
The Public Sociology Wars

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Reading the rich and varied chapters of this handbook one can only be convinced of the importance of public sociology both for the world and for our discipline. Whether we are talking of Steve Cornell's engagement with the political organization of Native American tribes, Lina Hu's involvement with migrant workers in China, Elizabeth Leonard's work with the convicted survivors of male violence, Bill McCarthy and John Hagan's chapter on publicizing deaths in Darfur, Robert Kleidman's collaboration with community organizations, Pamela Oliver's presentations on racial disparities of imprisonment, Rhoda Howard-Hassmann's critical dissection of human rights, or Ruth Horowitz's dual role on medical licensing boards, whether it be the chapters by Caroline Persell and Michael DeCesare on teaching sociology, or Lawrence Nichols, Vincent Jeffries, and Edward Tiryakian's different accounts of the extraordinary life of Pitirim Sorokin, the overwhelming impression is that the four sociologies—professional, policy, public, and critical—do indeed feed one another, expand and flourish on the basis of their antagonistic interdependence.

This is not to say that the fourfold scheme underlying this handbook is without flaws. Indeed, the flaws and limitations have given energy to an intense debate and discussion and have driven the scheme's revision and reconstruction. We see this in the chapters by Damon Mayri and Laurel Westbrook, who stress the importance of accountability to publics; by Frank Furedi, who urges us to bring the sociological imagination into dialogue with publics; by Norval Glenn, who interrogates the standards of evaluating public sociology; and by Raymond Morrow, who deepens the scheme in a number of directions. They all point to lacunae, narrowness, and contradictions in the fourfold scheme, yet in each case they do so not

with the purpose of jettisoning it but with the purpose of advancing it, and the allied project of public sociology. With the exception of the chapter by Joe Feagin, Sean Elias, and Jennifer Mueller, who consider professional-policy sociology beyond redemption, all the contributions to the handbook appear to be on board the fourfold ship.

One may be surprised, therefore, to learn of the hostilities aroused by public sociology and, specifically, the fourfold scheme—hostilities from fellow sociologists, fueled by fears that public sociology undermines our discipline and endangers the world. For many communicating our ideas to wider publics puts sociology at risk, threatens its integrity, and jeopardizes its credibility. Astonished by these attacks, others respond by asking why we would even bother to be sociologists, if public sociology is a dangerous pipe dream, if sociology is to become an irrelevant sinecure. Some go further and declare war on professional sociology itself, as encumbering, compromising, and even antithetical to the project of public engagement. For them professional sociology traps its practitioners in a devotion to an inaccessible science, in the trivial obsessions of methodology, mindless rituals of self-referentiality. The “public sociology,” formulated in the fourfold scheme, is denounced as a public relations venture to legitimate and conserve “mainstream” sociology. So here, ironically, we have the joining of extremes—the radical “public sociologist” meets up with the conservative “professional sociologist” as each denounces the other as the anti-christ. Agreeing that they cannot both occupy the same field, they both campaign for the abolition of the division of sociological labor. By contrast, this volume shows how we can and, indeed, why we must all live together if sociology is to survive—living together in tension but nonetheless recognizing the contributions of the other.

The public sociology wars are not confined to whispering campaigns or private defamation but have come out into the open. Within a space of four years, sociologists have penned well over 100 essays—not all hostile by any means—in diverse symposia in such journals as *Social Problems*, *Social Forces*, *Critical Sociology*, *The American Sociologist*, *British Journal of Sociology*, *Sociology*, *Socio-Economic Review*, *Current Sociology*, and *Contemporary Sociology*, as well as in journals in Finland, Portugal, Italy, France, Hungary, China, Hong Kong, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, Germany, and Iran. At the same time several books have already appeared bringing together critical, practical, and historical assessments as well as concrete case studies of public sociology. They include Blau and Smith (2006), Agger (2007), Clawson et al. (2007), Nichols (2007), Barlow (2007), Jacobsen (2008), and Haney (2008), but also different collections in Mandarin, Portuguese, and Russian. So the flames are not confined to the United States but have spread to other countries.

What has prompted these wars over public sociology, over the seemingly innocent proposal to take sociology's findings, its ideas, its theories beyond the academy, that is to carry on what is effectively its mission of public education? Why all the heat, the defensiveness, the skepticism, and the animosity toward public sociology? We enter our discipline with a sense of its relevance to the pressing problems of our day, yet the rites of passage in graduate school are like an induction into a secret society. Our inspirational pioneers, whether Marx, Weber, or Durkheim, not to mention Jane Addams or W. E. B. Du Bois, must surely be wondering what they have conjured up. At a time when the world is so badly in need of rudimentary sociological insights, why would we barricade ourselves within an ever more fragile academic citadel or, on the critical side, turn against the one protection we have in the uphill struggle against social injustice, inequality, and oppression?

DEFINING THE FIELD, CLASSIFYING THE CLASSIFIERS

To make sense of the public sociology wars I believe we should follow Pierre Bourdieu, and examine the context, or more precisely the field, within which these wars are played out.¹ But our following of Bourdieu should be a critical one. We need to problematize what, for Bourdieu, is the relevant field, namely the scientific field, which he regards as an arena of open competition among scientists. Competition within this field necessarily leads to the concentration of scientific capital within a shrinking elite, but, for Bourdieu, concentration also guarantees the advance of science. The dynamism of science comes from “armed struggle among adversaries who possess weapons whose power and effectiveness rises with the scientific capital collectively accumulated in and by the field” (Bourdieu 2000:112–113). These struggles take place both within the elite and between the elite and its challenging successor generation. Scientific progress is a permanent revolution within the elite.

For Bourdieu, the scientific field must possess a certain autonomy from extra-scientific intervention. He is especially concerned about the dangers of encroachment by experts, journalist pretenders, intellectual dilettantes, and social reformers all trying to appropriate sociology's mantle of science. For Bourdieu sociology, in particular, is always under threat of corruption and distortion because it delves into familiar subjects about which everyone holds strong but ill-conceived opinions and theories. It is important, therefore, that sociology break with and distance itself from common sense, and defend its scientific character by developing an esoteric vocabulary, inaccessible to lay publics.

How does this square with Bourdieu's fame as a public sociologist, the most important and most distinguished public sociologist of our era? Bourdieu defends the autonomy of the field and the accumulation of capital within it as necessary for the development of science. The redeeming feature of this science—sprung from its autonomy, liberated from the pressures of material necessity, enabling the free play of creative capacities, the leisured existence known as *skholé*—is the demystification and challenge it offers, so he claims, to the silent compulsion of symbolic domination—domination not even recognized as such. In other words, science by its very nature is subversive. But here lies the paradox: in this Bourdieusian world the dominant classes have no interest in hearing sociology's subversive message and the dominated classes are unable to comprehend the message, so deeply inscribed is their habituation to domination. Apart from critical intellectuals, therefore, it is not clear whom Bourdieu considered to be his publics. Bourdieu's theory lagged behind his practice as a public sociologist whose messages, especially later in his life, reached millions of people.

Not surprisingly, then, Bourdieu was a strong advocate of an elite band of intellectuals he dubbed as "an international of intellectuals" that would be the "organic intellectual of humanity," standing above humanity and defending humanity's interests. Bourdieu's lofty stance corresponds all too well with the commanding position he held at the Collège de France within the sharply pyramidal structure of French higher education. For all his critique of Sartre, the total intellectual, he became one himself, ensconced at the apex of the intellectual field he dissected with such acuity. In Bourdieu's conception public sociology is both the privilege and the obligation of those who have accumulated scientific capital. This "traditional" public sociology is a mediated engagement with broad, thin, passive publics and, therefore, dependent on newsprint, magazines, radio, and television. Not for nothing did Bourdieu unleash jeremiads against the media for distorting his messages, and usurping his role as scholar and scientist.

This traditional public sociology is a far cry from the organic public sociology that underlies many of the chapters in this book, and that drew only contempt from Bourdieu. For here the sociologist does not pronounce from the rafters but directly engages with publics in the trenches of society. Organic public sociologists are more modest and less visible than the traditional public sociologist. Their relations to publics—narrower but thicker and more active—are unmediated rather than mediated, not resting on a vast accumulation of academic capital. To understand their place in sociology we need to go beyond Bourdieu's *scientific* field, which corresponds to what I call professional knowledge, and examine the disciplinary field that includes policy, public, and critical knowledges as well as *professional* knowledge.

The wars over public sociology are first struggles over the very definition of sociology, what Bourdieu would call a classification struggle. We will find that, with notable exceptions, those sociologists who inhabit lofty positions in the academic world are more likely to defend a narrow scientific conception of sociology, along the lines of Bourdieu, whereas those in less elite places are more likely to defend a broader definition of the field as a discipline that embraces critical, policy, and public sociologies as distinct knowledges. The extension of sociology from a *scientific* to a *disciplinary* field brings to the fore a set of relations of domination and exploitation and their corresponding struggles that are beyond Bourdieu's narrow purview of the scientific field.

The scientific field is but the summit of a hierarchical disciplinary field. In the United States the scientific field rests on armies of teachers in state universities and community colleges who teach excessive amounts for modest compensation. More directly, research departments depend on legions of graduate students who not only do most of the face-to-face teaching and grading but also perform mind numbing operations of research. Together, they make possible the scientific practice of the elite. Of these exploited under-laborers we hear all too little in Bourdieu's account, but they feed the struggles over and within the broader definition of the disciplinary field. Like Bourdieu many "professionals" want to obscure their dependence on cheap labor by confining the definition of the field to "science," and either expel public sociology, as a relatively autonomous form of knowledge, or bring it under their control, prompting many "public sociologists," to react, in turn, against the exclusivism of professional sociology.

Thus, my claim that the four sociologies define the elements of a potentially integrated division of labor gathers enemies on all sides, but in expressing their enmity they simultaneously underline its gravitational power, shaping struggles emanating from different locations in that division of labor. In the very modes of its rejection, I will try to show that this fourfold scheme maps the positions and accounts for the corresponding perspectives that lead to the struggles of players within the field of sociology, and, arguably, any other discipline. The power of a field manifests itself not only in determining the range of orientations to sociology, what Bourdieu would call "position-takings" and what I will call "positional perspectives," underlining the link between position and perspective. Each actor also defines his or her positional perspective in relation to the others. That is to say, each actor works with an implicit cognitive map of the field, governing his or her strategies with regard to the adoption or critique of positional perspectives. Each is oriented to others as defined by their positions in the field.

The adoption of positional perspectives—hostility to public sociology, the defense of professional sociology, the embrace of critical sociology, and so forth—is not random, but nor is it simply founded in some abstract

rationality (as we tend to delude ourselves as intellectuals). Rather our positional perspectives are conditioned by and correspond to our interests as defined by the positions we hold within the academic field, and in particular by the distribution of field-specific capital, what I call academic capital.² Just as we are skeptical of the rationalizations of the people we study, so we have to be skeptical about our own justifications, our own folk understandings, our own logics of practice. Indeed, as Bourdieu would say, our reflexivity is, or should be, precisely what marks us out as sociologists. My attempt here is only a preliminary sketch of such a field analysis. It is not intended as a cynical ploy to discredit everyone but myself, but to better comprehend the field in which we work so as to better understand the unity that underlies our disunity, the common project obscured by the public sociology wars.³

WARS OF CONSERVATION

Let me begin by first summarizing the fourfold scheme that defines the division of sociological labor. It was designed to replace tired divisions between micro and macro, quantitative and qualitative, pure and applied, positivist and hermeneutic, theoretical and empirical work. The fourfold scheme is based on two questions: "knowledge for whom?" and "knowledge for what?" In response to the first question we have two audiences: *academic* and *extra-academic*. In response to the second question we have two types of knowledge: *instrumental knowledge* concerned with means to solve puzzles in our research programs (professional sociology) and to solve problems as defined by policy makers (policy sociology), and *reflexive knowledge* concerned with the ends of society, involving the interrogation of the foundations of research programs (critical sociology) and public discussion and dialogue about the fundamental direction of society (public sociology). These then are my four types of knowledge-practice that is to say ways of producing knowledge (see table 25.1). They exist in a matrix of antagonism and interdependence, varying over history and among countries, and through which individual sociologists move (or don't move) as their careers unfold. Of course, sociologists may combine two or more types of sociology, and a given work of sociology may appear simultaneously in

Table 25.1. The Division of Sociological Labor

	Academic Audience	Extra-Academic Audience
Instrumental Knowledge	PROFESSIONAL	POLICY
Reflexive Knowledge	CRITICAL	PUBLIC

more than one quadrant. My task here, however, is to examine the perspectives toward our disciplinary division of labor as enunciated by different players, situated differently within it.

Professional Sociology

When considering the United States we must start from the domination of instrumental over reflexive knowledge, and, indeed, the supremacy of the professional over the other three types of knowledge. This domination is built into the conditions of work and the system of rewards, giving power and status to departments and individuals that have the material and symbolic resources to prioritize research. We publicly consecrate leaders whom we deem eminent in the field of research, who have had careers of outstanding publications, and we rank departments in terms of their reputation and/or their research output. The distribution of jobs, justified as a meritocratic order, operates like a system of family strategies in which graduate students are exchanged among the leading research departments.

In this way the ascendancy of professional knowledge reproduces itself silently as a form of symbolic domination, that is domination that is not recognized as such, or that is so taken for granted as not to be questioned. From the narrow perspective of a self-contained professional sociology, the challenge of public sociology is best met by silence in the hope it will simply melt away. But it wouldn't melt away, tempting defenders of professional sociology to enter into what we might call a "war of position" against public sociology. The silent unrecognized compulsion of symbolic domination gave way to hegemonic strategies in which professional sociologists present their interests as the interests of all.

The first hegemonic strategy is to argue that sociology is not ready to go public. It is an immature science that has not produced reliable truths. Thus, Charles Tittle, a criminologist, in an essay titled "The Arrogance of Public Sociology," says our knowledge is so primitive as to be dangerous. If released into the public sphere, we can only discredit ourselves.

At the moment, though, sociologists do not have that body of reliable knowledge and the public pretense that we do actually undermines any hope of influencing society or of obtaining the support necessary for developing such knowledge. Lay people know we have weak knowledge and in response they accord us little credibility. We, in turn, continually undermine the little respect we might otherwise have by trying to promote our ideas (a form of ideology) in the guise of superior knowledge. Most of the time we actually do not know as much as we pretend and even when there is a chance we might provide or compile useful information, people do not trust us. (Tittle 2004:1641-1642)

We can argue the "truth" of these claims but that is not my purpose here. Rather I look upon these claims as more or less successful strategies to maintain the dominance of self-referential professional sociology.

Defending the integrity of professional sociology is also at the heart of Lynn Smith-Lovin's (2007) concern that the pursuit of public sociology could lead to divisive value conflicts within our already fragile profession. The divisions in the world would be imported back into our departments, threatening sociology's scientific project. The dangers of public sociology are also uppermost in Steve Brint's (2005) wide-ranging assault. Again, not only is sociology unprepared for a public role, but the public is not ready for sociology. The theory of society that undergirds my vision of public sociology—in particular its close link to civil society—is misguided. I underestimate both the problematic character of civil society and the potentiality of spaces within the state. "It is a bit distressing to see civil society treated with such gauzy romanticism, while the state is described as 'despotic' and the market simply a 'tyranny.' Here again, rhetoric is stronger than analysis" (Brint 2005:54; see also Brady 2004). Burawoy's scheme is not only dangerous and divisive, inflating the public importance of sociology, but is itself an example of bad sociology, unduly influenced by his political orientation. The world is not ready for public sociology, so we must give "moral centrality" to professional sociology. —

Andrew Abbott (2007) makes a different case for the moral centrality of professional knowledge in his advance of a humanist sociology that collapses the four sociologies into one. He does not fear the importation of values into the discipline but the pretension that we can work without values. He attacks the fourfold scheme of sociology for its separation of instrumental and reflexive knowledge, insisting on the inseparability of the cognitive and the moral dimensions. Far from being divisive, value stances are part and parcel of the scientific project. Having collapsed the reflexive into the instrumental, he expels the public-policy axis as a political project which has no place in our discipline. Craig Calhoun (2005) follows a similar strategy of collapsing dimensions, only he stresses more the dangers of extra-academic engagement—the fear that policy or public sociology, if given too much autonomy, would invade and violate the integrity of professional sociology. If there is to be a public sociology it must be strictly under the control of the professionals.

These positional perspectives of professional sociology do not vilify public sociology but are more concerned to patrol its presence within our discipline. This incorporationist strategy was more openly formulated by a panel of critics at Ohio State University. Douglas Downey, James Moody, and Pamela Paxton argued that, while they were not opposed to public sociology—indeed Douglas Downey and James Moody were full of examples of the dissemination of their own research findings—they feared its

autonomy. The self-regulation of our discipline by its anointed guardians was threatened by a relatively autonomous public sociology that would be accountable and not just relevant to publics.

Pamela Paxton was most explicit, attacking the scientific veracity of public sociology with an elaborate statistical analysis of the number and type of citations in public sociology articles as opposed to corresponding professional peer-reviewed articles. At least she brings some evidence to bear on the matter, but in so doing Paxton *pathologizes* public sociology—condemned as bad science, as violating the standards of our discipline. Paxton chooses cases that demonstrate her point rather than assessing the wide gamut of public sociologies. But, more deeply, her approach subjects public sociology to a standard of truth, a correspondence notion of truth, which professional sociology valorizes as the only notion of truth. She moves the attack on public sociology from incorporation to expulsion.

If Paxton pathologizes public sociology, Mathieu Deflem initiated a more aggressive "war of movement," *demonizing* public sociology as a cover for the infiltration of a perfidious Marxism. With a wry sense of humor, François Nielsen (2004) makes the same point, noting that public sociology appeared with the collapse of communism and looks like a new packaging of old Marxist ideas. "Because it promotes advocacy based on moral political values and overestimates the consensus on values, and because there are unresolved issues concerning its association with a Marxist political agenda, public sociology does not fit easily within a profession oriented to norms of scientific-scholarly objectivity" (Nielsen 2004:1626). This, of course, is an argument by innuendo and ad hominem without any attempt to seriously consider the advocacy of public sociology by myself or anyone else, reducing public sociologies to a single political project, subversive of scientific sociology, itself a taken-for-granted category. David Boyns and Jesse Fletcher (2005) take a less conspiratorial view of the supposed affiliation of Marxism and public sociology, but nonetheless argue that the association is there and is a liability that can only introduce further fragmentation into an already fragmented discipline. They conclude their measured critique that sociology has not yet achieved sufficient maturity and internal consensus to go public.

Policy Sociology

The positional perspective of policy sociology is closely allied to that of professional sociology, especially as the former depends upon the integrity and legitimacy of the latter. In a disquisition that ranges over a series of policy issues, from war to drugs, from educational achievement to birth control, Arthur Stinchcombe argues that we are so poor in our predictions that we had better stay locked up in our ivory tower working away at our

truths. "We should not be distracted by contributing to public discourse, and that what we do along that line is not likely to be much use to the public" (Stinchcombe 2007:135). Douglas Massey (2007), on the other hand, has no such hesitations, but this leads him to take a far more aggressive stance against the politicization of sociology, epitomized, for him, by official resolutions made by the American Sociological Association, such as the one against the Iraq war. He claims that sociology's politicization is dragging down its—and, particularly, "his"—influence in Washington. We need to be more like the Population Association of America that sticks to science and refrains from taking political positions and, thus, has greater credibility on the Beltway.

Of course, as Massey knows from his own experience the space for sociology within the federal U.S. state is very limited, especially in an era of neoliberalism that does not even recognize the existence of the social. To scapegoat ASA resolutions as the source of ineffectiveness misplaces the source of the problem. Scapegoating reaches fever pitch in Jonathan Turner's declaration of war on public sociology as the reason for sociology's lack of wider influence. He believes that sociology, as it is now constituted, is beyond the pale, beyond reform. His angry denunciations are strangely out of sync with his commitment to a dispassionate pure science, ending with a radical proposal to expunge the virus by splitting the discipline in two:

We will penetrate the public's consciousness and places where important decisions are made when we demonstrate again and again over a period of some decades that we possess an important body of knowledge. The only way for sociology to become more influential is to be a discipline committed to science and engineering, however you want to re-label the latter. Sadly, the years since I received my Ph.D. have seen just the opposite trend: inclusion of politicized social movements and their attendant ideology as not only subject matter (a quite legitimate activity for a scientist) but also as epistemology and as a worldview. We have critical this and critical that; many sociologists do not educate students as much as they seek to indoctrinate them into their identity politics or their moral vision of how the world should be. Of course, not all sociologists do this. I would guess that the discipline is split right down the middle between those who use the lectern as a pulpit and those who teach knowledge in an objective manner and let students decide for themselves how they will use this knowledge to frame their own beliefs. Given this even split, the best solution is to institutionalize this split into two sociologies—humanistic/activist sociology (or some such label) and scientific sociology (or some alternative label, with my preference being "social physics"). (Turner 2005:44)

Turner would turn us back to the proclamations of Auguste Comte for a positive sociology but without examining who, beyond sociology, might be interested in such sociological engineering in this era of market funda-

mentalism. Impotent in the world beyond he pursues a "war of movement" against the treacherous critical sociology.

As one surveys the strategies of containing the "danger" of public sociology, I am reminded of Foucault's description of the leper and the plague. The first we control through expulsion and the second through detailed regulation. Broadly, these are the strategies of conservation, but they emanate, in the first place, from the successful demystification and denaturalization of the domination of professional sociology. To understand how the symbolic power of professionalism has been dislodged, we must examine the subversive strategies, the challenging perspectives of critical and public sociology.

WARS OF SUBVERSION

Just as there is a close alliance of professional and policy sociologies, so there is often a seamless transition between critical and public sociology. Critical sociology takes the offensive against professional and policy sociology in order to create a space for public sociology.

Critical Sociology

As one might expect critical sociologists take a stance that is the mirror opposite of the policy sociologists. Thus, former president of the American Sociological Association, Frances Fox Piven (2007) questions the possibility and the propriety of a policy science and condemns those who would seek out patrons in government. She calls for a public sociology that addresses "the problems of people at the lower end of the many hierarchies that define our society" (Piven 2007:163). As against policy science and even neutered public sociology, she openly advocates the politicized sociologist. Against positivist science she argues for participatory research that upholds collaboration with oppressed groups, and racial minorities.

Just as policy sociology is founded in a neutral vision of scientific research, so the critique of policy science is closely tied to the critique of professional sociology. Thus, Stanley Aronowitz (2005) indicts professional sociology for its disciplinary chauvinism, and its tacit nationalism while Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi (2005) goes further in condemning "the colonial core" of U.S. professional sociology. Judy Stacey (2007) formulates her criticisms in a series of utopian proposals that would make sociology a more cosmopolitan discipline, connected to the rest of the world with university exchanges; that would make sociology a more engaged and engaging discipline, by having a moratorium on academic publishing every few years, by embracing public sociology as a criterion for academic promotions, by organizing exchanges

among disciplines and between disciplines and the extra-academic world, by improving standards of academic writing. In this volume Herb Gans follows a similar line as Stacey, continuing his defense of public sociology, and pointing to institutional reforms necessary for its advance—more funding, different career incentives, and changes in graduate training. Like Stacey he believes that the advance of public sociology can only be good for the discipline.

Ben Agger (2007) adopts a far more aggressive posture, mounting a “war of movement” from below. Unmasking the rituals of academic publishing, and condemning the irrelevance of professional sociology, he does to professional sociology what Paxton does to public sociology—condemning professional sociology *tout court* on the basis of egregious cases of unproven typicality. If Brint, Neilson, Turner, Boyns and Fletcher, attacked public sociology for politicizing the discipline, now critical sociology returns the compliment by revealing the professional defense of value neutrality as a political project in its own right.

Critical sociology not only fires arrows at professional and policy sociology, but can also turn on public sociology itself—or, at least, the variant I have embraced rooted in the interdependence of four knowledges. Thus Agger (2007) declares war on public sociology—the one rooted in the fourfold scheme—as irredeemably contaminated by “mainstream” sociology. More specifically, Joan Acker (2005) warns about not taking feminism sufficiently seriously: “any revitalized public sociology that does not incorporate the feminist insights about the systemic nature of gender subordination will be in danger of giving support to movements that inevitably reproduce domination” (Acker 2005:328). Rose Brewer reminds us of the impact of African Studies, Ethnic Studies, Black Studies that arose precisely out of an inseparable connection of community and academy. For her sociology, and its public face, is “too enmeshed in the dominant discourses and policy practices of the day” (Brewer 2005:358). Along similar lines, Evelyn Nakano Glenn (2007) denounces the fourfold scheme of sociology as the “disembodied voice” of a white male positioned in an elite establishment—another exclusivist particularism parading as universalism.

Public Sociology

Turning, finally, to the stance of public sociology itself, we do, of course, find many who embrace the fourfold scheme as legitimating what they have been doing all their life—not as something separate from but part of their vocation as sociologists. Such upholders are less likely to be the celebrated traditional public sociologists who have achieved acclaim through national prominence, but rather the organic public sociologists who have been working tirelessly and invisibly in the trenches of civil society. This

handbook is a testimony to their commitment and an acknowledgment of their importance.

This is not to say that those who speak from the stance of public sociology view the relations among the four types of sociology as harmonious. Far from it. Charlotte Ryan (2004) describes the tensions between the rhythms and incentives of an academic career and the demands of a community based program (Media Research and Action Project or MRAP) at Boston College—tensions that inhibited collaboration across the university-community divide. William Gamson (2004), who inspired MRAP from the beginning, reflects on the difficulty of obtaining university and foundation support for such a program. A different skepticism comes from Patricia Hill Collins (2007) who interrogates the significance of labeling something as “public sociology,” whether it might not play into the hands of professional sociology, facilitating its neutralization, marginalization, and even stigmatization. In the end she declares her support for the project but not without misgivings that recognition has its costs.

For others professional sociology is a major obstacle to the successful pursuit of public sociology. Sharon Hays (2007) is passionately committed to public sociology—if sociology is not public then it might as well not exist. She would want everyone to be a public sociologist. In this project the enemy is encamped behind the ramparts of professional sociology, but an enemy suffering from false consciousness. She projects a utopia in which the fourfold division of labor is subject to the supremacy of public sociology. Charles Derber (2004), a public sociologist in both organic and traditional modes, is more explicit about the opposition faced by any such elevation of public sociology.

Professionalism is a part of an ongoing political struggle for ideological hegemony and the control of knowledge. . . . The movement toward historical emancipation might then eventually transform or abolish professional sociology and professionalism more broadly, creating a different knowledge and class structure. It would integrate what we now call sociology into a system of knowledge production and organization that would have far more public participation, accountability, and accessibility. But any such transformation, in abolishing professional sociology, would also abolish the other three sociologies as part of a reconstruction of the entire knowledge system. (Derber 2004:121)

Even he recognizes, however, that the survival of the public sociologist requires a minimal adherence to academic rules of the game, so his revolution may prove to be more partial than he lets on.

The danger of a revolutionary strategy—the strategy of frontal assault—is that it will bring down the entire field, and public sociology with it. Better to prosecute a self-limiting revolution that seeks not to overthrow professional sociology, but to use it as a shield against external enemies. Even

those who do not see the redeeming virtues of professional sociology as an end in itself, should see it as an important fortification in struggles beyond the academy, providing some protection against the hostilities any successful critical public sociologist will inevitably face. A subversive strategy, therefore, seeks not to overthrow the division of sociological labor but to rearticulate its relations of domination.

BEHIND THE WARS

Warriors for and against public sociology position themselves in relation to the perspectives of others, announcing their views with a surety that they alone are right and rational. As academics we have an interest in portraying ourselves as above interests, as without interests. To attack others as motivated by interests other than truth is a violation of the rules of the scientific game, although of course they are violated all the time.

We know a war is being waged when academics publicly discredit their opponents by "unmasking" interests behind their supposed "rationality," when professionals point to critical sociologists as "interested" in destroying the discipline while critical sociologists accuse professionals as only "interested" in consolidating their disciplinary domination. The widespread discrediting of the perspectives of others calls for a systematic account of the interests at work within the sociological field. Academic fields, no less than others, are a terrain of clashing interests.

Following Bourdieu, one seeks out the field-specific capital that governs the strategies of its actors. I will define the field-specific capital in the disciplinary field as academic capital, which can be estimated from an individual sociologist's *curriculum vitae*. It includes the number of articles and books published and by whom, it includes citation counts, it includes the number and size of research grants, and it includes the recognition given to a sociologist by peers in the form of awards and prizes. Of course, the very definition of academic capital is subject to contestation so that, for example, for some successful teaching adds to academic capital while for others it is irrelevant.

For the purposes of this chapter and as a first approximation I assess academic capital by the standing of the department to which a person belongs on the broad supposition that competitive entry into departments is based on the accumulation of academic capital. I define the top 16 departments, as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* in 2005, as elite and the remainder non-elite. This ranking is a reputational ranking conducted by heads of departments and graduate advisors so it has all sorts of biases—not least, one that favors departments that produce the most Ph.D.s—but this is a

totally preliminary venture, exploring what direction such an analysis of the sociological field might take.

I have categorized the 35 U.S. contributions to 5 symposia (*Social Forces*, *Social Problems*, *The American Sociologist*, *Critical Sociology*, and the collection *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-First Century*) by the present department of their authors and by the positional perspective they hold. Attaching a definitive positional perspective to each contributor, based on these articles, is very difficult so I have sometimes invoked other information. Especially difficult is the separation of professional from policy perspectives, and public from critical perspectives as sociologists often circulate between these—an interesting observation in itself. I have, nonetheless, attempted it, giving more weight to deep extra-academic commitment since that is more costly in a world where the disciplinary culture is so strong. That is to say, if an author expresses a commitment to policy sociology as well as professional sociology, I have categorized them as having a policy perspective, if they express a commitment to public sociology as well as critical sociology or professional sociology I have categorized them as having a public sociology perspective. Finally, I make no claim that the contributors to the symposia are representative of the wider discipline, since they were largely chosen by editors and/or organizers for the perspectives they might be expected to defend. Still, the point here is not to map the whole field, but to point to what such a mapping would entail and to see if already in this set there is a linkage between academic capital, crudely defined, and positional perspective.

The first finding is that the critical and public sociologists are, as one would expect, concentrated overwhelmingly in non-elite departments. Only 2 out of 25 are to be found in elite departments and they interestingly enough are William Julius Wilson and Orlando Patterson, both black sociologists at Harvard University, and both with a very high public profile. At the same time, as table 25.2 shows, there is no such simple correlation of professional and policy sociology with membership of elite departments, since 4 out of 10 professional-policy sociologists are to be found in non-elite

Table 25.2. Perspectives by Department of Employment

PROFESSIONAL	POLICY
Elite = 5 (1), Non-Elite = 3 (0)	Elite = 1 (0), Non-Elite = 1 (0)
CRITICAL	PUBLIC
Elite = 0 (0), Non-Elite = 8 (5)	Elite = 2 (0), Non-Elite = 15 (7)

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to number of women.

departments. We also see that women are overwhelming concentrated in non-elite departments where they practice some form of critical-public sociology, although again this distribution is less a reflection of our discipline as a whole than of the way women contributors were chosen, namely on the basis of their feminist or critical race orientations.

In order to better capture the interests driving the different perspectives I included a second dimension of academic capital, the department where sociologists were trained. Is it elite or non-elite? The argument is that department of origin, the ranking of the Ph.D. degree, is as determining of academic capital as the department of employment. Table 25.3 presents this dimension by itself, and it shows that all but one of the professional and policy sociologists are trained in elite departments, but the critical and public sociologists are trained in both elite and non-elite departments. This, too, is not surprising since elite departments produce many more graduate students than can be accommodated in their faculty ranks, so there is bound to be a considerable movement from elite to non-elite departments. *In other words, professional-policy orientations are shaped heavily by training whereas critical-public orientations are more shaped by department of employment.*

If we combine department of training with department of employment, and switch the table around to ask how academic trajectory shapes orientation we discover in table 25.4 that those who are trained in an elite department and end up in an elite department are very likely to adopt a professional-policy perspective whereas those who spend their whole lives in a non-elite environment are very likely to possess a critical-public orientation. There are very few who manage to move from non-elite to elite departments. In fact, they are again the two black scholars at Harvard.

The most interesting category is made up of those who move from elite to non-elite caught as they are between two worlds. Within our small and selected population three hold on to a professional-policy orientation, whereas the rest (11) assume a critical-public orientation. The divisions within our disciplines are often the most acutely felt within this group. Here we find the most outspoken critics as well as the shock troops of professionalism, here, in other words, we find dissidents and technocrats side-by-side. Indeed, the non-elite department, full of active sociologists trained in elite departments, is often the theater of civil war between technocrats and dissidents. Such departments may be also collectively mobilized along the lines

Table 25.3. Perspectives by Department of Training

PROFESSIONAL Elite = 7, Non-Elite = 1	POLICY Elite = 2, Non-Elite = 0
CRITICAL Elite = 3, Non-Elite = 5	PUBLIC Elite = 8, Non-Elite = 9

Table 25.4. The Effect of Academic Trajectory on Perspective

Department of Training	Department of Employment			
	Elite		Non-Elite	
Elite	Professional	Policy	Professional	Policy
	5	1	2	1
	Critical	Public	Critical	Public
	0	0	3	8
Non-Elite	Professional	Policy	Professional	Policy
	0	0	1	0
	Critical	Public	Critical	Public
	0	2	5	7

of public sociology; they may become a niche department that prides itself in teaching and public engagement. More likely, they undertake a project of collective "upward mobility," like the Sanskritization of caste, seeking to ascend the rankings by "mainstreaming," by accentuating the commitment to publications in the *American Journal of Sociology*, the *American Sociological Review*, placing graduate students in elite departments, celebrating recognitions by the American Sociological Association, and so forth.

In the end no research department, elite or non-elite, can escape these tensions, but nor can the American Sociological Association itself. From its inception in 1905, the ASA has been a battleground between professionals seeking to centralize control in their hands and countervailing critical voices, calling for internal democracy and stronger public engagement. Thus, the inter-war struggles led to the creation of the Sociological Research Association in 1937, a self-selected elite who would act as guardians of the profession, while the breakaway Society for the Study of Social Problems created in 1951 was an attempt to wrest control from the professionals and to engage more directly with questions of social justice. The recent struggles for public sociology continue this tradition. They began as a reaction to oligarchic tendencies that were concentrating control within the executive council, a reaction that came to a head in a struggle over the editorship of the *American Sociological Review* (1999-2000). Since then the professional elite has had to relinquish its influence over key positions such as ASA president, and thus over the program at its annual meeting, over the multiplying sections that conduct their business with a considerable measure of autonomy, and over the formulation of political resolutions. The move away from oligarchic control, together with the discussion of public issues, brought in new members and record attendances at the annual meetings. The association is no longer so firmly controlled by a priesthood of aging white males from the elite departments.

We are now in a better position to understand the public sociology wars. Symbolic domination—domination without overt resistance because domination is not recognized as such—is secured through the legitimation of academic capital, awarded for objective scientific research and consecrated in the leaders of our field. Competition for recognition and for research funds keeps the field alive, and concentrates resources in the hands of the few, while obscuring the conditions of their existence, namely the armies of teachers who have few if any opportunities to gain admission to the inner sanctum. In this realm of professional sociology, there are struggles but they are largely confined to the tenure of individual sociologists, the mobility of departments up the rankings, the succession of leaders, the editorial boards of major journals, and so forth.

The struggle for public sociology threatens the equilibrium of our discipline, demystifying the invisible domination of professional sociology, compelling it to come out into the open and defend its interests as the interests of all. So now professional sociologists defend their hegemony vis-à-vis public and critical sociology either by declaring sociology as not mature enough to enter the public realm, or arguing the opposite, declaring themselves to be public sociologists, but insinuating a distinction between their authentic and the other's inauthentic public sociology. We can call these hegemonic strategies, in which the professionals position themselves as representing the interests of all, a war of position. A more aggressive strategy, that is a war of movement, is to condemn public sociology as self-defeating, as discrediting the entire sociological enterprise, or alternatively, a hopeless enterprise because no one is listening to us. At the extreme public sociology is demonized as "political orientation in non-partisan clothing" (Brint 2005), which justifies infantilizing and sanctioning its supporters, expelling them if necessary.

One war of movement begets another. Critical sociologists attack professional sociology for its self-referentiality, disciplinary chauvinism, and a latent political project of its own, denouncing policy sociologists as the servants of power. Behind the shock troops of critical sociology, however, lie alternative visions of sociology, valorizing not academic capital but what we might call an extra-academic or *temporal* capital—capital valorized through forms of public recognition. Public sociologies march to the tune of dialogic engagement rather than empirical-theoretical knowledge, a consensus rather than a correspondence view of truth, norms of relevance rather than norms of science, accountable to publics rather than peers. This is a war of position from below—a project centered around temporal capital that potentially challenges the supremacy of academic capital, constituting an alternative but always subjugated hegemony.

In considering this subjugated hegemony a distinction should be made between two types of public sociology. On the one hand there is *traditional*

public sociology, which uses academic capital to accumulate temporal capital. Here I am referring to the way professional leaders command authority in the public realm for the scientific expertise they vaunt. This is the public sociology of David Riesman, William Julius Wilson, Robert Bellah, Arlie Hochschild—public sociologists who see no clash between the two forms of capital. To the contrary each fosters the accumulation of the other. So the defenders of traditional public sociology will campaign for the recognition of temporal capital in professional publications, such as the new sociology magazine, *Contexts*, in professional appointments and promotions. We can call this the incorporation of public sociology.

On the other hand, far more threatening but institutionally much weaker, is an *organic public sociology* that offers an alternative vision of sociology, demystifying and censuring the domination of academic capital, calling for a new science of public engagement. Here we find varieties of participatory action research as well as certain feminist methodologies which pose the question of "whose knowledge?" From Paulo Freire to Dorothy Smith they problematize conventional sociological methods as furthering elite domination, and develop alternative techniques of collaborative research. Such organic public sociologists oppose positivist science as inauthentic. They champion their own participatory methods as the basis for an alternative and more authentic science. Organic public sociology—sociologists working with local communities, neighborhood associations, churches, labor movements, and so forth—is far more widespread but also less visible than traditional public sociology. As the public face of professional sociology, traditional public sociology can be deployed to stifle the more radical challenge of an organic public sociology—neutralizing the war of position from below. Alternatively, the two can work in concert with traditional public sociology acting as an umbrella and protection for a grassroots movement of organic public sociologies, but in turn being inspired by that movement.

BEYOND THE WARS

What, then, are these disciplinary struggles about? Why are they so intense? Are they more intense in sociology than in other disciplines? If so, why? Is it because sociologists are more reflexive about who they are and what they do, as Bourdieu might say? Is it because sociologists write and research matters about which everyone has an opinion, continually threatening the boundary between sociology and common sense? Is it because sociologists are so insecure about the scientific status of their discipline? What, in the final analysis, defines the specificity of sociology that might account for these wars but also lead beyond the wars? It is to these questions that I now turn, albeit in a brief manner.

Appearances notwithstanding, the intensity of the public sociology wars do betray an underlying commitment to the field of sociology, understood not as an elite scientific field (Bourdieu) but as a broader disciplinary field. Whether the strategies are conservative or subversive, accommodating or revolutionary, the object and terrain of struggle is the shared disciplinary field of sociology and perspectives adopted broadly reflect location within the division of sociological labor, which in turn reflect positions within the system of higher education. Following Bourdieu, one can say that it is through such struggles that the unity of the field and its boundaries are constituted. I have depicted the struggles organized around the *antagonism* between the four sociologies, while the chapters of this book underline their fructifying *interdependence*. What is the unity that these chapters portend, and how can we bring it to the fore?

Our shared commitments come into focus, once we attend to our origins, and the fate of sociology in different societies. Sociology grew up with the rise of civil society at the end of the nineteenth century—those associations, movements, and publics that are neither part of the state nor of the economy. Sociology disappears or goes underground with civil society as we see in Hitler's Germany, Salazar's Portugal, Stalin's Soviet Union, Mao's China, and Pinochet's Chile. Sociology thrives when civil society flourishes, as we saw in the twilight of apartheid, the Soviet Union, post-revolutionary Portugal, the civil rights era in the United States. Looking at matters historically and geographically, we find strong links between the vibrancy of sociology and the strength of civil society.

Civil society is not simply the object of knowledge for sociology—we examine much more—but rather the *standpoint* from which we study the world. That is to say we study the economy in terms of its effects upon civil society (atomizing relations, creating inequality, generating social movements) or civil society's contribution to the existence of the economy (supporting the non-contractual elements of contract, the networks that make markets possible, etc.). Equally, we study the state from the standpoint of its effects on civil society (the application of violence, the generation of social policy, the justification of domination) and vice versa the effects of civil society on the state (generating or absorbing conflicts, stabilizing democracy, etc.).

Civil society is not a homogeneous entity. It is no more homogeneous, no less at war with itself, than sociology. It is riven with conflicts, hierarchies, and exclusions, many of them deriving from the invasion or colonization by market and state. More generally, as a relatively autonomous realm civil society is Janus-faced. On the one side it serves to reproduce existing patterns of domination through the organization of consent; on the other side, it is the terrain for burgeoning conflicts that challenge patterns of domination. So sociology, too, is Janus-faced, on the one side conservatizing interests to

preserve an autonomous profession and on the other side subversive struggles that reflect public engagement. The two-sided character of sociology is no epiphenomenon or mirror reflection of the two-sided character of civil society, but nonetheless there is a correspondence between the two.

That having been said, civil society does also have an underlying integrity, an underlying resilience that repels the assault of markets and states, an underlying telos that imagines institutions of self-regulation. It is one function of public sociology to establish the grounds of that integrity, to make that integrity the subject of interrogation, which is why there cannot and should not be a single public sociology, but there has to be a multiplicity of public sociologies, catering to different segments of civil society. The multiplication of public sociologies, while generating conflict within sociology, nonetheless reflects a higher unity, a thickening of civil society, and a more effective defense against markets and states. We do share a common perspective, despite our differences, in and through our differences. The chapters of this handbook, starting with Vince Jeffries's integrative sociology, are testimony to that common project. Once we focus on specific problems of public concern—domestic violence, child labor, professionalism, human rights, civil war, community organizing, incarceration, and so forth—from whatever quadrant of our discipline many of our internal differences miraculously evaporate.

Here then lies the specificity of sociology as compared to other disciplines. It takes the standpoint of civil society and valorizes the social, as opposed to economics that takes the standpoint of the economy and valorizes the market, and political science that takes the standpoint of the state and valorizes political order. This is not to say that these disciplines are homogeneous since they too are fields with dominant and dominated perspectives. Within economics there are growing tendencies toward institutional analysis and there is even an oppositional organization called post-autistic economics. Political science's embrace of economic models generated the "perestroika" counter-movement. So sociologists can find allies within these two disciplines. At the same time, sociology is not impervious to the influence of the dominant paradigms within economics (the rational choice tendency) and within political science (the fascination with the state per se), but these have always been weak and subjugated tendencies within our discipline. Turning elsewhere within the academy, we do share the standpoint of civil society with large fractions of other disciplines, such as anthropology, human geography, and social history, not to mention the inter-disciplines of women's studies, race and ethnic studies, and environmental studies all of which have historical roots in particular publics.

As sociologists we do share interests—interests at odds with those of political science and economics, whose theories have stood in as ideologies that have justified the colonization of civil society, and specifically the

corporatization of the university, privatization of research, and the commodification of student learning. In our era of market fundamentalism, when civil society is under threat, sociology takes up a defensive posture in the face of the more powerful disciplines of political science and economics. In this era, to defend a single social science is to endorse the supremacy of economics. It would turn sociology into a minor moment of economics, which is, indeed, where we began more than a century ago. This is not to deny the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and alliance, especially now, but simply to hold on to sociology's *differentia specifica*.

The era of market fundamentalism is not eternal. There have been at least two previous waves of marketization, one in the nineteenth century and another in the early part of the twentieth century, beginning after World War I. Both gave rise to counter-movements—the first to a vibrant civil society and the second to a welfare state—and both would produce a vibrant and self-confident sociology. Today we see the exhaustion of third-wave marketization that began in the 1970s. Indeed, it is entering a deep economic crisis that has already produced a counter-movement from the U.S. state—a state that had hitherto pioneered deregulation. Counter-movements can be found all over the world in local struggles against land and water expropriations, in leftist governments in Latin America, and perhaps in Islamic states in the Middle East and at the global level from international agencies such as the IMF and World Bank. The era of counter-movement introduces enormous uncertainty as to its form and direction. It is an era in which the range of possibilities expands, possibilities that portend repressive dangers no less than democratic openings. We close our eyes to such dangers and openings at our peril—we can assert our presence in society, joining the switch men and women of history, or, possibly for the last time, be condemned to irrelevance.

NOTES

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1. I have drawn widely on Bourdieu's writings on intellectuals, scientific and cultural fields, and the public role of sociology and of intellectuals more generally. See Bourdieu (1975, 1988, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2008).

2. Each field has its own specific capital which, in the Bourdieusian scheme, can be converted from or can be converted into more generalized economic and cultural capital. Calhoun (2005:35) misses this point in proposing that the sociological field itself is organized by economic and cultural capital.

3. This chapter follows that of the handbook itself in largely concentrating on the field of U.S. sociology. If it was initially applied to the United States, the fourfold scheme was conceived of as a universal template that would cast light on the disciplinary field of other nations and also at the global level. Elsewhere I have explored how other national divisions of labor give rise to distinctive struggles and alliances, and even how the disciplinary field in one country depends on or influences the

disciplinary field in another. In these comparative analyses we learn just how peculiar U.S. sociology is, and thereby broaden our imagination of what it could be. But here I confine myself to sociology in the United States.

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