices that sever the categories from their ground and elaborate theory on that basis, the materialist method insists on returning to and investigating the actual social relations in which the categories arise.” This epistemology “represents the historical setting as foundational to the project of social-scientific knowledge.”

She writes, the argument can be summarized thus:

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Dorothy E. Smith's Work (continued)

Historical development generates specific social relations; social relations are expressed in categories; these categories are the forms of thought in which the social relations come to consciousness. The developing social relations are themselves the ground of the categories or concepts in which they become conscious. According to this line of reasoning, social-scientific knowledge depends on a historical process of changing social relations that create the conceptual and categorical ground upon which social science works. This means that the explication of a changing mode of production is itself lying in wait in the categories in which the developing social relations are expressed but not discovered.

Thus, Smith indicates how Marx's work can serve as the basis for further renewing, even revolutionizing the discipline. I urge you all to read it, especially the illustration she gives of Marx's analysis of Aristotle, the idea of value, and the notion of human equality. She writes, "Following the method I've recovered from this exploration of Marx's thinking, possibilities for exploration emerge from the very concepts that we take for granted." As she herself concludes, "This offers, in my view, an exciting prospect for research that has not previously been addressed by the social sciences of this and the previous century."

I would like to conclude by saying to Dorothy Smith, thank you. Thank you for work that has enriched and benefitted so many people, work that has enriched and transformed the social sciences, and work that continues to jolt social science forward in exciting new and progressive ways.

William Shakespeare on money and its influence on the alienated ability of humankind

"Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold?
 No, Gods, I am no idle votarist! ...
 Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,
 Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward valiant.
 ... Why, this
 Will lug your priests and servants from your sides,
 Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:
 This yellow slave
 Will knit and break religions, bless the accursed;
 Make the hoar leprosy adored, place thieves
 And give them title, knee and approbation
 With senators on the bench: This is it
 That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;
 She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
 Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
 To the April day again. Come, damned earth,
 Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds
 Among the rout of nations."

Review of, *The Dunayevskaya-Marcuse-Fromm Correspondence*

by Daniel Auerbach

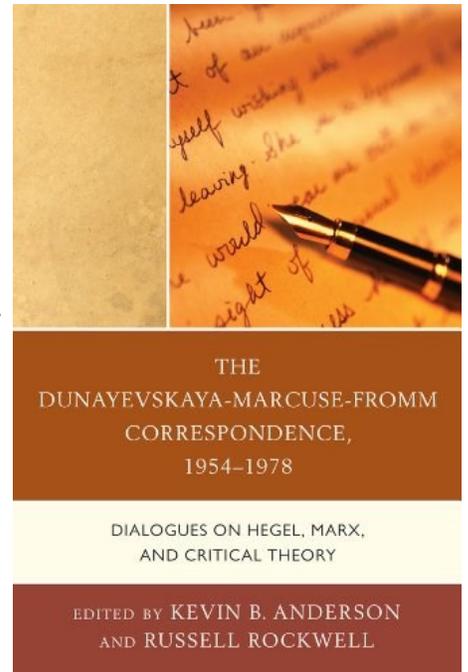
Kevin Anderson and Russell Rockwell's edited volume, *The Dunayevskaya-Marcuse-Fromm Correspondence, 1954-1978: Dialogues on Hegel, Marx, and Critical Theory*, provides an interesting insight into the development of particular aspects of Marxian thought. In the introduction, the editors illuminate the development of thought through the tensions between Raya Dunayevskaya and both Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm. Furthermore, through the reprinting of letters between important Marxian intellectuals this edition serves to demystify the often alienated (and alienating) process of developing thoughts and ideas by highlighting its dialectical development.

Anderson and Rockwell organize their book into two major parts: Raya Dunayevskaya's correspondence with Herbert Marcuse and her correspondence with Erich Fromm. From these reprinted letters we see a unique insight into the development of thought (it is of particular interest to people interested in the overlaps and tensions between Critical Theory and Marxist-Humanism). On a purely intellectual level we are given a glimpse into the thought processes of Marcuse as he endeavors to write *One-Dimensional Man*. For example, Anderson and Rockwell's well written and thoughtful introduction help capture the tension that existed between Marcuse and Dunayevskaya around the issue of automation. Marcuse, while writing about the dangers of restricted and partial automation endemic within the capitalist mode of production, claims that only true, genuine automation will bring about the full development of human capabilities. Drawing references from Marx's *Capital* and *Grundrisse*, Marcuse makes the claim that the realm of true freedom lies in a world beyond necessity. Dunayevskaya, however, disagrees with this sentiment. As a representative of *News & Letters* (a Marxist-Humanist newspaper representing the voice of workers), Dunayevskaya writes that one of the realms of freedom is completely connected to *how* labor is performed in addition to who has control over it. For her, and fairly representative of the Marxist-Humanist perspective, in order to be truly liberated, labor (in its non-alienated form) must be tied up with life. Whereas Marcuse sees true automation as a means of moving us beyond a world of necessity, Dunayevskaya sees this process completely intertwined with how labor is performed. In other words, for Dunayevskaya, the struggle for liberation and substantive human development is connected to labor. Furthermore, this conflict also highlighted the tension between the limited viewpoint of the intellectual and the more privileged standpoint of workers for understanding Hegelian dialectics.

As Dunayevskaya's correspondence with Marcuse deteriorated, she began communicating with Fromm. From this exchange, we are given insight into the development of the feminist component of Marxist thought. Their correspondence helps provide an insight into the development of her thinking which led to the publication of her book on Rosa Luxemburg (which Fromm did not live to see). Additionally, from this correspondence we learn about the depth and breadth of Fromm's intellectual interests. Reading these "backstage" exchanges gives us a greater understanding of Fromm's larger intellectual project and his sympathies and connection with Marxist-Humanism

For this reviewer, one of the most major contributions of this book—which is not to take away from seeing a glimpse of the intellectual development and contributions of Marxist-Humanism, Critical Theory, and Marxian Psychoanalysis—is that it provides a key insight into the dialectical development of thought.

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Book Review (continued)

Anderson and Rockwell, in their introduction and through how they organized these correspondences, illuminate the tensions and contradictions that led to the intellectual development of three prominent Marxist scholars. The dominant economic system, its historically specific set of social relations, and the differing standpoints of each writer gave rise to varying perspectives. While each perspective builds off of the insights of Marx, they reach somewhat different conclusions as to what represents the path to genuine human development and freedom. The point of this book is not necessarily to elevate one position over another. Rather, it helps highlight the incompleteness of each perspective and shows how thought can move towards completeness through dialectical relations with other views. By highlighting these tensions, the readers see that the development of thought is not a monolithic march towards perfection. Thought, rather, develops dialectically.

Anderson and Rockwell's edited volume addresses much more than what was covered in this brief review. I chose these themes as a means of contextualizing this book within the development of Marxian thought throughout that period of time. This book is a fantastic representation of the great work produced by members of this section.

István Mészáros on radical social transformation

We must bear in mind that moving from one social formation—i.e., in our case from capital's mode of social metabolic reproduction—to its radical alternative (which appeared in practical terms on our historical horizon a little over eight decades ago) is an immensely complicated and troubled social process, not only with moves forward but also suffering major relapses. But no relapses, no matter how great and tragic, can extinguish the human aspirations and forces pressing for a qualitative transformation.

-István Mészáros, "The Need for Radical Alternative: Interview with István Mészáros," conducted by Elias Kanellis.

Herbert Marcuse on the consumer society

The so-called consumer society and the politics of corporate capitalism have created a second nature of man which ties him libidinally and aggressively to the commodity form. The need for possessing, consuming, handling and constantly renewing gadgets, devices, instruments, engines, offered to and imposed upon the people, for using these wares even at the danger of one's own destructions, has become a 'biological' need.

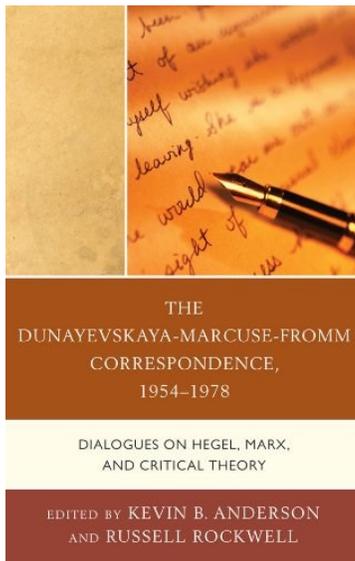
-Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*

Publications

Books

The Dunayevskaya-Marcuse-Fromm Correspondence, 1954-1978: Dialogues on Hegel, Marx, and Critical Theory.

Kevin B. Anderson and Russell Rockwell (eds.)
Lexington Books (2012)
<https://rowman.com/Lexington>



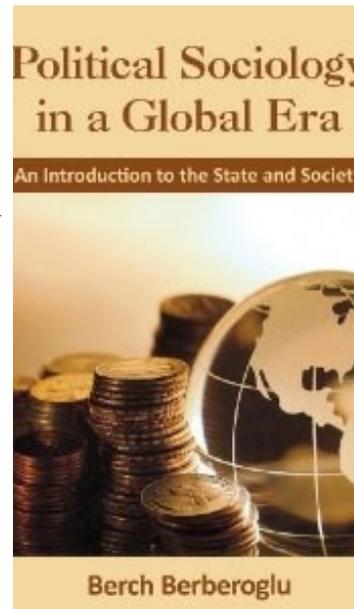
This book presents for the first time the correspondence during the years 1954 to 1978 between the Marxist-Humanist and feminist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87) and two other noted thinkers, the Hegelian Marxist philosopher and social theorist Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979) and the psychologist and social critic Erich Fromm (1900-80), both of the latter members of the

Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. In their introduction, editors Kevin B. Anderson and Russell Rockwell focus on the theoretical and political dialogues in these letters, which cover topics such as dialectical social theory, Marxist economics, socialist humanism, the structure and contradictions of modern capitalism, the history of Marxism and of the Frankfurt School, feminism and revolution, developments in the USSR, Cuba, and China, and emergence of the New Left of the 1960s. The editors' extensive explanatory notes offer helpful background information, definitions of theoretical concepts, and source references.

Political Sociology in a Global Era: An Introduction to the State and Society.

Berch Berberoglu

Paradigm Publishers (2013)
www.paradigmpublishers.com



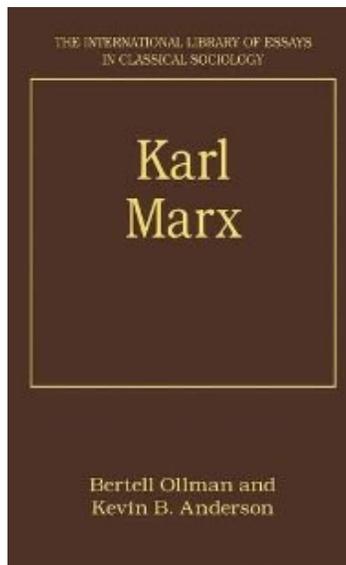
Political Sociology in a Global Era provides a critical analysis of the origins, nature, development, and transformation of the state and society historically and today, examining the class nature and social basis of politics and the state in different societal settings. It examines in detail the major political issues and events of our time, and makes them relevant to the study of power and politics today.

Publications (continued)

Books

Karl Marx (The International Library of Essays in Classical Sociology).

Bertell Ollman and Kevin B. Anderson (eds.)
Ashgate Publishing Company (2012)
www.ashgate.com



Marx's approach to analyzing society and especially his critique of capitalist society, continues to influence the work of a large number of scholars world-wide. Unfortunately, there are relatively few clear accounts of what this approach is and how to put it to use. And, despite the many attempts to use Marx's method to study a variety of subjects, there are relatively few that can

serve as useful models. In the present volume, the internationally renowned Marxist scholar, Bertell Ollman, and the social theorist, Kevin B. Anderson, have brought together a sampling of the best writings of the past hundred years that illustrate and critique Marx's method as well as explain what it is and how to put it to work. Anyone wishing to understand better Marx's dialectical method (along, of course, with the theories created with its help), or to revise this method or to criticize it, or to use it in their own work will find this collection invaluable.

Class and Class Conflict in Post-Socialist China.

Alvin Y. So
World Scientific Publishing Company (2013)
www.worldscientific.com



Class and Class Conflict in Post-Socialist China traces the origins and the profound changes of the patterns of class conflict in post-socialist China since 1978.

The first of its kind in the field of China Studies that offers comprehensive overviews and traces the historical evolutions of different patterns of class conflict (among workers, peasants, capitalists, and the middle class) in post-

socialist China, the book provides comprehensive overviews of different patterns of class conflict. It uses a state-centered approach to study class conflict, i.e., study how the communist party-state restructures the patterns of class conflict in Chinese society, and brings in a historical dimension by tracing the origins and developments of class conflict in socialist and post-socialist China.

Publications (Continued)**Articles**

- Bair, Jennifer Bair and Phillip A. Hough. 2012. "The Legacies of Partial Possession: From Agrarian Struggle to Neoliberal Restructuring in Mexico and Colombia." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 53 (5-6): 345-366.
- Bin, Daniel. 2013. "The Class Character of Macroeconomic Policies in Brazil of the *Real*." *Critical Sociology* (OnlineFirst): 1-19.
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Reflections on the Transnational Student Congress

By Ryan Thomson

Between October 28 and November 3, students representing a variety of educational organizations converged in Marburg, Germany for the first Transnational Student Congress (TSC). The event was hosted by the Allgemeiner Studierenden-Ausschuss der Philipps-Universität Marburg (AStA) Marburg student union as an extension of the International Student Movement (ISM) platform. The ISM began in Marburg in 2008 and felt a fitting location to convene. The congress was initiated in hopes of further solidifying the student movements beyond the national level. An assortment of groups (primarily collectives and associations/unions) travelled from 10 different countries as far away as Nepal. Some countries only had a single attendee while others had attendees from different cities. North America was represented by students from the Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante (ASSÉ), Students for a Democratic Society (New SDS) and U.S. Student Association (USSA).

The week-long program consisted of single-session open discussions, presentations, and film screenings. The recurring theme was student resistance to the commercialization of education. Our discussions integrated a diverse collection of ideas and tactics. Attendees spent a significant amount of time explaining their structurally similar yet distinct situations for student organizing in wake of austerity reforms. Many students expressed concern for the precarious working conditions back home and how budget cuts were threatening their studies. As one German organizer put it, "the neoliberal discourse brought with it the introduction of tuition fees... it removed education from its social context and viewed it as a self-investment in personal social capital to later be used on the labor market... such a view demanded consistent opposition to challenge not only the policy but the discourse itself." Similar narratives arose in the reports from Romania, Lebanon, Turkey, Quebec, and Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some participants expressed concerns that the introduction of tuition fees and larger structural reforms were modeled after the privatization of Universities in the United States.

Among the larger discussion surrounding changes within academia, the militarization of the education system in Sri Lanka received much attention. The violence perpetrated by the Sri Lankan government and paramilitary forces since the 1980s has gone well beyond mass arrest, suspension, and expulsion by including threats of violence (directed towards both students and their parents), and includes disappearances, kidnapping, and assassinations. In the words of one Sri Lankan organizer, "The suppression of students in Sri Lanka (*Continued on page 15*)

Reflections on the TSC (continued)

is intertwined to the neoliberal economic policy of the current government, especially to the privatization policy on education. With the human rights situation of the country degrading by the day and the force used for pushing privatization escalating the struggle for free education... it is reaching a critical point.”

Egypt was also a country of concern due to the emerging feminist struggle as well as the student's role in post-revolution politics under the current military regime. The male Egyptian students were unable to attend given the policy surrounding mandatory inscription of recent graduates. Following a background presentation, the students resolved to hold a series of Q&A's via Skype to overcome the inability to travel. The female Egyptian student presentation documented politically charged sexual violence against women, which sought to discourage their participation during the revolution. They concluded with a moving discussion of the internal organizing efforts aimed at preventing such harassment.

In terms of tactics, the student referendum was popular after a number of successful applications. One presentation outlined the referendum process, which has spread after removing tuition fees throughout Germany (Bavaria being the most recent state). Iskra, the Slovenian student group, is attempting a similar referendum. Beyond voting and demonstrating, the physical occupation of campus buildings was recognized by many to be an effective form of direct action so long it is contextualized within a larger campaign. Others added that acts of spontaneous resistance beyond the university space (e.g. blockading of banks and ports in Québec during last years Unlimited Student General Strike or highways and railway stations in Germany following the 2009 Bologna Process) offered yet another course of action to pressure those in power. Despite some disagreements over tactics and organization it was apparent to all that a mass movement is needed.

The hosts were successful in maintaining an atmosphere for dialogue and personal associations. These loose ties are the basis for the larger ISM platform. No concrete coalition structures were instituted which could be seen as a criticism or commendable depending your perspective. Others had hoped there would be more countries represented with active student movements (for example Chile, England, and Indonesia). The event was the first of its type and as a result, some presentations focused on declaring their student organizing as being worthy of international acknowledgment. In the concluding days of the congress, solidarity statements were recorded in multiple languages. The students have adopted the '*IworldIstruggle*' refrain to signify the global movement for free emancipatory education in social media. The closing comments regarding platform infrastructure in some ways alluded to the central questions of the Whitaker and Bello WSF Open Space Debate.

I encourage all scholars to visit the ISM website (ism-global.net which is maintained in a variety of languages) for current updates on the struggle for free education. In the Anglophone countries alone, there is the ongoing Petraeus fight over the Morales-Assata Shakur Center at CUNY, a recent worker-student strike at UC Santa Cruz and four contentious movements on English campuses (Sussex, Birmingham, Manchester, and London). Too often such rebellious activities and stimulating events such as the TSC fail to garner their share of attention. Such a lack of awareness makes it difficult to document not only successes and failures but waves of struggle more generally. The transformation of education as a tool of neoliberal economics is problematic in that it not only shapes the goals of education to align with the interests of capital, but it also narrows the realm of critical inquiry. The campus has historically served as the seedbed of radical critique; let us make sure we stay as informed as possible and foster the unruly subject upon each opportunity.

“I am not a Marxist” (Continued)

students had a real stake in seeing the Vietnam War brought to an end. Campuses were centers for antiwar protests, protests against the presence of military recruiters on campus, and demands on some campuses that ROTC programs be eliminated. What else drove protests in the 1960's? Let me list just a few of the many interconnected things.ⁱⁱⁱ Robert F. Kennedy, who was running against Hubert Humphrey in the Democratic primaries for the Presidential nomination and was regarded as the leading candidate, was murdered in April of 1965; shortly thereafter, in June of 1968, the Reverend Martin Luther King was shot and killed. Though I despaired when Robert Kennedy was shot, when the news about King was broadcast, I got angry. The America I thought I knew was coming apart, a view shared by many of my colleagues. The gunning down of King sparked race riots across the country and in some cities police and National Guard units enforced order with batons and rifles. Not all riots happened immediately after King's death but many exploded shortly after. There were deep underlying causes for unrest, especially in northern industrial cities. Among the reasons were economic inequality, police abuse, the growing Black Power movement, and a lack of affordable housing.

In 1967, Detroit police decided to close down an after-hours bar in an African-American section of town where 80 patrons were holding a party for two returning Vietnam veterans. Confrontations between police, patrons, and observers quickly escalated into one of the most destructive riots in American history. National Guard troops were mobilized to help the police put down the riot, which lasted five days. At its end, forty-three people were dead, over a 1000 were injured, and over 7000 had been arrested. In the riot's wake, white flight to the suburbs began in earnest.

After Bobby Kennedy's death, Hubert Humphrey stood as the leading Democratic candidate and was set to be nominated to lead the ticket at the infamous 1968 Chicago Convention. The Vietnam War was a central issue in the campaign, which would pit Richard Nixon against Humphrey. Antiwar protestors were determined to be heard at the Democratic convention but a massive police presence was provided to keep demonstrators far away. Instead of the nominating speeches and coverage of the convention the public got to see police wielding their batons, beating protestors, and some of the protestors throwing rocks and bottles and damaging private property. The protests and police attacks on protestors lasted for five days, and at the end hundreds of protestors and police officers had been injured. A Federal Grand jury met in September to consider criminal charges against demonstrators, including conspiracy to incite a riot. Johnson's Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, declined to bring charges against the protestors, indicating that the violence had been caused by the actions of the Chicago police force. However when Nixon was elected, his Attorney General, John Mitchell, pressed charges against the "Chicago Seven"—Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, David Dillinger, Tom Hayden, Rennie Davis, John Froines, and Lee Weiner.^{iv}

The trial dragged on for months, attracting protestors from across the country. Singers such as Judy Collins and Arlo Guthrie came to sing protest songs; the poet Allen Ginsberg, the writer Norman Mailer, and activists such the young Reverend Jesse Jackson came to join the demonstrations and add their voices to the noisy crowds. The trial itself became a theatre of the absurd with the defendants and their attorneys often cited for contempt of court. On one occasion two of the defendants came to trial dressed in judicial robes; when the judge insisted they be removed, the defendants were wearing Chicago police uniforms, which furthered enraged the judge. Many on the Left saw the trial as a gross miscarriage of justice because they believed the police, not the "Chicago Seven," should be on trial. On February 18, 1970, well over a year after the protests, a jury declared that none of the defendants was guilty of conspiring to commit a riot. Five were, however, convicted of crossing state lines to commit a riot and sentenced to jail time and fined. Eventually all sentences were overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals in 1972. The length of the trial, its absurdity, and the attempts by Nixon's Attorney General, Mitchell, to use the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) to convict the defendants continued the erosion of trust in the government. The intent of the RICO Act, signed by Nixon in 1970, was to prosecute members of organized crime syndicates who conspired to commit a crime. However, the government did not need to prove conspiracy; they only needed under the Act to prove that a conspiracy was possible. From where Nixon sat, the entire antiwar movement was a conspiracy and the government only needed to show that Abbie Hoffman and his friends *could* have conspired. The jury did not buy it.

Protests against the war and the direction of American society in general intensified in the fall of 1968, and moved on to college campuses. Students had already developed a capacity to mobilize. Beginning in 1961 and extending through the mid-1960s, groups of students, including white students from the North, joined The Freedom Riders, whose purpose was to register black voters in the South. Those who rode the buses had been trained in non-violent protest but the violence directed at them when they arrived in towns like Birmingham, Alabama, was intense, leading to the death of some and the eventual murder of King. But the protests worked! They resulted in the Federal government passing Civil Right legislation under Johnson. In the fall of 1964, activist students at the University of California, Berkeley, some of whom had experience registering voters in the South, were soliciting donations for Civil Rights causes. Their fund-raising table was set up outside the gates of the University on what the students assumed was city property. However, a dean noted that the strip of land at the corner of Bancroft and Telegraph was University property and decided to strictly enforce the University regulations which prohibited fund raising for
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political purposes. Campus police were instructed to close down student fund raising outside the University's gates. When they showed up, a former student, Jack Weinberg, was manning a table. He was told to provide identification and when he refused (as he had a right to do), the police arrested him. From there, things went downhill for the administration. The police car in which Weinberg was held was surrounded by students, and over the next 32 hours the car served as an impromptu podium for students demanding that their First Amendment rights be honored. The University administration indicated they had no intention of negotiating the issue; the result was a massive student sit-in of over 1000 students in the administration building, Sproul Hall. Mass arrests were made and students jailed, which led to even larger protests that continued throughout the fall and gave rise to what was known as The Free Speech Movement. I still have the brochure students produced, and their demands still make good sense. The movement radicalized the Berkeley campus, which continues to be one of the most progressive of all universities. On a side note, Ronald Reagan became Governor of California in 1966, campaigning on a platform to “clean up the mess at Berkeley.” As nobody really expected him to win, can we blame Reagan on the Berkeley Marxists? Reagan wasn't the only one to be elected because he vowed to put down protestors. There was considerable public backlash against the various protests, marches, and sit-ins of the early 1960s, giving a boost to Nixon in 1968.

Berkeley was not the only campus or place where protests were taking place. In 1960 the Students for a Democratic Society (a campus-based offshoot of the League for Industrial Democracy) held its first meeting on the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan. The group held its first convention in 1962, adopting the Port Huron (Michigan) Statement, drafted by a staffer Tom Hayden, who later married Jane Fonda (Hanoi Jane, as she was then called by her detractors) and was elected to the California Assembly. The SDS was what we would think of today as a middle-of-the-road organization opposed to the threat of nuclear war, against racism, for social justice, and anti-Soviet. They demanded that both political parties—Democrat and Republican—work to engage American citizens in creating a democratic society and work to eliminate poverty. The SDS had considerable staying power and drew in students from campuses across the United States. The point I want to make here is that the SDS was not what people like me or the students thought of as a radical group. It pushed a liberal agenda and tried to work within existing, albeit transformed, traditional political processes and parties. For students, who were doing what they thought was their responsibility as democratic citizens, the reactionary backlash from other citizens, their professors, and university administrations drove some further to the left.

The Weather Underground was organized in 1969 as an offshoot of the SDS. The Weathermen did not want to wait for change or work within existing institutions. They wanted revolution, now! One misguided idea the Weathermen had was that by bombing government offices, they would create civil disorder, bring down the wrath of police and military forces on everyone and thereby prove to the American public just how venal and repressive the state was. It was not an effective strategy. I later had a member of the Weather Underground, who was captured in the 1980s, as one of my students at the Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. He was an unrepentant radical who shortly stopped coming to class, regarding any sociology class taught by two professors from Kansas as being hopelessly bourgeois.

There were many things that happened to radicalize both students and faculty throughout the Sixties. There was a year-long strike (1968-1969) at San Francisco State College sparked by the Vietnam War. Students had gone to the president, John Summerskill to protest the college revealing a student's academic standing to the Selective Service Office. The Chancellor of the California State University System, Glenn Dumke, ordered its continuation and students said they would protest until the policy was reversed. Racial tensions were also part of the mix. The student newspaper at San Francisco State published an editorial opposing funding for special programs like the Black Student Union. Black students tried to shut down the newspaper, which led to protests by both blacks and whites. Then, an instructor of English, George Mason, who was also the Black Panther Party Minister of Education, was suspended from his job for allegedly saying at a rally, “We are slaves, and the only way to become free is to kill all the slave masters.” His rhetoric was clearly the same as that of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, founded in 1966 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland. The Black Student Union demanded that Mason keep his job and that all black students applying to the College be granted admission, given free tuition, a Black Studies Program be created, and a School of Ethnic Studies be established.^v

It was not just colleges and universities where grievances gave rise to changes. Even local governments used what many of us considered armed aggression against peaceful protestors. My first academic job was at the University of Minnesota, and our family lived in faculty housing on the north side of campus, which was undergoing urban “renewal,” bulldozing historic communities and working-class neighborhoods. The community immediately adjacent to the campus was called Dinkytown, where Bob Dylan lived and played his music. Dinkytown was an eclectic mix of student housing, restaurants, music and book stores, but it was also prime real estate. One developer had bought an historic building—at least historic to those who lived and worked in Dinkytown—which was to be demolished for a franchise. Students occupied the building and refused to leave. The solution for the city and the developer was to mount a military campaign. Late at night in the spring of 1967 a helicopter with a

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search light rose in the air to hover over the building shining a search light on the property. Minneapolis police surrounded the building and positioned themselves on roofs with guns. The police then smashed down doors, swept in and clubbed and removed struggling squatters. Immediately after the last protestor was drug out, the bulldozer went to work and collapsed the building. A front-end loader scraped up the remains. By the time classes started the next morning, there was nothing left but a bare lot. It happened again in 1970, when another franchise tried to bludgeon its way into the community.

In the spring of 1969, a *New York Times* reporter broke the story that Nixon had expanded the war into Cambodia. Desperate to win the war he inherited from Johnson, Nixon ordered the secret carpet bombing of North Vietnamese sanctuaries along the Cambodian border between March of 1969 and May of 1970. He had been convinced by the Air Force and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that bombing Vietnamese troops might show America's resolve and enhance the peace talks Secretary Henry Kissinger was secretly trying to arrange in Paris. When the news of the Cambodian bombings broke, anti-war protests and marches occurred on hundreds of campuses across the country. Thousands at the University of Minnesota marched shoulder-to-shoulder from the Minneapolis campus to downtown St. Paul with police guarding the route. Many classes were unofficially cancelled for the remainder of the quarter. Protests continued across the country in opposition to the war and its expansion. Later, in 1970, protests over the bombings occurred at Kent State University, and the Ohio National Guard was called on to “protect” public property. Unprovoked and insecure young National Guardsmen fired into the crowd of students killing four and wounding nine others.

The Rise and Creation of the Sociology Liberation Movement

Carol Brown (1988) has explained in exceptional detail the radicalization of students at Columbia University in 1968 and the rise of the Sociology Liberation Movement (SLM).^{vi} Columbia had its own chapter of the SDS and its own set of campus grievances. Among them was opposition to Columbia's involvement with the Institute of Defense Analysis, and the Black Student Association's protest that a new gym would have a blank wall facing Harlem. The usual happened: students protested and sat in and the police stormed in and arrested 700, leading to a student strike that drew in a large proportion of the graduate students in sociology. Thus was born the SLM, which reached out to other departments across the country, tabling and handing out literature at sociology conventions. One of Brown's important points was that what sociology students at Columbia and elsewhere were reacting against was the predominant liberal ideology of the day and the conservatism of their own departments. By conservative, I mean that many senior faculty felt politics had no place in the classroom and that the way people were hired and fired was not any business of the students. I can testify to the fact that senior faculty at the University of Minnesota did not react positively to graduate student demands that they have a representative on search committees and some say in who was kept and let go.

One of the things I believe students and young professors did not consider was the context in which most of our professors had grown up. I know that virtually all of my professors at the University of Oregon had served in World War II and thought of themselves as good liberals teaching students who would follow in their footsteps. Only a few came to understand that conventional sociology was inadequate to understand the transformations we thought were taking place in the larger society. Many students saw professional sociological associations as irrelevant and demanded changes, which simply befuddled many of our senior professors.

The 1967, 1968, and 1969 ASA Conventions

In 1967 antiwar sociologists, driven by the energy of sociology students, popped a surprise at the annual business meeting. They proposed and passed by voice vote an antiwar resolution. As the Bylaws of the Associate required, the resolution was then sent to the ASA voting members, and few students fell into that category. The majority of members, as Brown has noted, were opposed to the war but also opposed to the ASA taking a political position. Undaunted, plans were laid by the SLM and others for the 1968 convention in Boston.

The ASA had invited Wilbur Cohen, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare as a keynote speaker in 1968. The SLM, among others, demanded an opportunity to rebut Cohen's remarks, even though they did not know what they would be. Richard Flacks spoke briefly, and then Martin Nicolaus, who had apparently been invited by the SLM, launched into what became known as “The Fat Cat Speech.”^{vii} Nicolaus started by noting that while Council members and the speaker were having a big meal in the convention hotel before Cohen's presentation, Nicolaus “was across the street in a cafeteria having a hot dog and two cups of coffee.” He opened by describing Cohen as the “Secretary of disease, propaganda, and scabbing.” He went after mainstream sociologists, calling them in essence voyeurs of poverty and oppression who made names for themselves by working for the dominant class. In Nicolaus' words:

The honored sociologist, the jet-set sociologist, the fat-contract sociologist, the book-a-year sociologist, the sociologist who always wears the livery—the suit and tie—of his masters: this is the type of sociologist who sets the tone and ethic of the profession, and is the type of sociologist who is nothing more or less than a house-servant in the corporate establishment, a

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white intellectual Uncle Tom.

Whether intended or not, Nicolaus’s remarks mimic the tone and tenor of Malcolm X’s not-so-indirect criticism of Martin Luther King in his “The Negro and the Field Negro” (1963). That same year the Black caucus demonstrated against another invited speaker, Whitney Young of the Urban League, and also took to the business meeting a resolution condemning sociologists for using black subjects to further their own careers. It was during the ASA convention of 1968 that the SLM was founded. The 1969 convention was perhaps even more dramatic, because the presidential address was interrupted to memorialize the recent death of Ho Chi Minh.

Some of the drama at the 1969 meeting had to do with professors losing their jobs because of their political convictions. One of the most high profile was Marlene Dixon, who had lost her job at the University of Chicago. Her popularity among students inspired 16 days of unsuccessful student protests. She played a role in organizing the 1969 memorial to Ho Chi Minh. She then secured a position at McGill, again built up a group of followers but, again, fell out with her colleagues. In 1974 she decided to stop teaching and moved to San Francisco where she founded a radical group, the Democratic Workers Party, which was an amalgam of Marxism, Maoism, feminism, and Leninism. As Janja Lalich, a member of the party, explained in her *Bounded Choice: True Believers and Charismatic Cults*, the Party devolved quickly into a cult. In a letter to the Party, “On Leadership,” Dixon explain that “Comrade Marlene and the Party are inseparable; [and] her contribution *is the Party itself*, is the unity all of us join together to build upon.” Marlene was the Party and the Party was Marlene. As she said, “There will be no other unity.”^{viii} In San Francisco, the Party produced its own newspaper, the theoretical journal, *Our Socialism*, and two academic journals: *Contemporary Marxism* and *Crime and Social Justice*. Finally, members who had given up all of their material possessions and cut themselves off from their families and friends, got together when Dixon was out of town and voted to expel General Secretary Dixon from the party, and then dissolve it.

There were cross-cutting pressures among many as to which of many organizations to support and whether or not the struggle was against the ASA and the profession, against capitalism, racism, sexism, or against the war in Vietnam. For a time, the Union of Radical Sociologists served as a unifying force among the disparate interest groups, primarily at regional conventions. When one of the students who had been most active in the protests at Columbia, Al Szymanski, moved to the University of Oregon he took the SLM’s newsletter, *The Insurgent Sociologist*, along with him and together with Ted Goertzel and sociology graduate students turned it into a journal. *The Insurgent* sought out disparate voices on the left and provided something of a unifying function. However, women and minority scholars had their own issues (gender and race), which they did not feel were understood or addressed by their male counterparts in the profession or in their home departments. Women were tired of being handmaidens of the Left and minority scholars turned to the narrative of Black radicalism, nationalism, and Afro centrism rather than Marxism.

Job Market and Backlash

Graduate students, some of whom, like Carol Brown, Ted Goertzel, and Al Szymanski, had been active in the protests of the 1960s began to enter the job market in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some took their radicalism to their new departments but their radicalism was not always gratefully received. David Colfax, who had gone to Washington University, was denied tenure in 1971 because of his antiwar activities. Eventually, Paul Piccone, another Marxist and the founder of *Telos*, met the same fate in 1976, and the entire department at Washington University was eliminated in the 1980s.

I had returned to Minnesota in 1969 after a Fulbright to Greece. Before the fall quarter ended, I had sent a letter to the entire department telling them that I was resigning my tenured position because I no longer wanted to be part of a department or university that cared so little for its students. I thought it would be easy to get another job and was a little shocked by just how tight the market was. My wife and I thought it would be good to go back to Oregon, so that she could finish her Ph.D. in English and I was confident that I would be well received there. My big surprise came when my former dissertation adviser, Ben Johnson, wrote telling me there had been a “coup” in the department; the Marxists had been overthrown and he was now the chair. And, while he liked me, noted my job chances there were nil, because I was associated with the Marxists. What?! Who were these Marxists and what did that have to do with me? I had just finished a book that was going to be published as the first in the ASA’s new monograph series, explaining why Greece would never be an economically robust country because of their *culture*. The argument was about as Weberian as you could get. So, I decided to find out just who these Marxists that had founded *The Insurgent Sociologist* and their followers were. Then, I remembered one of them, Al Szymanski, who spoke out loudly at the ASA meetings. He was the one who raised a sign in the air with “Bullshit” printed in large letters, when he disagreed with or just found silly something a speaker was saying. As Ted Goertzel has noted, Al had great fun with such pranks.^{ix}

I got to know Al and the *Insurgent* group from the University of Oregon better at the Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) meetings. Al and his colleagues reminded me vividly of Ken Kesey (also from Oregon) and his band of merry pranksters. At one PSA meeting, the students from Oregon crowded into one or two hotel rooms, did not pay the registration fee (for the
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obvious Marxist reason), descended on the hotel’s buffet line, ate all the food, and danced and laughed their way through the lobbies much to the dismay of paying guests. At a PSA meeting in San Jose I gave a paper with my Arizona State University colleague, Jim Johnson, entitled, “The New Conservatives: Ethnomethodologists, Phenomenologists, and Symbolic Interactionists.” The room was packed. It’s one of the only papers I’ve ever presented at which people cheered and booed; it was great. However, as soon as I was done and before the session was over, Al came up to the speakers’ table and asked for the paper for the next issue of *The Insurgent*, which I happily provided.^x My friendship with Al deepened a bit when I helped him place and edited for publication his *The Capitalist State and the Politics of Class*.^{xi} The Marxists generally welcomed anybody who they thought would poke a stick in the eye of the establishment or make fun of useless theories. The Marxists that I knew in the 1970s and early 1980s were a very welcoming and forgiving group. Many of us were willing to suspend our disbelief about whether a particular variant of Marxist theory (Marxist, Leninist, Maoist, or something else) made any sense.^{xii}

Marxists who got jobs were carefully scrutinized by their colleagues and the demands for scholarly production were intense. Al Szymanski serves as one example. Even though Al was a wonderful and charming person, he was also an in-your-face radical. He received tenure at Oregon, even after the “coup” that deposed the Marxists, because his scholarly record was outstanding. Michael Burawoy may not know this but even Burawoy, a future president of the ASA, was regarded by some as not a “real” sociologist because of his Marxist leanings. I had gone to meet with one of the ASA officers about a special issue we were working on and he brought up the issue of Burawoy, because he was an outside reviewer for his tenure case. The conversation revealed that it was some of Burawoy’s own colleagues who were dubious about what he might produce. But not everyone had Burawoy or Szymanski’s record. At one section meeting, a person burst into the room demanding that we save her colleague, who she said was being denied tenure because he was a Marxist. I was the one who asked if we could see a c.v. before we voted on the resolution. There was none and as it transpired her colleague had no publications. He was denied tenure.

Making Theoretical Sense of the 1960s and 1970s

It was not clear how to make theoretical or practical sense of what was happening politically, socially, or militarily in the 60s and 70s. It is easy to forget how many crises of capitalism there were or the confluence of events that seemed to signal that a revolution of some sort was at hand. As the decades unfolded we learned more about the Vietnam War with the 1968 My Lai Massacre, and about CIA activities in Central and South America designed to prop up corrupt leaders and topple democratic ones. We considered Che Guevara’s attempts to spread the Cuban Revolution to Latin America and followed his career until his capture and death in Bolivia in 1967. When peace accords were signed in Paris in 1973, bringing the Vietnam War to a close, the air went out of many radical balloons. The same year there was an oil crisis, brought on by the Arab-Israel War of 1967 and a decision by OPEC to punish Western nations for the support of Israel. Gas went from 25 cents a gallon to \$1 overnight. Nixon resigned in disgrace in 1974 and President Carter was elected in 1976, inheriting a stagnant economy, soaring fuel prices, and interest rates running close to 18 percent. In 1979, Iranian students stormed the U.S. Embassy, captured staff and held them until Carter’s last day in office, when he was succeeded by Ronald Regan, who never did clear up the “mess” at Berkeley. By the time we get to the 1980s, women’s studies programs were on the rise, along with ethnic studies programs, and the syllabi of nearly all humanities courses became more inclusive.

European intellectuals had struggled in the wake of World War II to try and understand the insanity that had infected the whole of Europe and the writings of this group, principally the Frankfurt School, were known and available. Although, it must be added, the work of the Frankfurt school did not figure prominently in any of the graduate school programs of the time. The standard theory texts required students to plow dutifully through the founders of the discipline and although Marx got a nod, it was not much more than that. The work of Marcuse, sometimes referred to as the Godfather of the New Left (and a member of the Frankfurt School), was available and widely read by those in the humanities and social sciences, for example, *Eros and Civilization* (1955) and *One Dimensional Man* (1964), but not because it was assigned reading. Marcuse combined his understanding of Marx and how capitalism reduced workers to interchangeable parts with Weber’s pessimism about the dehumanizing effects of bureaucracy and technology. Reading Marcuse was enlightening but his work did not serve as a manual for mobilization. This particular strain of Marxism (Weber combined with Marx) did capture the imagination of some sociologists, particularly those associated with the journal *Telos* founded by the philosopher/sociologist Paul Piccone, who joined the distinguished faculty at Washington University in St. Louis. The entire project of *Telos* might be summed up as searching for a place to stand in opposition to the capitalism which had begun to flood the entire planet, destroying oppositional cultures in its wake. The *Telos* crowd was made up of philosophers and political scientists, as well as sociologists, and did not have much of an impact on radical sociology and certainly not on mainstream sociology.

Many U.S. scholars and graduate students were just beginning to focus on Marx, not as a manual for political correctness but as a way to develop a narrative of the society they saw unfolding. English translations of Marx’s work, such as *Capital* and *The Communist Manifesto*, had been available from Moscow’s International Publishers for decades, but *understanding* Marx was
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another matter. Trying to beaver one’s way through *Capital* was not a luxury most students could afford. So, the 1963 work of Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment* and David McLellan’s (1974), *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*, provided entry points to Marx’s work that were accessible and teachable. And, by the 1980s, there was a rich trove of articles and books about Marx’s early work, which some saw as an antidote to the mechanistic ideas laid out in his later efforts, *Capital*. For a number of sociologists, this rich trove of literature set them on the search like a pack of truffle hounds for new nuggets of knowledge and interpretations of Marx they could publish. Contrary to Feuerbach’s injunction, their goal was to understand the philosophy of Marx, not apply it. If there is one massive deviation from Marx’s works this is it: the failure to apply it to change people’s lives. *This matched the turn toward theory rather than praxis which was evolving in all formerly “radical” positions*. This remains an issue for a Section devoted to Marx and Marxist scholarship.

One of the difficulties experienced by “new” Marxists was the search for a revolutionary subject. During the 1960s, student protestors, Black power advocates, and feminists did not find the American working man and woman in their corner. If anything, members of the working and middle classes were vehemently opposed to the actions and beliefs of antiwar protestors and demands for ethnic and women’s studies programs were met with initial skepticism. Certain theoretical contortions were required to explain the deviance of the working classes and why they had not become sufficiently alienated to throw off their chains. Some of my colleagues with Marxian leanings argued seriously that social welfare should not be provided to the needy as a means of hastening their immiseration and the inevitable revolution. The work of Gramsci was frequently employed to explain that the ideology of the dominant classes had “infected” workers, and that with the right education and a little persuasion, a class of organic intellectuals would rise up and assume their rightful place as agents of change. This search for the revolutionary proletariat has continued throughout the history of the section. Some have argued that global capitalism is giving rise to a new proletariat; others argue that the continued hollowing out of the middle class will make them revolutionary agents; and there are those who hope that there will be a new blue/green coalition of workers and environmentalists who can reverse our destruction of the biosphere and at the same time minimize economic inequalities.

Struggles to understand and apply the fundamentals of Marx continue. When I assumed the position of Chair at the University of Kansas in 1976, I had the opportunity to teach a seminar called simply, Marx. I remember to this day that every class began with the same student asking me, “Is Marx’s Labor Theory of Value true?” I said, every time, “It is a tendency.” His invariant reply was, “Then Marxism can’t be true!” His example of why the labor theory of value did not work was the emerging digital world in which a disk with software or something else on it could be produced for virtually nothing and sold for whatever the market would bear. “Where,” he asked rhetorically, “was the labor?” The same question has been asked recently by economists who ponder the meaning of a digital economy and where to locate value. Why is Twitter now worth \$18 billion dollars?

The notion that the collapse of the capitalist state was at hand (whether in the sixties, seventies, or now) draws on the Marx of *Das Kapital* (1867). During the Occupy Wall Street Movement (2011) and the financial crisis that began in 2008 and continues today, Marx has been turned to as a way to understand the cyclical nature of economic crisis. Engels got the blame, or credit if you prefer, for mechanistic or deterministic Marxism—the idea that the proletariat was the revolutionary agent, capitalism evolved following invariant laws, and its collapse was inevitable. Marx’s work was less an influence than Engels on the emerging feminist movement. Engels’s *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) served as inspiration for some Marxist feminists struggling like others to give voice to their concerns and their oppression.

The rediscovery of the early Marx, whose work exhibits a more psychological sophistication and gives us a better understanding of his theory of alienation and a better understanding of modern capitalism, came as a relief for those of us who wanted to teach something more than mechanistic determinism. (Of course for those who were followers of the Frankfurt School and George Lukás, these ideas were already available.) There were more than enough variants of Marx (e.g., Leninist, Maoist, Weberian neo-Marxism) to go around in the 1970s. One of the debates that took place in the early days of the Marxist section was the division between those who thought of themselves as structuralists and those who drew their inspiration from C. Wright Mills’s *The Power Elite*. As an example of the latter, Bill Domhoff in his numerous works has argued some variation of the theme that there are distinct elites who interact with one another and set the agenda for the capitalist state. In other words, it matters whom you go to lunch with. I am of the school (structuralist) that instead argues that the capitalist state reproduces the conditions for capitalism in its economic, political, and legal institutions. Therefore, if we want to understand how capitalism works we don’t try to figure out who is dining with whom. It doesn’t matter; the outcome is already predetermined. The capitalist state must serve the long-term interests of capitalists, or it would not survive; what it mostly does is adjudicate rival class interests (e.g., finance capital as opposed to industrialists) so that the whole system doesn’t collapse.

There were a number of us in the section when it was formed who referred to ourselves as class theorists. For us, that meant that class is actively created, as Eric Hobsbawm and E.P. Thompson argued. We took seriously the Marxist idea that “we create our
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own histories but not always in circumstances of our own choosing.” We wanted to show that how people thought about their life circumstances and their class position was driven by specific historical circumstances and the voices they used to describe their plight came from the dominant rhetoric of the day. In the late 1980s, Rick Fantasia, Rhonda Levine, and I received an ASA grant to sponsor a mini-conference, “Bringing Class Back In,” at the University of Kansas. We brought together a group of about 15 younger scholars, virtually all of whom have played a role in the section. We occupied a restaurant one evening and tried to sing the *Internationale*, and another evening we rented a barn, had a barbecue at which Erik O. Wright, future president of the ASA, played the fiddle. The conference resulted in an edited collection, *Bringing Class Back In* which was published in 1991, the same year I served as chair of the Marxist section.^{xiii}

There was nothing dramatic in being the fifteenth chair other than that it provided me a perspective on the good work done by previous chairs and councils. Ted Goertzel served as the first chair of the section, and along with Immanuel Wallerstein (the second chair), Dorothy Smith, Carleton Smith, Martha Gimenez, Kay Trimberger, Carol Brown, Chris Chase-Dunn, and John Leggett, got things started for all of us. (Please note the early involvement of women in the section.) The annual meetings served, initially, not so much to advance a Marxist agenda, whatever that might be, but to have a chance to connect with like-minded colleagues, share stories about our departments, and have a party. There were some notable teams of spouses, not all sharing a last name, who served to keep the section going, and a variety of people stepped up to do the chores associated with assuming a position on the council or serving as chair, or chair elect. For those of us in the early years of the section, I can honestly say, we had fun. I recently read the current ASA Bylaws regarding the responsibilities Section Chairs. An annual report is required, which must include the number of those who came to the section business meeting, the minutes of the Council of the Section meeting, a report on the state of the budget, information about what was done to recruit and retain members and information about “communications strategies,” such as newsletters. And those aren’t all of the requirements. Bluntly, they are onerous and require significant work on the part of section officers, so we owe debt of gratitude to those who agree to serve.

Formation of Other ASA Sections

Tocqueville once worried that Americans would become so locked up in the habits of their own hearts that they would fail to engage in a civic culture that would support a democratic society. It may be the case that we have an Association that has become so Balkanized and locked up in the habits of the profession that we have lost sight of the larger goals that drove the origination of the ASA—equity and social justice. There are now *52 separate ASA sections* ranging widely (sex and gender, sexualities, theory, emotions, disability and society, children and youth, and so forth) and, though members can and do sign up for more than one, the sheer number of sections makes it hard to maintain the magic number of 300+ members that assures two dedicated sessions at the annual meetings; less than 300 gives us just one. We all received pleas from Art Jipson in 2013 urging us to check the box for the section, urge colleagues to do likewise, and pay for graduate students to become members.

I say one thing, not to annoy readers, but to point to what I have personally found vexing. I’d venture the hypothesis that the greater the number of sections, the less the quality of any given paper presented and the less its influence. The spread of the number of sections means that people have many choices when it comes to deciding where to submit a paper for presentation. Often, it is a friend or acquaintance chairing a session who shares the same theoretical perspective. This results in an intellectual narrowness and disadvantages those who work the Marxist side of the street who are trying to explain total or totalizing systems. It is also the case that Marxists end up talking to just Marxists and sometimes do not engage in the intellectual rigor it would take to get others to pay attention to what we have to say. We need to work a bit harder to have really “killer” sessions that will draw others.

Membership in the Marxist section has also been subject to the vagaries of the economy. The number of section members has waned as downturns made it harder for people to come to an annual meeting or retain their membership in the section. The early 1980s saw overall membership in the ASA drop by almost 1000 during the economic crisis of 1981-1982. Total ASA membership now hovers around 14,000. We normally maintain our Section’s required level of 300 members, but just barely. Membership in the section has also been affected by the fact that other sections have been created that overlap with the interests of those who might be attracted to a section devoted solely to Marxist sociology. Even before the Marxist section was founded in 1977,^{xiv} women, who had been deeply involved in antiwar protests, the Civil Rights Movement, and the emerging feminist agenda of the 1970s, demanded more recognition and a voice in the profession. The Section on Sex and Gender now has more members, with a few annual exceptions, than any other section. In 1981, two other sections that held interests for Marxists of different stripes formed. One was the section on Political Economy of the World System, led by Immanuel Wallerstein and his students. The formation of a separate section to focus on just part of the Marxian agenda—the capitalist pursuit of cheap land, labor, commodities and energy—seemed odd to me. The simple addition of when a country or region integrated into the capitalist world system did not, and does not, seem like a reason for a separate section. The section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities was also formed in 1981. My

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understanding then, and now, was that the debates which began in earnest during the 1970s about whether race, class, or gender was the most important variable in understanding one's position in society fueled the creation of this section. One odd resolution of the debates about whether race, class, or gender was most important was the formation in 1997 of the section, Race, Gender, and Class (a section more than double in size that of the Marxist section), suggesting the debate was not over. For Marxists of the old school, class trumps race and gender. But, as minority women scholars pointed out, being a middle-class African American woman, as opposed to being a white middle-class woman, made a significant difference in terms of one's life chances and experiences. So, for many minority scholars the Marxist sociology section trod the wrong path.

Looking Forward

Yet, Marxism endures because the crises of capitalism keep rolling along and globalization keeps grinding cultures to dust. How to develop a Marxian narrative that will move people to action, though, remains a continuing challenge. Good empirical work showing just how or why a group is dispossessed or being shortchanged is necessary but not sufficient to transform our political or economic landscapes. Helping to answer the question about “What will it take?” is good work and we should systematically undertake it as a thoughtful and collective effort and with good will toward one another because it is going to take more than one big idea to solve the problems we confront.

I am not proposing a Marxist loyalty oath but a request to reflect on the intention of Marx's remarks and answer the question about what it means to be a Marxist or member of the Section. Should it mean, at a minimum, that we focus on praxis, on the continued pursuit of justice and equality?

There is a character in Norman Rush's (1991) novel *Mating*, who explains why he is a Marxist and why Marxists are so fun to be around. “I love Marxist academics because it turns them into such absolute bloodhounds when it comes to critiquing actually existing capitalism. . . It was Marx and Engels's fault that when Lenin took power he had no idea what a socialist state should be like, because they never bothered to describe it.” All this by way of saying, we need to do a very good job of explaining what the kind of future we hope for will look like and explain how we are going to get there.

Notes:

ⁱThe target of his remarks was the founders of the French Parti Ouvrier, Jules Guesde and Paul LaFarque, who Marx saw as focused on the introduction of a form of state socialism rather than working for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Engels cites Marx's remarks in a letter to Bernstein, November 203, 1882. For an extended discussion of the issues surrounding the minimum and maximum political demands of the Parti Ouvrier see: <http://libcom.org/forums/thought/im-not-a-marxist>.

ⁱⁱMills was larger than life, described by one writer as a “broad-shouldered, motorcycle-riding anarchist from Texas.” But he was also the first sociologist to really offer a serious analysis of power in American society. See, John J. Summers. 2006. “The Deciders.” *The New York Times*. (May 14). Available on-line at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/14/books/review/14summers.html>

ⁱⁱⁱAs my colleague Richard Hogan has noted, campus protests were not just about one thing, or driven by one issue. The Freedom Riders who returned to Berkeley got involved in the Free Speech Movement. Students, who had been involved in anti-War protests, got involved in struggles for student rights.

^{iv}There were originally eight defendants but Bobby Seale, who had directed stinging insults at the presiding Judge Julius Hoffman, had his trial severed from the process.

^vHelene Whitson. *Strike: Concerning the 1968-1969 Strike at San Francisco State College*. Whitson was a university librarian and posed her recollections at: <http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=STRIKE!...> Concerning the 1968-69 Strike at San Francisco State College

^{vi}Brown, Carol A. 1970. “A History and Analysis of Radical Activism in Sociology, 1967-1969.” *Sociological Inquiry* 40 (winter).
Brown, Carol A. 1988. “The Early Years of the Sociology Liberation Movement.” *Critical Sociology* (formerly *The Insurgent Sociologist*) 15(2):37-45.

^{vii}Martin Nicolaus, “Fat-Cat Sociology: Remarks at the American Sociological Association Convention.” Accessed online November 21, 2013 at: <http://www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/fatcat.html>. It may be of interest to know that Nicolaus' was not a sociologist. Rather he is a San Francisco attorney, trained in philosophy, who is best known among sociologists for his exceptional
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(1973) translation of *The Grundrisse*. He describes his radicalization as stemming from the year-long (1968-1969) strike at San Francisco State College (now SFSU). See his site at: <http://nicolaus.com/mn/>. He continues to blog and now writes books about recovering from drug and alcohol addiction.

^{viii}Cited in Janja A. Lalach. 2004. *Bounded Choice: True Believers and Charismatic Cults*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p.295.

^{ix}Ted Goertzel. 1988. “Albert Szymanski: A Personal and Political Memoir.” *Critical Sociology* 15:139-144.

^xScott G. McNall and James C.M. Johnson. 1975. *The Insurgent Sociologist*. (Summer):49-65.

^{xi}Albert Szymanski. 1978. *The Capitalist State and the Politics of Class*. Winthrop, MA: Winthrop Publishers.

^{xii}As my two colleagues Richard Hogan and Brett Clark have noted, there are many ways to slice the Marxist pie in terms of how to characterize the different theoretical divisions. My list is not intended to be exhaustive, simply illustrative of some of the divisions.

^{xiii}Scott G. McNall, Rhonda Levine, and Rick Fantasia, eds. 1991. *Bringing Class Back In*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

^{xiv}It was actually founded in 1976 and the first chair, Ted Goertzel, assuming his responsibilities in 1977.

Erich Fromm on the sane society

It is naively assumed that the fact that the majority of people share certain ideas or feelings proves the validity of these ideas and feelings. Nothing is further from the truth. Consensual validation as such has no bearing whatsoever on reason or mental health. Just as there is a ‘folie à deux’ there is a ‘folie à millions.’ The fact that millions of people share the same vices does not make these vices virtues, the fact that they share so many errors does not make the errors to be truths, and the fact that millions of people share the same forms of mental pathology does not make these people sane.

Indeed, the tremendous energy in the forces producing mental illness, as well as those behind art and religion, could never be understood as an outcome of frustrated or sublimated physiological needs; they are attempts to solve the problem of being born human.

It follows...that mental health cannot be defined in terms of the ‘adjustment’ of the individual to his society, but, on the contrary, that it must be defined in terms of the adjustment to the needs of man, of its role in furthering or hindering the development of mental health.

-Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*