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My reading of Michael Burawoy's paper is done from the perspective of an economist with a strong interest in interdisciplinary perspectives in research and teaching. In reading the paper I learned much from it—even more so listening to its very interesting presentation. Let me begin with a comment about one of my favorite quotes from the paper:

“Sociology lives and dies with the existence of civil society. More than in any other science, it withers away with totalitarianism and gains strength with community.”

This is an interesting way of depicting Sociology. By contrast, I wish I could say the same for Economics (or at least for its hegemonic branch). At best, it has accommodated to changing circumstances while, rather than withering away with dictatorial regimes, it seems to do fine with them—such as under Pinochet in Chile where, as is well known, the “Chicago boys” flourished and had a major influence. Orthodox Economics tends to respond to powerful market interests rather than, in Burawoy's terms, to civil society and community needs. Its heavy emphasis on the market and on “choice” rather than on human welfare often makes it insensitive to the needs of civil society, particularly of the least privileged parts of it. In this sense, some of us tend to suffer from “sociology envy” and wish that our discipline was imbued with a greater sense of “the social” and more responsive to the need to emphasize social “provisioning” in addition to rational choice. Let me, however, move to

the core of Burawoy's paper about which I want to make two main comments:

First, I find the paper very “disciplinary,” in the sense of being restricted or “locked in” within the contours of Sociology and without bridging to other social sciences or even other disciplines. It seems to me that public sociologies should be very conducive to incorporate interdisciplinary analysis. How can sociologists, for example, explain/understand global migration processes without combining their analysis with political and economic questions or with anthropological insights? The paper's four-cell matrix could easily incorporate such extra dimensions. Drawing from Economics again, some of the most innovative and critical work tends to include a relatively high degree of interdisciplinary analysis, as in the fields of political economy, feminist economics and other forms of heterodox economics. Clearly, they are the most engaged with matters of concern to public sociologies and often, in Burawoy's words, they represent “the most fruitful source of innovation, imagination and challenge” to orthodox economics. The links to other disciplines tend to be an integral part of the analysis; it is difficult, for example, to talk about the economics of gender without understanding the ways in which gender constructions shape economic reality and vice versa. And this implies moving beyond narrow definitions of the discipline.

The same can be said for institutional economics. To illustrate, orthodox economics views the market as an ahistorical mechanism of exchange and allocator of resources which functions in a strictly economic sense quite apart from its social linkages. Institutional economists have questioned this formulation, emphasizing the need to place the market

in a historical context, and showing us the extent to which markets are shaped, a la Polanyi, by a variety of forces beyond the strictly economic. In order to understand these forces, the analysis must draw from history, politics, sociology, and other relevant disciplines. In a similar way, public sociologies will tend to be too narrowly defined if they don't establish the necessary links with other relevant bodies of social analysis.

My second comment has to do with the need to globalize the disciplines. I very much agree with the points made by Burawoy on this subject but would like to raise the question of "how to" which in fact he has discussed elsewhere in his work. This includes the distinction between positive and normative science or between "what is" and "what ought to be." Organic sociology could be defined as a combination of the two, a way of not separating sociological analysis from its meaning and implications for action and policy. My emphasis here is twofold: a) how do we go about doing this work and how do we ask the relevant questions, b) and where do we situate our analysis. Let me explain what I mean using the example of research on SAPs (Structural Adjustment Policies), in which I have been involved, and which has focused on the effects of these policies on developing countries during the past two decades.

The reports from this research have often been contradictory. Some studies have concluded that the effects of these IMF/World Bank-inspired programs on developing countries have been positive, resulting in the elimination of chronic problems and stabilizing the countries' economies. Others have arrived at very different conclusions, pointing out that the costs of adjustment have been very high for a large proportion of the population,

thus generating social tensions and questions of sustainability. While the two types of studies can claim that they have engaged in "positive science," these contradictory results have often confused those who want to understand these processes and those who live through them. Some development reports, and even the popular press, particularly in high income countries, have often emphasized the optimistic view. Yet, conversations with the average citizen in countries undergoing adjustment convey a pessimistic evaluation of the tremendous social costs of adjustment, and many studies have documented these costs during the past two decades.

We can only reconcile these different interpretations if we understand what questions have driven this research and how it has been carried out. For the most part, the optimistic view has been based on studies drawing on macroeconomic indicators focusing on the performance of the adjusting economies. In many cases, SAPs have succeeded in increasing exports and generating revenue to deal with foreign debt-related payments; they have clearly contributed to lowering high inflation rates, paved the ways to attract foreign investment, promoted globalization, and reduced government deficits (in many cases through privatization programs). In some countries, growth rates have improved even though they have lagged in many others, particularly over the long run.

The more pessimistic view has been based mostly on research carried out at the micro level. Relying often on case studies, this type of research has focused on households and communities and provided detail about the ways in which structural adjustment – including budget cuts, privatization and economic

restructuring – has affected employment, household budgets and daily life. Others have looked at the changing division of labor generated by these processes, for example in agriculture and manufacturing, including their gender dimensions. Their overwhelming conclusions have pointed out that, for a large proportion of the population, the social costs of adjustment have been very high, including an increase in poverty levels in many cases. This was the case for the Latin America’s “lost decade” of the 1980s, which resulted in negative economic growth and an overall fall in living standards. To be sure, a (much smaller) proportion of the population has benefited from the more globalized economies resulting from SAPs. While this can be viewed as a positive result, it has also contributed to increasing inequalities between different social groups, thus resulting in social tensions and pointing to problems of the model’s sustainability.

Needless to say, the implications of the two sets of conclusions take us to very different avenues for action and policy. The optimistic view amounts to a reaffirmation of the appropriateness of the Washington Consensus to deal with the chronic problems of developing countries. The pessimistic view has provided a critical evaluation of this model in terms of its social effects and long run sustainability, thus calling for alternative paths to neoliberal policies.

I have used this example to show the crucial importance of the situatedness of the questions posed and methodology used for our empirical – and ultimately theoretical – work. In this sense, we can argue that any effort to globalize public sociologies is likely to be influenced by how it is being carried out. Burawoy’s own work has provided interesting

examples of the importance of situating research beyond the narrowness of our disciplines. His questions and mode of analysis have provided rich evaluations of the reality and contradictions of socioeconomic processes – as we should expect from globalized public sociologies. I want to take this opportunity to thank him for his contributions to the social sciences.

DAVYDD GREENWOOD

Goldwin Smith Professor of Anthropology,
Director, Institute of European Studies

I. Introduction

- A. I am pleased to have been asked to make some remarks on this exciting lecture on a topic that is very important to me personally.
 - 1. I celebrate Michael Burawoy's topic because the future of the social sciences and their uncomfortable relationship to civic responsibility and social engagement is the centerpiece of my own work.
 - a. Not since William Foote Whyte's presidential address to the American Sociological Association in 1981 have I heard such a clear statement of the issues facing sociology and I take Michael's position as a voice of hope within a not very promising social science scene in the U.S.
 - 2. I also welcome the comparative orientation he suggests because international comparisons reveal the larger political and economic conditions that structure our work lives as

- social researchers better than almost any other strategy.
- II. But, to stimulate discussion, I will focus points where we diverge.
- A. Michael's work links to my own project of a large-scale comparative analysis of the increasingly uncertain fate of at least the conventional social sciences in increasingly corporate university environments.
1. As you might expect, since this also where I am working, I have strong views of my own.
 2. I will emphasize where my views differ from Michael's in hopes of sparking a slightly broader and more inclusive debate about the future of the social sciences.
- B. While I don't disagree with much of what Michael articulates regarding sociology, I believe that his perspective needs to be broadened to include the social sciences as a whole, to include key historical dimensions, and to include reference to phronesis-based social science practice.
- III. History
- A. If we identify the important issues and processes he discusses as part of a considerably larger historical problems affecting all of the social sciences, then I think our framing of the issues changes significantly, as does our sense of what reasonable courses of action might be.
- B. Sociology is treated, in this paper, as a relatively unproblematic category. Yet it is an academic profession whose arbitrary boundaries, corporate

- structures, and history are hard to understand outside of the broader scope of the history of the social sciences in the U.S. as a whole.
- C. Michael identifies the origins of sociology with the origins of civil society,
1. While this certainly is partly true, it could also be argued that sociology, with its focus on immigrants, slums, and the injuries of social class, was also born out of the confrontation with the incivility and inhumanity of Nineteenth century America as well.
 - a. Viewing it this way would align better with the history of both sociology and anthropology, fields that emerged as strongly reformist endeavors centering on the major social ills of the U.S - the legacy of slavery, ethnic conflict and ethnocide, immigration, and urbanization.
 - b. This seems important to me because the founders of American economics, sociology, political science, and anthropology were social reformers and paid dearly for those commitments over time.
 2. In the case of sociology, this case is particularly well made in the book by Pat Lengeremann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley in their book, The Women Founders,

- in which they argue that powerfully reformist women, like Jane Addams, Sophonisba Breckenridge, and Marianne Weber were key founders and equal partners in the origins of sociology only to be tossed out of sociology as academic professionalism took over and then, as a final insult, to be tossed out of the history of sociology as well.
3. A similar case can be made for anthropology with the likes of Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Zora Neale Hurston, Francise LaFlesche, and Elsie Clews Parsons.
 4. The same could be said for the rest of the social sciences.
- D. A broad look at the history of the social sciences shows that the first social science organization in the U.S. was founded by none other than Andrew D. White and colleagues, the American Social Science Association. It was an association of public intellectuals committed to giving sage policy advice to governments.
1. Two things broke it apart. First, the social scientists could not speak with one voice because they were deeply divided between conservative and socialist thinkers and engaged in constructive and necessary debates about social ideals. They were punished for these debates and intensely partisan university leaders supported the conservatives in the professions by selective purges. White himself made history by eventually firing a tenured faculty member at Cornell, Richard Ely, one of the most prominent socialist economists of his time, for his "socialist" beliefs.
 2. The ASSA was not connected directly to graduate education either and did not have a system for reproducing itself. Soon, in the 1880s, the ASSA began by breaking up into the AHA and the AEA and these associations were immediately linked to specialized graduate education, beginning at Johns Hopkins.
 3. In the first five years of the 20th century, the American Sociological Association, the American Political Science Association, and the American Anthropological Association emerged.
 4. All promised at their founding to be civically engaged, reformist social sciences at the service of the public interest and yet, by the 1930s, all had withdrawn professionally from that commitment, working hard to quell ideological disagreements within and to project an image of dispassionate professionalism and expertise without.
 5. As Michael suggests, the final blow came with the McCarthy hearings but these were only the latest of a long series of ideological purges that pushed activists out of the social science professional associations and academic

- centers of power.
6. To put this history bluntly, the self-referential, disengaged social sciences are an overdetermined outcome of the political economy of capitalist development as applied in academic settings. Civic engagement is not some forgotten focus, some modestly emphasized area within the academic professions. It was purged and remains on the outside.
 - a. Once the lesson was learned, these reformist attempts are held in check by the domesticated professionals themselves through self-referential and regressive peer structures and through having lost most relevant connections to the non-paying, non-academic constituencies for their work.
 - b. As a result, most social scientists not only are not interested in problems that interest civil society but they have severed most of the mechanisms by which they could even find out what those problems are by limiting their communications to their professional cadres.
 - c. Thus I don't agree that it "is the nature of the profession to constitute itself as the monopolist of obscure knowledge". I think the word "discipline" refers to the academic product of externally and internally imposed coercion that keeps the social science fields out of the faces of significant extra-academic powerholders.
 - d. And even these highly domesticated disciplines are routinely scourged by right wing ideologues to this day.
- IV. The four sociologies
- A. I think it is a good idea to differentiate professional practices in something like the way Michael does. His four sociologies, the professional, critical, policy, and public, are an interesting and diverse set.
 - B. Yet I would carry this differentiation farther and perhaps make it along a somewhat different set of lines, following Stephen Toulmin, Bent Flyvbjerg, and Olav Eikeland who both their work on Aristotle's distinctions between three kinds of knowledge: *episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis*.
 1. *Episteme* corresponds closely to what we now describe as theoretical knowledge. It is highly self-referential and is the property of a similarly educated peer group that is seeking "illumination" of the fundamental causes at work in the world.
 2. *Techne* corresponds closely to applied sociology, applied anthropology, public policy studies, and applied economics. This is a kind of mobilization of the findings and methods

- of the *episteme* workers in the service of what the professionals themselves define as the "good life," the life their "clients" should want to live or deserve to live. It reserves to experts the definition of the good life and the methods for achieving it.
3. *Phronesis* basically now corresponds to the miniscule field of action research in which professional social researchers and local stakeholders collaboratively define problems and goals, learn and practice research together, design actions to ameliorate social problems, and engage in social change processes as partners.
- C. While *episteme* and *techne* are represented in Michael's presentation, *phronesis*, with its leveling of disciplinary monopolies is missing, just as it is missing in the contemporary conventional and applied social sciences.
 - D. I believe that *phronesis* promotes a much more radical change of social science practices and disciplinary boundaries because collaboration with stakeholders in work on real world problems projects us into the swamp, into the complex, dynamic, multi-disciplinary messes that make up every day life, messes that were not created to provide neat problems for hermetic disciplines to solve. *Phronesis* practice reveals the degree to which the academic social sciences are product of academic Taylorism and its consequent and self-referential academicism.
- E. I also believe that *phronesis* practice could do a great deal to redress the evident loss of public support for much social science work but it would require radical behavioral and organizational change by the social scientists, the kind of change we see in the constant remaking of the scientific disciplines around new problems and in the dynamic creation of fields like cultural studies in the humanities but that we almost never see in the social sciences, the true home of disciplinary hermeticism.
- V. Finally
 - A. A point that Michael makes in passing should be emphasized even more. The social sciences rarely turn their attention to the analysis of the academy and we do even less work as researchers on the work organizations and ideologies that clearly dominate our lives.
 - B. The willed absence of this research, with the obvious exceptions like Bourdieu's scandal-producing studies of the French academy, should cause us to ask ourselves why we do not wish to or do not dare to study the conditions of our own work lives, particularly if we wish to engage in reform.

DAVID LEWIS

Professor of City and Regional Planning,
Director, Cornell Institute for Public Affairs

As one interested in policy and international development, I appreciate the call for

- a more public sociology
- a more intuitive sociology

Today's speaker has given us both

- a development model
- a typology to helping us think about the divisions of labor in sociology

The development model has three interrelated elements:

- economics
- politics
- culture or society

Of the three, economics has been most dominant in its influence on international development policy and planning (World Bank, USAID, etc.). This has caused instances and distortions of effort.

More recently there has been a growing recognition of the importance of politics (governmental transparency and accountability).

The third dimension, culture and society, has received less attention. Mr. Bush's experience in post-war Afghanistan and Iraq is teaching us how dangerous this can be. We can't deal with development, discipline by discipline.

The typology for examining the division of labor within sociology is particularly useful. Moreover, it can be helpful in looking at phenomenon well beyond the sociology discipline.

Cornell is a particular place where the "applied arts" of engineering and agriculture were given recognition comparable to the humanities. Over time this has evolved and we now have several disciplines represented in several different colleges. My own department of City and Regional Planning is a microcosm of academic, applied, public, and critical interest.

Cornell's former president, F.T.H. Rhodes, is often quoted as having said, "Cornell should be a Land Grant University to the world", teaching, research, outreach or extension that would be intrinsically useful.

There is always a tension over resources, relevance, and credibility. Faculty are ostensibly hired to teach, to carry major administrative burdens, but then they are evaluated for tenure primarily on the basis of research published in academic journals.

The model worked for many years, but the cultural context has now changed:

- greater emphasis on measurable outputs
- more research moving to private sector
 - private firms (e.g., engineering)
 - think tanks
- New problems demand research
 - HIV/AIDS
 - environment

This brings me back to the role of public sociology.

- Sociology is tied to society and this is shifting from country to country. Public sociology has a crucial role in informing academic society of fundamental assumptions:

“connecting sociology to society in which it appears”

- commit U.S. sociology to broader world
- link sociology to other disciplines

Growing initiatives of developing countries (Cancun) also need to be recognized as major agency items. There is a need for new engagements

The interactive character of Public Sociology can make identification of basic assumptions possible in new culture. I would ask our speaker to comment on how to do this.

I have four comments on Burawoy’s framework::

- ideal types are heuristic devices
- people are in more than one cell
- interdependent (organic)
- What is the domination of the professional

➤ **I commend Burawoy for connecting sociology to the public sphere, and for making sociology relevant to the rest of the world.**

Each social science discipline has its own niche.

Economics → market

Sociology → society particularly civil society connecting economy to state

Today: global civil society emerging but how does this affect local civil societies?

Sociologists hold the tyranny of market and government at bay

MAX PFEFFER

Professor of Development Sociology, Associate Director of the Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station

I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to Michael Burawoy for acknowledging and affirming the importance of public sociology.

The legitimacy of and support for public sociology, and public scholarship more generally, depend on a variety of factors including the sanction of professional organizations.

It is an interesting time to talk about public scholarship—a number of forces encourage such work and others create constraints on it.

Certainly we need to take into consideration macro-level factors like state policies toward higher education and research.

One senses, especially in the current period of economic contraction, that we are in the midst of an extended period of reduced public funding for higher education. This tendency has all sorts of implications for the operation of universities, including impact on the prospects for engaging in public scholarship.

Many scholars in research universities like Berkeley and Cornell rely heavily on outside support for their work, and I would be interested to know Michael’s thoughts on the implications for public scholarship of changes in funding streams.

I believe that trends in the form and expectations of funding create both opportunities for, and constraints on, public scholarship.

Funding increasingly comes with specifications regarding the purpose and content of the research. This pattern may be expected with private sector funds, but it is also true of publicly funded grant programs that increasingly have targeted requests for proposals.

Often the calls for proposals are intended to address issues with clear policy relevance. Such conditions pose particular challenges to what Michael calls professional sociology. Is it relevant to the immediate concerns posed in the solicitation for research proposals?

But these targeted funding streams, by pre-determining the research area or problem also restrict the potential for civic inputs into problem selection and definition, as well as the actual conduct of research, thus limiting the range and type of public scholarship that may take place, and in this way challenge our ability to engage in a more participatory public scholarship.

On the other hand, some funders demand that research show clear public benefit, stakeholder input, and outreach that applies the results of the funded research -- such conditions clearly increase the incentive for scholarship generally to more directly address public concerns and engage with the public.

I wonder, on balance, are opportunities for public scholarship growing or are they diminishing?

Closer to home, I wonder if our local academic institutions provide a sound foundation for the conduct of public scholarship.

Both Cornell and the University of California System are land grant

institutions that grew out of populist calls for scholarship to meet the practical needs of people.

Land grant universities have well over a century of experience in pursuing the populist mission, but in the course of that history our economy has gone from an agricultural to a post-industrial one; civil society has been changed by the civil rights movement and the social movements that followed its lead.

Have these public institutions evolved with the times in ways that they remain a distinctive and vital base from which we can embark on public scholarship? I am interested in Michael's thoughts on this question.

Finally, I wonder what challenges and opportunities for public scholarship emerge from devolution and the growing role of non-governmental organizations in promoting public welfare.

This change is perhaps most visible in poor country development programs, but is also of growing importance at the local level in the U.S.

NGOs that operate at the local level can play a key role in mobilizing civil society, promoting more equitable development, and assuring fair decision making.

What are the implications of these developments for public scholarship? Is this the environment in which public scholarship thrives?

Perhaps this is an opportunity for the critical sociology identified by Michael to be applied to public scholarship.

For example, is the public scholar prepared to engage with civil society in a

way that does not exploit the scholar's privileged position of expert?

What is the appropriate role of the scholar "as scholar" in civic affairs? These questions take us back to age-old questions about the appropriate role of academicians in politics, but I think in present times the work of the public scholar, as expert, may be less legitimate in the eyes of the public than in times past.

In summary, Michael's stimulating lecture spurred me to raise these questions:

- 1) How do changes in the nature of funding for university research affect public scholarship?
- 2) Do land grant universities offer a distinctive, vital, and supportive institutional base for the conduct of public scholarship?
- 3) What is the impact on public scholarship of the growing importance of civil society organizations in providing for public welfare?

Michael, thank you very much for sharing your insights with us today.



CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN CORNELL FACULTY MEMBERS AND MICHAEL BURAWOY

David Brown to Michael Burawoy

I'm sending you this e-mail to respond to several points in your presentation/paper (which I assume is a first step toward your ASA presidential address). Actually, you are still here in Ithaca as I write this, but since you'll have plenty to carry home I thought it would be better to send my comments electronically.

- 1) Policy sociologists have more agency than you acknowledge. While it is true that they have a client list relationship with their funding sources, my experience is that agency sociologists have ways of (a) influencing what their sponsors ask for, and (b) bootstrapping what they believe is important onto their agency's official agenda. In addition, like the other three categories, this one is diverse. Sociologists at the Census Bureau, NCES, USDA-Economic Research Service [yes, there are 8-10 there], etc., have long-term research agendas in addition to responding to requests for analysis of specific issues. These longer term agendas are often motivated by disciplinary concerns [check out Larry Long's work at the Census Bureau for example]. Of course, ultimately there is an unequal power relationship, and the person who controls the purse strings can pull out the rug. In contrast, "beltway bandits" do what the RFP asks them to do, and probably have much less to say about shaping the direction of their work. And, political changes over time can alter the prospects for

self-initiated work within agencies. Bottom line, I recommend that you unpack this category somewhat to acknowledge its diversity.

- 2) I agree with one of your discussants (Davydd, I think?) that you should reconsider using the label "professional." All four types are professionals, and this will be insulting to three that are not included. I don't know what to recommend in its place. "Academic" would also insult the critical group who often also conduct disciplinary scholarship. Similarly, policy analysts often publish scholarly works [I published my first book while working for USDA]. While I don't know what to recommend in its place, I have a strong gut feeling that "professional" will not help you communicate your message.
- 3) Issues of power between the various sociologies should receive more attention. There is a fair amount of boundary maintenance, especially between professional [and probably critical] and policy, public. My observation is that professional sociologists seek to elevate their status by regulating membership. [Maybe this is simply my Cornell Development Sociology paranoia?]
- 4) Working in the interdisciplinary message will be difficult. There are two issues here: (a) how to strengthen the discipline, and (b) how to engage in interdisciplinary work. My own

opinion is that many questions would benefit from interdisciplinary analysis, but sociology has to have something important to offer the other disciplines before we can engage in constructive interdisciplinary work. If we don't have our house in order we will not be taken seriously by the other disciplines, and we won't be able to engage in egalitarian partnerships. This is a problem when working together with other social sciences, but it is magnified when we try to work with physical or biological scientists (on issues like environmental management, food security, etc). We end up cleaning up the mess after the fact [why did the green revolution fail?]. We need to be equal partners right from the get go.

- 5) I recommend that you give more thought to how institutional location influences the possibilities for conducting public sociology (and is influenced by public sociology). One of the questions we will consider next month in our workshop is "How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain opportunities for doing public sociology? What might the ideal institutional context for doing public sociology look like?"

Well, that's about it. As you know, each of our five research working groups is preparing brief written responses to three questions about public sociology for our November 1 workshop. I would be glad to share their work with you if you are interested.

Thanks again for a great presentation. We will be chewing on this for a while.



Douglas Gurak's Response to David Brown's Response to Burawoy

David,

Very good comments. Here are a few more to chew on. On point 2 MB could justifiably respond that he is not classifying Sociologists, but rather Sociologies. In this light the use of Professional is probably appropriate and even optimal. Indeed, he emphasized this distinction in his presentation.

Clearly, people who tend to emphasize the critical perspective (or policy or public) can utilize theories, procedures, assumptions, etc., that are normally associated with Professional Sociology. Similarly, people whose core interests are in issues of interest to those in the Profession, can operate in complex ways (e.g., use or not use methods not highly respected (or are highly respected) by most in the Profession, venture into critical or policy or public domains, etc.). Professional is meant to suggest that something is of core interest to the profession (perhaps in general or in the sense of a dominance hierarchy). I think he should retain his terminology and merely footnote the position that Professional is not being used in the sense of an antonym of "amateur".

To my mind, the biggest weakness in MB's presentation was the lack of an effort to establish the need for more Public Sociology, much less the nature of that need. Is it just to get more public recognition? Will it give us more influence? Could it redirect the

substantive focuses of the Profession?
Should it?

His reference to the pervasiveness of public sociology on a small scale (*e.g.*, when we talk to neighbors, the school board, etc., or serve on public bodies is also perplexing. It is not clear that we are practicing public sociology just because we do public things and happen to be sociologists. What might render such public interventions "public sociology"? Could there be any consensus on the proper practice of such a micro-public-sociology? Or is this just a call for Sociologist to run for mayor (or school board, etc.) of the municipalities?



Paul Eberts to Michael Burawoy

First, thank you for coming to our Polson Institute program and making such a provocative presentation. I also want to add something else to David's and Doug's comments. I was puzzled that you did not more closely define the core of sociology as something we have to contribute that is not used (much, if at all) by social scientists other than sociologists. Since the term "society" is so vague, it does not do it for me. And, "culture" in my judgment is more anthropology than sociology (only a few sociologists use it much anymore, even if it is coming back into vogue).

Based on my own work, as a sometime (largely?) public sociologist concerned with outreach of university thinking and research to the general public as well as to policymakers, I have decided the core contributions of sociology are to focus on 1) "stratification-differentiation-equality" (and its [their] consequences and/or other implications for people, institutions,

communities, associations, organizations, power, change); 2) institutions (in their great variety yet central focus or "unity" on key values in their "localities" (even if localities can also be whole societies), as well as their consequences and other implications...); and 3) development (and its consequences and implications, especially for life-quality and well-being in a variety of ways...).

Stratification and institutions, of course, are also the guts of most intro soc textbooks. I also find that "development" is a real "hook" for conversation and discussion with people and policymakers. Once the hook is set, though, then we quickly return to issues of strat-equality (the latter a core value of American and Western democracy) and institutions and their capabilities for change.

I think the paper/talk could be improved if the contribution of sociology to public and policy sociology would be more adequately articulated along these lines, especially to see your own "stance" on this issue, since the issue itself is somewhat controversial.

I also believe the typology needs some re-formulation, but have little to offer on this issue. The dimension of "technical and reflexive" seems somewhat vague and ad hoc, as do the terms "professional" and "critical," each of which has several meanings within sociology. For example, is technical-reflexive really a single dimension, or is it a typology in itself? And, if the latter, what are the dimensions underlying the typology of which technical and reflexive are types?

I believe it would help us all if you would give this issue of the basis for the vertical axis in your typology is clarified. Are the "pattern variables" of Talcott Parsons any

help? Universal-Specific, especially? or General-Particular?

By the way, thanks for considering "audience" as an essential dimension in a policy-relevant typology. Most sociologists probably do not give the idea of alternative audiences *any* thought, even the few of us who try to influence policymakers. (By the way, not to be cynical, but most policymakers, in my experience, know little about academic or professional sociology *per se* [e.g., in terms of stratification-equality and its consequences in and on communities] and care about it even less.)

Finally, the boundaries in the cells of the typology are frequently crossed by the same individuals (e.g., the work of James Coleman, as well as others). This could be emphasized a bit more. Some of us get labeled as in a single cell (especially by those in the "critical" cell toward those in an "applied" public sociology cell), and then are "dismissed" as, e.g., "Oh, he or she is (merely) "applied" as if we are by definition not being, ever, in any other cell, and, indeed, *incapable* of being anything else. It's almost like being "type-cast." It hurts our whole profession in my judgment. We need more role models like you and James Coleman, and to publicize both your/his/their efforts (even if I also am critical of Coleman's theoretical efforts).



Tom Hirschl to Michael Burawoy

Thanks so much for coming to Cornell this past weekend. It was my pleasure to spend time with you and to hear about your new activities.

I am writing to comment on your paper about public sociology, in particular your assertion that critical sociology provides the discipline with moral voice. This statement goes to the heart of a concern I have about American sociology that sociologists lack a persuasive moral voice.

During your Polson address you appeared to argue that critical (or Marxist) logic provides the framework for such a voice. I believe that this is wishful thinking on your part, and is refuted by the obvious isolation of critical sociology from the mainstream of American social and political discourse. My own thinking is that critical sociologists need not pay this price, but that they do so largely because of their own sociological ignorance.

It has become clear to me that effective moral voice must be properly contextualized by the cultural context from which it is spoken. For a voice to be effectively perceived, it must have the proper points of reference. These reference points vary quite dramatically, and are not the same in the United States compared to the various European countries.

In order to give you some positive sense of my thinking, I relate how I tackle this problem in the context of my department's 101 course, "Introduction to Sociology." I begin with two critiques of Weber's Protestant ethic, an excellent starting point. First, I argue that the most influential thinker of the Reformation was not Calvin but rather Adam Smith. This argument is supported by the attached exegesis (Glenna 2002) which details Smith's theory that markets transubstantiate self-interest into public good. Second, I describe Douglass North's (1963; also Fogel and Engerman 1989) economic historical argument suggesting that slavery was the starting point for

North American capitalism. This helps to explain why the US is stratified by race and class, and also to contextualize a moral alternative to marketism: the (post-Watts) theology and social thought of Martin Luther King, Jr.

This dual critique of Weber furnishes the course with two legitimate and divergent moral voices germane to American society. Both are related to the Reformation aptly described by Weber, and each can be assessed using social scientific tools.

Of course this is just one example and there is much more to discuss. I close the letter by saying that I look forward to your presidential address with great interest.

References

North, Douglass C. 1961. *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790-1860*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Fogel, Robert William and Stanley L. Engerman. 1989. *Time on the cross: the economics of American Negro slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton



WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY
November 1, 2003



October 28, 2003

This year's Polson Institute workshop will focus on the issue of "public sociology." The workshop will begin at 9:00 on Saturday morning, November 1, and will conclude with dinner and dancing that evening. Similar to last year, part of the workshop will be comprised of plenary sessions and part will consist of breakout groups that "mix and match" individuals with different interests and perspectives.

The planning committee, made up of representatives of the Institute's five research working groups (RWG), has identified 3 questions to spark the discussion (see below). Each working group is preparing brief written responses to these questions, and these responses will be circulated to the Institute's affiliates prior to the workshop. However, since not all Institute affiliates participate in one of the RWGs, it is important that all of us give some thought to these questions. In addition, Michael Burawoy's Polson lecture, "Public Sociologies in a Global Context", is food for thought. His lecture, and responses to it by several Development Sociology faculty members are now on the Institute's web site.

Questions to stimulate discussion of "Public Sociology:

1. To what extent does your RWG's intellectual project have public implications? How does a concern for public sociology affect the types of questions your RWG examines (note: the same question could be asked of each of us as individual scholars).
2. How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG's opportunities to do public sociology? What might the "ideal" institutional context for doing public sociology look like?
3. How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

I want to emphasize that this workshop is open to all of the Institute's affiliates regardless of whether one participates in a RWG. I also want to indicate that one of the workshop's objectives (in fact, one of the Institute's objectives) is to stimulate discussion among persons with divergent perspectives and substantive interests. Accordingly, the break out sessions will be an opportunity to get to know how a diverse set of people approaches the issue of public sociology. I hope to see everyone there. Mary Wright will send an invitation with a RSVP so that we can plan the food and refreshments.

David Brown

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE WORKSHOP

DISPLACEMENT RESEARCH WORKING GROUP



To what extent does your RWG's intellectual project have public implications? Does being a public sociologist affect the types of questions your RWG examines?

The displacement analytic is (for some of us) a power analytic and therefore clearly engages us in questions which have social implications. But rather than equating social implications with predefined 'publics', the displacement analytic necessitates reflexive attention to the power dynamics involved in the constitution of publics and privates. Not only is this distinction problematic, but the very notion of public/private segregates and displaces. Being a distinction or separation that goes back years and spans almost all social space (today), it is a profoundly powerful form of dislocation. Who is "in" and who is "out" is decided by power relations. The displacement analytic leads us to ask questions about processes of exclusion/inclusion, obliging us to consider who becomes excluded (and included), by whom and through what particular practices of rule/control and, finally, whose interests are served through such practices. This is more transparent when displacement plays out in terms of race, gender, religion, age,

cultural identity, rights, and other familiar tags. However, it is not so transparent when it comes to public-private since both labels have their defenders. Unlike many other "in/out" distinctions, public-private is not really two arenas of power but one, and sociology has years of insight into how the one represents itself as two, reifies this distinction, and constructs complex realities and social relations around it. For example, the private sector generates wealth; the public sector taxes the private sector to survive; we draft our youth to do public service and pay them (value them) less for this work; private property is the "highest and best use" of land and things; public goods are vulnerable and suspect; public office is venal and rarely to be trusted; private power is okay whereas public power needs checks and balances; cumulatively, private interest is in the public good, etc.

Rather than asking how being a 'public sociologist' affects the kinds of questions our RWG examines, we would therefore suggest reversing the order of this question: how do the kinds of questions which the displacement RWG examines suggest ways of thinking about 'public sociology' as grounded in social and historical processes? The following kinds of hard and systematic public-private questions bring forward the ways in which the displacement analytic might query the construction of publics and privates, and how our scholarly

engagements in social relationships are represented in these terms:

- The transition from “traditional” to “modern” societies with emphasis on human experience and social relations before the public-private distinction became embedded. What preceded it? What motivated it? What normalized it? Were the Great Transformation(s) about public-private divides and distinctions?
- The “public” sphere follows (?) from “the state” thinking & negotiating. The interactions and evolution of this relationship. Were there private states (and are there)? Where did they go? Are some states private but dressed in public robes?
- The relationship between civil society about “public” values. How did the public come to be sovereign over the private when theories of sovereignty start with popular (private individual) sovereignty? In what sense is (or can be) civil society a third force (a la Giddens and others)? Are there other “others” beside public and private?
- The history and change of gendered “public” and “private.” Are there further distinctions in society that carry public-private baggage and, equally interesting, why? Do economic “private” and “public” stigmas carry over into the social and cultural?
- Public goods and public bads. If deconstructed by sociologists, what do these labels mean, who uses them, and how valid are they? What happens when we take power into account in this image-making? Under what conditions does “the public

sector” take responsibility for preventing exclusion and displacement?

- What is the difference between public and private ownership, particularly over time? Is displacement from one the same as the other? Why is control of the latter by the former considered an illegitimate “takings” but the reverse isn’t true? What kinds of ownership exist that are neither public nor private and what kind of social relations give rise to them?

How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG’s opportunities to do public sociology? What might the “ideal” institutional context for doing public sociology look like?

The RWG is located in a department which is rooted in the tradition of extension service, associated with the land grant system. This "applied" dimension suggests a more engaged interaction with the "public"; however, our interaction with the extension program is quite limited.

But this is not to suggest that the academic setting of the RWG prevents us from doing public sociology, if public sociology is taken to mean a sociology of displacement (amongst other projects) which can help us to explore the very constitution of the "public" and the "private". In fact, the institutional context of the academia can often provide a space for critical analysis that may not be available at other sites such as policy institutions and NGOs. However, we feel that within academia, there is a need for developing deeper links between disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, law, and planning, to fully explore the "sociology" of displacement. The RWG has also been involved in researching ways in which

displacement has come to be "publicly" constructed and dealt with, by policy institutions such as the Brookings Institution.

How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

In the context of neoliberal economic reform, the rise of a globalization project, and particularly in relation to the rise of a post-9/11 international security regime, understanding the distinction between public and private is more important than ever. The very notion of public/private segregates and displaces. Being a distinction or separation that goes back years and spans almost all social space (today), it is a profoundly powerful form of dislocation. A sociology of displacement critically grapples with the public/private distinction in all its myriad forms – addressing everything questions of citizenship and rights to recent territorial transformations associated with social, political, and economic change. It can help in understanding the public/private distinction as an ongoing process of exclusion and boundary-making as well as an often unquestioned argument of legitimation. Understanding it as such can help unsettle critiques which legitimize everything from the ongoing privatization of public space to global military projects operating for private profit in the name of the public good.

The sociology of displacement explored by the Displacement RWG, then, can open debates over public and private. It can do this by exposing the hidden costs of projects carried out in the name of a "public good" and by questioning the constitution of public/private, the division of social space into these seemingly

autonomous spheres, and the recombinations of these spheres for political and economic gain (e.g., the Corporate University). A critical evaluation of the public/private distinction then necessarily engages with debates and projects at different institutional levels. By denaturalizing the public/private relationship, can help to shift the ground on which these debates are carried out.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS RESEARCH WORKING GROUP



To what extent does your RWG's intellectual project have public implications? Does being a public sociologist affect the types of questions your RWG examines?

Social movements are collective projects that often seek to incorporate or address at least some portions of the 'public'. No matter their ideological orientation, in contemporary society they will often be subject to media interpretation of their goals and strategies. For this reason the researcher's analysis of a movement's history, membership, strategies and organization may not only resonate within the ranks of the movement (if the researcher shares the 'results' of his/her study) but also within its broader representation. Those members of our RWG who see themselves as somehow

engaged with the movement they study, as members and/or as actors who are sympathetic with the government's goals, may thus select their choice of question and 'case' study with some recognition that certain lines of inquiry will be more effective in advancing the movement than others. In this sense, our RWG views research that advances the goals of *extant* movements as expressing part of our intellectual project, namely, to link research to public issues and their resolution via collective action.

The other part of our intellectual project is to study social movements as expressions, and agents, of the particular historical conjuncture under examination. We believe that social orders are constructed as much by movements of resistance to powerful discursive and institutional forces as those forces themselves. Studying such movements provides a dialectical lens on the making and remaking of what comes to be represented as the 'public', and indeed the 'private'. In this sense, our work has both analytic and applied dimensions. Drawing on certain insights of 'post-structuralism,' we recognize that our relation to the subject matter we study influences how we select our questions and approaches. We may even go so far as to employ our location within a broader public, including our ability to access particular communities or policy-making circles via academic position and networks, to construct an engaged research project.

How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG's opportunities to do *public sociology*? What might the "ideal" institutional context for doing public sociology look like?

The Social Movements Research Working Group's location in the Polson Institute

within Cornell University both enhances and constrains opportunities to do public sociology. The university provides opportunities to engage in debate and dialogue as sites of knowledge production. The Social Movements RWG members seek to develop an intellectual project that both contributes to an interdisciplinary approach to the study of social movements, and also creates bridges between the institution and social movements 'on the ground,' enhancing the opportunity for public sociology and critical political intervention about the ways and reasons to study movements. The graduate student conference our working group held in spring 2003 on new approaches the study of social movements, and the involvement by several of our members in last year's World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, were efforts towards these goals. There is a tension that often arises within academia between scholarship and activism, related to the perceived incompatibility of the roles of 'scholar' and 'activist'. Our understanding of research as an inherently political endeavor contrasts with the conventional social scientific approach of treating social movements from a purportedly objective perspective.

The position of the working group and the researcher in the university can also constrain the ability to do public sociology. In addition to the difficulty of getting activists involved in academic activities, academics often tend to not take their contributions seriously. This may originate from the difference in project, where the academic's may be scholarship and the activists may be direct social change, or it may stem from past relationships where researchers exploit the subject for research purposes, publish, and move on from the specific movement that was studied to the next topic. A critical

positional difference here is the privileged ability of the researcher to 'move on,' while those engaged in daily struggle do not always have this choice. A second concern is the consequence of the research undertaken by the academic because it can undermine or endanger social movements by reinscribing the very social relations that it is trying to uncover (e.g. western feminist representations of 'third' world women) or revealing strategies and information that assists oppositional forces in the elimination of the movement. Finally, just as the university context may provide a wealth of resources for public sociology, it can also be a constraint, especially if a subject being studied lacks available funding.

The location of the SMRWG in another institutional context offers many of the same enhancements and constraints for public sociology. Research institutes (think tanks) and NGOs offer the resources and capability for research, as well as the opportunity for sharing it with the public. This is not always the case for NGOs, where funding may be lacking, demonstrating that certain research settings and/or institutions are privileged spaces for knowledge production. Perhaps even more so than university professors, departments, and institutes, NGOs and think tanks can impact policy and social issues by directly engaging in dialogue with the government or other entities. They may also be more directly linked to specific movements or causes. A major constraint, just as for academics, is that their employees also conduct research that may not help the research subjects. Acknowledging the difficult debate over the position of the researcher in relation to social movements, there may be no real ideal institutional context for doing public sociology on social movements unless several factors are accounted for. There

must be an awareness of the position of the researcher, the impact the research may have, and a discussion of the costs and benefits to the movement being studied. If all of these are taken into consideration, then universities and other institutions can all be ideal contexts.

As pointed out by Burawoy and others, structures of academic recognition outside the United States are often influenced by the publishing priorities of US academia. This is so because of the larger academic audience reading English-language publications, the fact that US institutions train a large proportion of international PhDs, and that some academic ranking procedures, for instance in Latin America, require publications in US journals as a condition for tenure. On this point, we discussed the significance of linguistic 'translation' to both the projects of academia and collective action; the elimination of certain languages from the US academic debate may severely limit our conceptualization of not only 'social movements', but also of what constitutes 'public sociology'. Public universities in various 'developing' countries, as well as Europe, have been key sites of social movement mobilization and have themselves been important interpreters of local movements onto the global stage – for example, the summer of '68 in France and the central university in Peru as the birth-place of the Shining Path movement. US universities have been less involved in mobilization, and more involved in observation and interpretation, although campuses have been sites of student movement.

Despite its land grant status, Cornell's physical setting reflects the quintessential ivory tower.

How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

We believe the particular historical context we are in is partly defined by social movement activity. Given that, we argue that our research is necessarily public sociology as it directly addresses social currents and power relations that constitute and define the world-historical conjuncture. For example, our research on the Plan Pueblo Panama, or representations of indigenous rights, or resistance to corporate monopolization of resources, or movements to enhance conceptions of citizenship, raises questions about the interactions between movements and systems of governance and corporate power. While the cases themselves are distinct, together they contribute to an understanding of how the 'public' is being defined and redefined, and, therefore what a public sociology at this historical conjuncture may involve. In this sense, our various individual research projects, and our collective research project, shed light on institutional developments and contribute to debates about their meaning, their social impact, and their sustainability.

POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND ENVIRONMENT



To what extent does your RWG's intellectual project have public implications? Does being a public sociologist affect the types of questions your RWG examines?

Our multi-disciplinary and institutional working group has attempted to identify public policy problems with a clear need for applied scholarship. Through group deliberations we have identified two related issues with widespread impacts on people and the physical environment:

- Development project such as construction of transportation networks in the Amazon
- Land use/land cover change associated with human settlements in frontier areas of the Amazon

Our group strategy has been to find research funding to address issues related to these broad areas of interest. In the past year we have succeeded in winning a research award from the National Institutes of Health, Fogarty International Center Program on Health, Environment and Economic Development. With this funding a sub-group within the RWG with collaborators at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil and Princeton University will engage in applied research on the public health effects of development and environmental change in the Brazilian Amazon. The research will address the following research questions:

- How do land use/covers changes in frontier areas of Brazilian Amazonia impact human health? Specifically, what are the risks of malaria transmission related to specific changes in the landscape, and how do these risks vary over time and across space?

- How do social networks, organizational structure, social stratification, and government (local, state or national) programs influence the effectiveness of health care providers in dealing with regional health problems like malaria?

How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG's opportunities to do public sociology? What might the "ideal" institutional context for doing public sociology look like?

Our approach to these public problems is framed by our institutional setting. Our partners are academics, we have developed a research proposal based on our academic interests, our research proposal was reviewed and selected for funding by a panel of academic peers, and the funding for this research comes from the U.S. government agency that is the largest single source of funding for academic research in the U.S. It is important to note that NIH funding also tends to be oriented to applied problems related to public health, thus enabling the kind of public scholarship we have proposed. On the other hand, the framing of the problems and the peer review were heavily oriented toward our contribution to academic knowledge, without direct inputs from a broader public. While our proposal has explicit plans for local public engagement in the conduct of our research and dissemination of its results, an ideal approach to public scholarship would involve the public in problem identification, articulation of research questions, and selection of methodologies most appropriate to addressing the questions at hand. Ideally, academic institutions would provide incentives for engagement with the public and make involvement in public scholarship an important academic evaluation criteria.

How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

The public scholarship we are embarking on is directly related to issues situated in the contemporary historical context. Economic development is part of the broader strategy of the Brazilian state to situate itself within global markets and to address domestic problems of resource distribution and socio-economic inequality. At the local level, these efforts can play out in different ways depending on the nature of local social organization. Thus, the problems we address in our work are defined in the context of real people coping with real problems and aiming for real solutions. Institutionally, there is support for such work as evidenced in funding provided for the Health, Environment and Economic Development Program of the Fogarty International Center by the National Institutes of Health. It is important to note that at Cornell we are housed in a department whose roots are in the Land Grant tradition that historically has supported research and education to serve the practical needs of people. Finally, our Brazilian collaborators have a long tradition of influencing public policy and informing broader audiences at the local, regional, and national levels. In this context, we have the opportunity to engage in scholarship multiple audiences which constitute a broader public outside the academy. Our challenge is to fully embrace that opportunity and to conduct research of some practical value.

FOOD SYSTEMS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY



To what extent does your RWG's intellectual project have public implications? Does being a public sociologist affect the types of questions your RWG examines?

The vast physical and psychological distance that has been created between the consumer and food production in the modern industrialized agro-food system creates a disconnect between the general public and the nutritional, social, and environmental effects that arise from the way food is grown and eaten. This disconnect allows the real consequences of the industrial agro-food system to often remain hidden from public view.

Contemporary large-scale industrial agriculture has taken the shape of a horizontally and vertically integrated system in which power and control have become centralized as the number of producers, distributors, and retailers decrease in number and diversity.

Consumers are finding themselves with less control over what they eat and how they eat it, while producers find themselves with less control over what is produced and how it is produced.

Our RWG's intellectual project has public implications first and foremost because we are situated within the land grant system, which uses public subsidies to support research that provides information and tools to further the public interest. The

study of agro-food issues from within the land grant system presents researchers with an added responsibility as the land grant system is one of the major architects B along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and agri-business corporations - of the modern industrial agro-food system. We believe that it is our responsibility to insure that the role played by the land grant system in the further development of modern agro-food system serves the public interest. It is our goal to build interconnections between production and consumption that promote equitable, sustainable, and sound agriculture and food policies that are responsive to the needs of the local, national, and global public.

Further public implications of our RWG's intellectual project are especially apparent in the environmental, social, and health related threats presented by a global industrial agro-food regime. The global industrial agro-food model, which is supported, enforced and promoted by international institutions and agreements, is inherently injurious to the environment and citizens for many reasons:

- The destruction and pollution of our water, soil, and air resources are caused by industrial agriculture's dependence upon the increasing use of pesticides and chemicals.
- Local, self-reliant food systems that provide a secure food supply and rural livelihoods are being replaced by corporate control over farm inputs, energy, commodity prices, food production, and food marketing.
- The industrial agro-food model has brought about a decrease in the

biodiversity among plants, animals, and insects, thereby creating monocultures.

- Diseases of overconsumption and underconsumption threaten the global population simultaneously.
- Biopollution, in the form of genetically modified plants and organisms, destroys biodiversity and brings with it unknown dangers.
- Corporations are taking the control over and access to the essential elements of life from local communities.
- Local, national, and international food security and food safety is threatened.
- The welfare, well-being, and culture of rural communities are being eroded.
- Governments negotiate the rules and policies of international agro-food trade through international institutions such as the WTO, IMF, and the World Bank, but they are most often crafted and designed to benefit large corporations at the expense of the environment and people.

The inherent political nature of the agro-food system and the concealed consequences of the global industrial agro-food model drives the kinds of questions our RWG asks.

Our RWG's intellectual project is dedicated to uncovering the contradictions and tensions inherent in the modern agro-food system and the world-wide challenges to the ideology of such a system. We are committed to exploring the ways the modern food system

threatens our health, our environment, and our quality of life, as well as, exploring alternatives that emphasize local control, local production systems, food as a human right rather than a commodity, cropping systems that enhance rather than deplete soil fertility and biodiversity, and alternative trade regimes.

How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG's opportunities to do public sociology? What might the "ideal" institutional context for doing public sociology look like?

The Agriculture and Food Systems working group benefits from its location in an institution of higher learning, particularly a land grant university like Cornell. One of the core missions of land grant universities is to engage in agriculture and food systems research and outreach. Consequently, there are financial and organizational resources at Cornell that are dedicated to both basic and applied research. Furthermore, there are opportunities for interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary work with other social scientists, nutritionists, and faculty in the production agriculture departments. The composition of the Agriculture and Food Systems RWG is composed of faculty and students from several different departments and divisions.

The Cooperative Extension Service is designed to transfer knowledge to the public. As such it is an ideal vehicle for doing public sociology. An excellent example of how public sociology related to agriculture and food issues is delivered at Cornell is the Community Food and Agriculture Program (CFAP). The publication *Growing Home* by Joanna Green and Duncan Hilchey, is grounded in sociology. Not only is this publication being widely distributed, it is also as a core text for a Professional Development

training grant funded by Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education. This grant is taking public sociology to 25 agriculture development professionals in the Northeast.

While the land grant university may not be the 'ideal' venue for doing public sociology, we do not know of another institutional context that has the resources and provides the opportunities to widely disseminate the findings from our RWG. Perhaps independent think tanks would be an alternative.

How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

This working group was constituted as such largely due to the current historical context in which issues surrounding agriculture and food take center stage in policy debates at every level. From community movements and civic agriculture to global trade policy, the urgency of agricultural issues has compelled activists, policy makers, and academics to address the pressing issue of food sovereignty from many different angles. Sociologists make up a small minority of those addressing these issues, but we are uniquely equipped with the tools to examine the contentious relations of the global food system.

The recent convergence of activism around food and agriculture has opened new spaces for research, and particularly for our working group, to engage in public sociology. For us, food and agriculture cannot be disassociated from the political contexts of community, nation, and global order, and therefore these issues are *necessarily* public. Community agriculture

movements connect consumption directly with production in ways that challenge corporate control over the food system and create important economic, educational, and social resources in the community. National farmer organizations that lobby in Washington *against* the large commodity groups provide farmers (as opposed to only agribusiness) with a voice in government. Global farmer and peasant movements force international organizations to grapple with issues of food sovereignty. Our working group endeavors to address social problems at all of these levels and to contribute to, not merely to analyze, the movements and organizations that bring these issues to the table.

At the individual level, the scourge of malnutrition wrought by decades of misguided policies is grotesquely contrasted with the epidemic of obesity in industrialized countries and the resulting proliferation of fad diets and eating disorders. What and how we eat has become a matter of international debate. At the community level, rising concerns over food safety and sustainability have eroded trust in the corporate, mechanized food system and prompted a revival of local food systems, farmers markets, and community supported agriculture. In turn, the rising demand for organic food has prompted a response by large corporations that now increasingly offer "organic" alternatives, and this raises a whole new set of issues and contradictions for civic agriculture. At the global level, agriculture has become the ammunition for both social movements and governments of developing countries to take aim at the protectionism and market manipulation of the industrialized north. Agriculture was responsible for the failure of the most recent WTO ministerial in Cancun, and the success of FTAA talks

hinge on progress being made toward resolving the agricultural disputes between north and south. Because it is essential for all human life, agriculture has become an arena where citizens can stake a legitimate claim to self-determination in the face of radical power asymmetries.

The members of our working group span the entire spectrum of issues illustrated above. We study nutrition, civic agriculture, community food systems, national farm policy, and the global food regime. Because food and agriculture are at the heart of local, national, and global agendas we are uniquely situated to begin to understand the ways in which these “levels” are not discrete, and to make connections in our own and each others’ work that reveal the complexity of the food system in this particular historical conjuncture.

RURAL POLICY, RURAL DISADVANTAGE AND CITIZENSHIP



To what extent does your RWG’s intellectual project have public implications? Does being a public sociologist affect the types of questions your RWG examines?

While not wanting to fixate on Burawoy’s distinction between public and policy sociology, we have a particular concern

with the role of sociology in the policy arena. Burawoy’s concept of public sociology includes only civil society – not policy. His definition of policy sociology treats sociologists as apologists for policy – reactive at best – not designers. Burawoy’s notion of public sociology was of synergy and collaboration between sociologists and the public, but he denies such a partnership between sociologists and policy makers. This may be why sociologists are largely considered irrelevant to policy debates. We sit on the outside and critique. Policy sociologists, however, often have *agency* in influencing research and policy agendas. In reality, sociologists such as Wilson, Coleman and Massey who have had effective impact on policy change have taken a more collaborative and proscriptive stance (what he suggests for public sociology but denies for policy sociology). Preferring to view “public” sociology as collaborative with both the public and policy makers, we believe research/policy cooperation between academia and policy makers both domestically and internationally is desirable.

Our project has important public implications because it looks at the role of government directly. Our concern with regional policy and rural disadvantage becomes more difficult to achieve, however, in an environment increasingly focused on the competitive state. There is public responsibility for a social welfare system, and our group is primarily concerned with policies that protect human well being in a context where the state is primarily concerned with economic competition. As governance structures are transformed, and power and government functions are diffused from national, state and local governments to public/private networks of governance,

tensions emerge over representation and legitimacy, accountability and control (sovereignty). A sociological review of these questions is helping to articulate public values and governance concerns that should become the subject of public discussion.

How does location within an institution of higher learning enhance or constrain your RWG's opportunities to do public sociology? What might the "ideal" institutional context for doing public sociology look like?

Being based within an academic institution gives us the space to explore and ask questions that the practical policy world might find too obscure. Exploring questions for purely disciplinary reasons is legitimate and necessary, but genuine responsiveness to the users of sociological knowledge is also part of our responsibility as sociologists in a land grant institution. Cornell's extension activities, moreover, facilitate a posture that enables us to hear the contradictions that these blurred lines create in governance and social welfare policies as they play out in real life. Nonetheless, we need an alternative *moral voice, a positive vision – not just a critique*. We would also benefit from comparisons with other countries, which have different public values as starting positions. We also must be careful, however, to use theory that resonates with the culture where we work (e.g., does critical sociology have resonance with American civil society?).

How does the particular historical context we are in affect your RWG's possibilities for doing public sociology, and for affecting debates at a variety of institutional levels?

The dramatic restructuring trends in governance – decentralization, privatization – reflect the ascendance of economics in government policy. Cracks

in the economic hegemony, however, permit a sociological perspective. Issues of voice, access and legitimacy are coming to the fore. A paradigm shift means we are not clear where we are going, but when market hegemony begins to erode we need to have an *alternative vision*. Discussion of these issues is both hampered by the general chill on criticism as a result of Patriot Acts and made more obvious by the excesses of the shift in balance toward 'security' over democracy.

A primary focus of our project is the impact of post-socialist restructuring on rural people and on community well being. This is an advantageous time in world history to examine how local people and communities are affected by macro social, political and economic change. We aspire to influence public debate on the local implications of these fundamental transformations.



REPORTS FROM THE BREAKOUT GROUPS

POLSON INSTITUTE WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY: GROUP 1 REPORT

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FIVE MAIN AREAS OF DISCUSSION:

I. What is public sociology?

Does this mean engagement with public issues or with the public?

- Both, especially given our department's location within a land-grant institution.
- Kai spoke of his experience working with Wayne County School district and, through this experience, realized the utility of working with Cornell Cooperative Extension. Was surprised that they "were not on the radar screen" when he began; by working with them, felt need to engage and work with them more in present and future.
- "How do I structure my work to most benefit you?" Kai found that by creating a "research advisory committee" and holding periodic

meetings he could build on-going dialogue to shape his work and maximize public benefit.

- We all agreed this was a good model for "public research" and agreed that a *reflexive engagement with the public at all stages of research* contributes to orienting public research.

II. What is not public sociology?

Parfait pushed us to consider what is *not* public about sociology?

- Teaching, research, and extension within Development Sociology are all public activities.
- Engagement with public can operate along a continuum.

Who is the public we are talking about?

- Different and many publics.
- Are we speaking of a demographic public (age, sex, geography, etc.) or a sociological one (interest, class, race, etc.)?

Engagement with a public can occur at different stages of research:

- Beginning: problem definition – how to solicit input?
- Middle: data collection – with what methods?
- End: publication – to which audience?
- Of course, the stages overlap and cycle back; research process is iterative.
- Comparing extractive research with more collaborative approaches informed our assessment of different models of engagement.

III. Is “public” just another new buzzword?

For example, how is a participatory approach different from a public one?

- Easy answer is that “participatory” sociology denotes a methodological approach whereas a “public” one denotes an orientation.
- Nonetheless, both approaches draw attention to reflexivity and imperative to engage publics in analysis, data collection, and reporting.
- Question remains: how is public sociology different from how sociology has been conceived and practiced before, esp. since the post-positivist turn?

How is the “public” represented? Who benefits from a certain representation? Two limiting cases: first, work on/for disadvantaged populations; second, drug research funded by pharmaceutical companies. Both reflect a concern for publics and both could fit into Burawoy’s “instrumental” box.

- 1) Work on/for disadvantaged populations carries an emotional attachment, an extra *burden* (both psychological/emotional and labor/remuneration).
 - Assuming burden and making a commitment to working on/for disadvantaged groups carries hazards: blurring of activist/academic agendas; gains for one group can come at a loss for others.
 - How do you choose a give minority? On what basis?
 - The initial choice of one group implies that other groups may not have a researcher friend/ally. Example: anti-dam movement.
 - Does serving one minority/disadvantaged group

(one public) serve a greater public good? Perhaps not according to many other publics.

- 2) Drug development or marketing research also contributes to some “public.”
 - problem comes in blurring of boundaries between “public” vs. “private” interests.
 - Nonetheless, who determines what is private and what is public?
 - Scientists working at corporate labs developing anti-psychotic drugs will argue that they too are contributing to a needy public.

IV. What about the role of the public intellectual?

Similar to “participatory research” literature, “public intellectual” readings are another source for investigating what we mean by the public in “public sociology” and how to differentiate this latest from other key/buzzwords.

- Two limiting cases: Edward Said and Tom Hirschl

On the one hand, Edward Said has argued forcefully that the public intellectual must play the role of iconoclast. Implies isolation from the public.

On another hand, Tom Hirschl has argued that we cannot only be critical, but must also provide an alternate moral vision.

- To be a good public intellectual, one does not have to be an iconoclast.
- It is good and necessary to question the social order, but must keep in mind the alternate vision to try and prevent misuse of findings.

- Also, to whom are we positioning ourselves as iconoclasts: *vis a vis* “power,” community, state, an institution?
- It was our conclusion that we tend to side with Hirschl in wanting to engage institutions as a means of embodying collective action for meaningful social change.
- In sum, be productively disruptive vs. disruptive for its own sake.
- Question of 11 September 2001 was useful for assessing the role of the intellectual.
- Is this truly the watershed in history we are told it is?
- Or, can we interpret it as a generational shake-up that forces graduate students to reconsider the inherited academic order and address questions of public engagement (similar to our professors’ 1968 experience in Paris or Berkeley or Madison)?

V. The peculiar case of “Development” Sociology

Is this a different kind of sociology to begin with? Does it imply a commitment to a certain kind of social change?

- Yes, although we are critical of the statist and neo-liberal development project (and other assorted developmentalisms), what is impressive with Cornell’s department is an inspiring and impressive commitment among faculty and students to meaningful change.
- Of course, it is a tension-filled endeavor. How do you make it work? Return to the double edged meaning of “burden” – emotional attachment and extra labor (and less pay).

- While short-term setbacks will always occur, it is possible to effect long-term change only if we keep our “eyes on the prize” and stay reflexive about our limits/agenda.

Points of leverage in the knowledge/power nexus: language and frames.

- Need to be attentive to the frames and words we use to describe social phenomena – still, a tension-filled endeavor given institutional constraints.
- While the positivist perspective idealizes research as a search for Truth in an objective fashion, a more reflexive approach sees the problems associated with language and how certain descriptors can unwittingly reinforce power relations or render results ready for capture by powerful actors.
- How can we be truly critical of the system that raised us?
- One solution is to try and re-frame simplistically conceived “problems.” For example:

- **Corruption:** how do we conceive of the boundaries between public and private domains? Who draws the lines? Are the lines the same for some and different for others? Note how discourse of corruption rarely mentions the US in spite of recent corporate scandals and “emergency allocation” of USAID funds in Iraq to firms friendly with the Bush administration.
- **Education:** how does educating one group affect another group not enjoying the same opportunities? In other words, the universal good of education can be problematic. Increasing education in a

community, for example, could lead to outmigration and deprive the community of its best and brightest.

- **Poverty:** narrow problem definition neglects the wealthy – who have hoarded all the loot. Must constantly reframe the problem in terms of “relative deprivation” or “unequal distribution.”

**POLSON INSTITUTE WORKSHOP
ON PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY:
GROUP 2 REPORT**

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McMichael set the stage by suggesting that our discussion should directly address the notion of public sociology to tease out its meaning.

Barkin began by saying that the responses of the research working groups to the questions relating to public sociology were notable for the absence of the interdependence of social groups and their ecology. The relationship is key to the viability of indigenous communities. Any

discussion of public sociology should take this into account.

Hernandez and Mauer added that any discussion of representation of indigenous interest must take into account power relations. Mauer adding that undertaking the activity of public sociology and the meaning derived from the activity could be different. Barkin gave the example of bio-piracy undertaken in Mesoamerica by institutions such as the University of Georgia.

Kassam explained that in the context of the circumpolar Arctic citizen scholars have been able to use a participatory approach (mostly out of necessity of geography, environment, teaching schedules and the sheer depth of knowledge contained by indigenous communities about their ecology) to generate a relationship where indigenous knowledge has completed the sciences and social sciences. In this context the very nature of interdisciplinarity is expanded to include the physicist, biologist, anthropologist and the subsistence hunter.

Kusi-Appouh explained that we are really talking about public sociologies in the plural rather than a singular concept. There are many kinds of public sociologies. McMichael added that we should not be constrained by Burawoy’s definition.

Barkin suggested we use the term “public science’ rather than public sociology. Kulcsar added that the debate on public sociology presented in a way as it was done in the workshop has little relevance in Eastern Europe. Intellectuals are separated from power. Academics have low prestige. In fact, they need to

undertake private sector activities in order to survive.

Building on the theme of Eastern Europe, Barkin spoke of the notion of academic freedom as being a myth among scholars. The survival of academics is determined by their ability to access to grants for graduate students and research. Hence, academics practice self-censure because they have little latitude to practice public science. He gave the example of his colleagues who have found that the largest dairy company in Mexico produces milk with high levels of arsenic. However, they have chosen to publish their research results in journals published in Argentina rather than Mexico.

Continuing with his train of thought, Barkin added an additional wrinkle to the notion of public sociology. He maintained that economists are among the foremost practitioners of public science. Their edicts affect the lives of whole societies. "They are the brain trust of neo-liberal points of view. They are war criminals, as their policies make war on societies." Barkin was illustrating that the practice of public sociology may also have negative consequences, reinforcing a point made by Mauer and Hernandez earlier in the discussion.

Hernandez provoked further debate by suggesting that we define the notion of "public" to be an activist role undertaken by a sociologist and exclude corporations from the notion of the public. Kreider then asked about the role of agro-business, which may also have a positive public impact. This discussion indicated the notions of public sociologist, professional sociologist, critical sociologist and policy sociologist (as suggested by Burawoy) may merge and intersect. Kusi-Appouh asked if an individual consciously defines

herself as a public sociologist. Speaking of the work of her mother who is a practicing sociologist whose work serves the public but she may not call herself a public sociologist. In reference to the circumpolar Arctic, Kassam added that in the course of doing research, the scholar often develops a deep relationship with the community. Later on an event may occur and the community turns to the scholar for assistance and then the scholar is transformed into activist, whether intentional or not.

The discussion settled on the notion of "progressive" public sociology as a way to give some meaning to Burawoy's simplistic notion of public sociology. This led to a discussion between normative and non-normative methods. Who gets to define what is public good. Kreider complained that we should not allow methodologies to constrain our thinking and Kusi-Appouh warned against the use of dichotomies to understand knowledge.

Barkin offered another alternative to examine these points of view from the perspective of post-normal science, a growing field in Europe.

At this stage the time ran out for discussion. We agreed on the following points:

- While acknowledging that Burawoy provided a valuable starting point for discussion, there is a general rejection of his simplistic notion of public sociology along with the matrix of critical, professional, and policy sociologies.
- There are many types of public science or public sociologies. This plurality also contains not so desirable aspects of public science as well.

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ON PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY:
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Our group first began by trying to define Public Sociology, but soon concluded that this would take longer than the time allotted and would probably not produce any tangible conclusions. We then decided to use Burawoy's conception of 'Public Sociology' as the jumping-off point for our discussion. We discussed the importance of defining the audience for different kinds of Public Sociology. Although we discussed the need to publish widely (i.e., in popular and industry literature and media), a lot of our discussion centered on how to make sociology more relevant to policy makers and sociology's position vis-à-vis economics. There was a consensus that economics has become the hegemonic social science in part because of its positivist epistemology and reliance on quantitative analysis. Quantitative analysis is easily understood by policy makers and thus translatable into policy recommendations. We discussed the merits of positivist epistemology and quantitative analysis but also noted that

much of our own work and the work of other sociologists emerges from non-positivist frameworks and uses qualitative methods. There was also some discussion of the danger of quantitative sociology becoming a 'second-rate economics'. While there was a general agreement that qualitative analysis based on non-positivist epistemologies does not translate as easily or readily into policy recommendations, sociologists have also been negligent in promoting our work to policy-makers. Several of the more experienced members of our group discussed the ways in which they, as sociologists, had contributed to policy formation, often through pointing out the assumptions of economic analysis. Several also noted that economists and policy-makers have begun using many of the same methodological tools as sociologists such as stakeholder meetings and focus groups. Several people wondered the extent to which this development is a token gesture, rather than a sign of true openness to different methods of conducting research. One of the key points that emerged from this line of discussion is the need to promote sociological research and to continue pointing out the assumptions of economic analysis. A key area for the latter is to attempt to widen the meaning of 'rational self-interest' to include social and environmental values rather than purely economic self-interest. We discussed the ways in which even business programs are now teaching 'triple bottom-line analysis' which includes social and environmental costs as well as monetary costs.

We also discussed the way in which economics has a 'moral vision', namely that rational self-interest is good for society. This started a lively discussion on whether sociology needs an alternative

moral vision. Several noted that sociology's openness to various theoretical and epistemological frameworks may make it difficult to form such a moral vision. Several also wondered whether even attempting to form an alternative moral vision was a good idea given the tendency of such projects to become hegemonic. This brought the discussion back to some of the earliest comments, namely that we are all political and public beings, and that we can not escape the moral and political implications of our actions as sociologists. This final point underlines the importance of Burawoy's Public Sociology project and the need to constantly rethink the relationship between our work and the public.

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ON PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY:
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The displacement analytic is a power analytic that clearly engages us in questions which have social/public implications. But rather than equating social implications with predefined 'publics', the displacement analytic necessitates reflexive attention to the power dynamics involved in the constitution of publics and privates. Not only is this distinction problematic, but the very notion of public/private segregates and, potentially, displaces. Being a distinction or separation that goes back years and spans almost all social space (today), it is a profoundly powerful form of dislocation. Who is "in" and who is "out" is decided by power relations. The displacement analytic leads us to ask questions about processes of exclusion/inclusion, obliging us to consider who becomes excluded (and included), by whom and through what particular practices of rule/control and, finally, whose interests are served through such practices. This is more transparent when displacement plays out in terms of race, gender, religion, age, cultural identity, rights, and other familiar tags. However, it is not so transparent when it comes to public-private since both labels have their defenders. Unlike many other "in/out" distinctions, public-private is not really two arenas of power but one, and sociology has years of insight into how the one represents itself as two, reifies this distinction, and constructs complex realities and social relations around it. For example, the private sector generates wealth; the public sector taxes the private sector to survive; we draft our youth to do public service and pay them (value them) less for this work; private property is the "highest and best use" of land and things; public goods are vulnerable and suspect; public office is venal and rarely to be trusted; private power is okay whereas public power needs checks and balances;

cumulatively, private interest is in the public good, etc.

Rather than asking how being a 'public sociologist' affects the kinds of questions our RWG (i.e., Displacement WG or DWG) examines, we suggest reversing the order of this question: how do the kinds of questions which the DWG examines suggest ways of thinking about 'public sociology' as grounded in social and historical processes? The following kinds of hard and systematic public-private questions bring forward the ways in which the displacement analytic might query the construction of publics and privates, and how our scholarly engagements in social relationships are represented in these terms:

- The transition from "traditional" to "modern" societies with emphasis on human experience and social relations before the public-private distinction became embedded. What preceded it? What motivated it? What normalized it? Were the Great Transformation(s) about public-private divides and distinctions?

- The "public" sphere follows (?) from "the state" thinking and negotiating. The interactions and evolution of this relationship. Were there private states (and are there)? Where did they go? Are some states private but dressed in public robes?

- The relationship between civil society about "public" values. How did the public come to be sovereign over the private when theories of sovereignty start with popular (private individual) sovereignty? In what sense is (or can be) civil society a third force (a la Giddens and others)? Are there other "others" beside public and private?

- The history and change of gendered "public" and "private." Are there further distinctions in society that carry public-private baggage and, equally interesting, why? Do economic "private" and "public" stigmas carry over into the social and cultural?

- Public goods and public bads. If deconstructed by sociologists, what do these labels mean, who uses them, and how valid are they? What happens when we take power into account in this image-making? Under what conditions does "the public sector" take responsibility for preventing exclusion and displacement?

- What is the difference between public and private ownership, particularly over time? Is displacement from one the same as the other? Why is control of the latter by the former considered an illegitimate "takings" but the reverse isn't true? What kinds of ownership exist that are neither public nor private and what kind of social relations give rise to them?

"Ideal" Institutional Context?

The DWG is located in a department which is rooted in the tradition of extension service, associated with the land grant system. This "applied" dimension suggests a more engaged interaction with the "public"; however, our interaction with the extension program is quite limited.

But this is not to suggest that the academic setting of the DWG prevents us from doing public sociology, if public sociology is taken to mean a sociology of displacement (amongst other projects) which can help us to explore the very constitution of the "public" and the "private". In fact, the institutional context of the academia can often provide a space for critical analysis that may not be

available at other sites such as policy institutions and NGOs. However, we feel that within academia, there is a need for developing deeper links between disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, law, and planning, to fully explore the "sociology" of displacement. The DWG has also been involved in researching ways in which displacement has come to be "publicly" constructed and dealt with, by policy institutions such as the Brookings Institution.

Historical Context?

In the context of neoliberal economic reform, the rise of a globalization project, and particularly in relation to the rise of a post-9/11 international security regime, understanding the distinction between public and private is more important than ever. The very notion of public/private segregates and displaces. Being a distinction or separation that goes back years and spans almost all social space (today), it is a profoundly powerful form of dislocation. A sociology of displacement critically grapples with the public/private distinction in all its myriad forms – addressing everything questions of citizenship and rights to recent territorial transformations associated with social, political, and economic change. It can help in understanding the public/private distinction as an ongoing process of exclusion and boundary-making as well as an often unquestioned argument of legitimation. Understanding it as such can help unsettle critiques which legitimize everything from the ongoing privatization of public space to global military projects operating for private profit in the name of the public good.

The sociology of displacement explored by the DWG, then, can open debates over

public and private. It can do this by exposing the hidden costs of projects carried out in the name of a "public good" and by questioning the constitution of public/private, the division of social space into these seemingly autonomous spheres, and the recombinations of these spheres for political and economic gain (e.g., the Corporate University). A critical evaluation of the public/private distinction then necessarily engages with debates and projects at different institutional levels. By denaturalizing the public/private relationship, can help to shift the ground on which these debates are carried out.

