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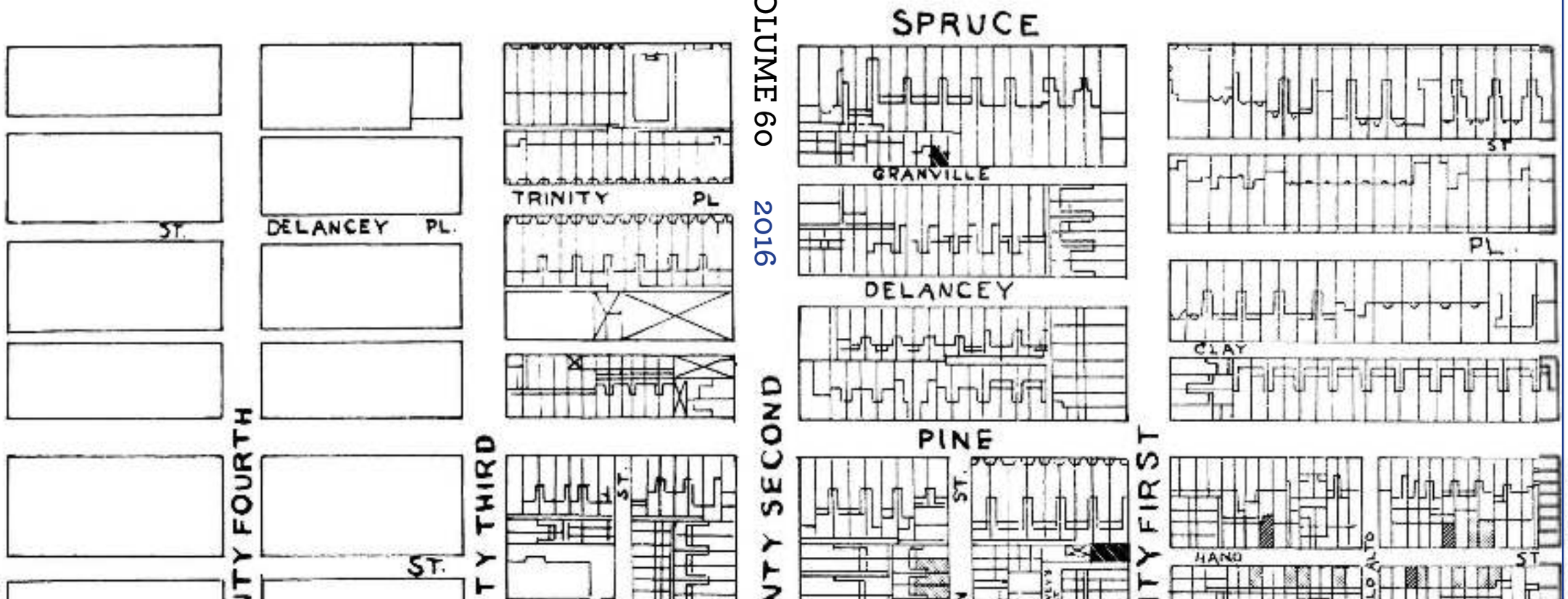

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Cover Photo:
"The Seventh Ward of Philadelphia." Reprinted in: DuBois, W.E.B. 1899. *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*.

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EDITORIAL

If one of the core tenets of contemporary sociology is correct – the insistence that knowledge *about* the world necessarily constitutes a perspective *on* the world –, our inquiries must not just concern themselves with the analysis of social facts. They must also shed light on regimes of knowledge that underpin sociological studies, complicate the rise and fall of scholarly traditions as social processes, and thus recognize scientific practice not just as the pursuit of elusive truths but as a way of world-making. We begin by disenchanting the world, as Alvin Gouldner once noted, but proceed by disenchanting ourselves.

It was in this spirit that a group of scholars gathered in the summer of 2015 to discuss and debate *The Scholar Denied*, Aldon Morris's recent book on the legacy of W.E.B. DuBois within American sociology. The book presents DuBois as a pioneering scholar whose methodological and theoretical contributions shaped the landscape of American sociology even as he was denied recognition for his achievements. It comes as no surprise that DuBois's star shines more brightly today in other academic disciplines.

Yet the goal of such historical re-evaluation must not merely be an expansion of the canon. If the only outcome is a belated inclusion of DuBois in the pantheon of sociology, the introspective project will have been for naught. Wisely, the scholars whose works are reprinted in this issue – Aldon Morris, Julian Go, Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, Marcus Hunter, and Earl Wright II – have embarked on a different path. By dissecting the reception of DuBois's work, they open up space for a more fundamental reassessment of the sociological project. As Julian Go writes in his review of *The Scholar Denied*, "all social science is parochial. It comes from a place. It is shaped by the interests behind, around, and subventing it. Each theoretical construction embeds a specific standpoint." By studying the reception of one of America's most influential early sociologists, we can hope to glimpse at the politics of scientific practice.

For DuBois, social scientific work bore fruit at the intersection of methodological rigor and political conviction. If statistical analyses were indispensable to understand the social conditions of the present, their deployment was no end in itself: they served the goals of social justice by awakening the conscience of a nation to the plight of many of its citizens. As DuBois wrote in one of his most memorable passages,

> "We often forget that each unit in the mass is a throbbing human soul. Ignorant it may be, and poverty stricken, black and curious in limb and ways and thought; and yet it loves and hates, it toils and tires, it laughs and weeps its bitter tears, and looks in vague and awful longing at the grim horizon of its life."

To DuBois, the scientific ethos was linked to the values of humanism, the aesthetics of poetry, and the politics of progressivism. "I am one who tells the truth and exposes evil," he proclaimed, "and seeks with Beauty for Beauty to set the world right." He refused steadfastly to be only called a scientist, or only a writer, or only an activist.

It is thus fitting to anchor this issue of the *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* with a discussion of his legacy. DuBois's approach has been embraced and applied by many of the contributors to this volume: By Siddhi Bhandari and Manuel Rosaldo, whose photo essays on gender relations in India and garbage workers in Colombia capture the struggle for self-assertion and self-determination. By Isaac Miller, whose essay on contemporary Detroit dissects the complex relations between local politicians, budding entrepreneurs, self-proclaimed innovators, and community activists to contrast two competing visions of urban development. By Camar Diaz, who writes about collective trauma and the memorialization of violence in post-conflict Guatemala. By Martin Eiermann, whose book review of Matt Desmond's Evicted emphasizes exploitation as a core feature of urban poverty. And by Thomas Gilbert and Andrew Loveridge, who assert a vision for liberal politics against against the background of the 2016 US presidential election. Their foci and conclusions differ. But they are united in their insistence that social science can aspire, to paraphrase the German playwright Bertolt Brecht, to be not just a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.

– The *BJS* Editors

PLACE-BRANDING DETROIT: BELOVED COMMUNITY OR BIG SOCIETY?

by ISAAC GINSBERG MILLER

COMPETING FRAMES OF DETROIT HISTORY

In his 2004 commentary "Manufacturing a New Detroit," financial journalist Dale Buss argued that Detroit's playing host to three major league sporting events (the Ryder Cup, the MLB All-Star Game, and the Super Bowl) presented an opportunity to re-brand the city's image. Buss writes, "Detroit's marketers are putting the finishing touches on a new brand-identity program. The goal is to help Detroit, once and for all, dissipate the perceptual black cloud that has hung over the city for the last 40 years." From the racially coded "black cloud" metaphor, he continues: "The city's image took a decided plunge after race riots in the late sixties", and then lists the results: white flight, violence, crime, urban blight, the decline of public schools and hostility between the city and its suburbs.

This is a common narrative, though a false one. The 1967 Detroit rebellion was one of the largest uprisings in US history, lasting five days and resulting in over 7,000 people arrested,[1] at least 40 million dollars in property damage, and 43 people dead (of these, 32 were killed by police, National Guard, or federal troops).[2] However, white flight began more than a decade before the 1967 rebellion with the rise of suburbanization and the construction of the interstate highway system.[3] Though white flight accelerated in the late 1960's, this was true throughout the United States, not isolated to Detroit, and conditions of violence, economic precarity, and segregation existed for Black Detroiters long before the 1967 rebellion. The rebellion was itself a response to the oppressive conditions faced by a Black community subjected to decades of endemic housing[4] and employment[5] discrimination, police brutality,[6] military conscription, insurance red-lining,[7] and forced removal through eminent domain.[8]

So exactly whose image of Detroit do writers like Buss hope to see restored? By placing the blame for the city's problems on Detroit's Black majority, Buss sets the stage for a reclamation of the city's "brand identity" by predominantly white and suburban business elites. This is by no means a new project. In Buss' piece, one sees the continuation of a line of thought that extends back to the creation of the Renaissance Center in the 1970's. The Renaissance Center embodies a model of development driven by hotels, conference centers, sports stadiums, and other large-scale infrastructure designed to attract massive tourist events. This development model seeks to create an increased "quality of life" that will court investment by developers and major corporations. This will supposedly lead to a city's climb in the hierarchy of what Saskia Sassen has termed "global cities," the network of elite cities vying for company headquarters, development projects, media attention, and population flows.[9]

Of course, the Renaissance Center's "city within a city" did not spur the economic and cultural renaissance that it was intended to herald, failing to attract many new residents or significant capital investment to downtown Detroit. Though the Renaissance Center initially served as the headquarters of Ford Motor Company (it was subsequently purchased by GM in 1996), the building primarily housed white, suburban commuters who left Detroit's downtown at the end of each workday. Simultaneously, in the years following the Renaissance Center's construction, a maelstrom of intersecting crises devastated Detroit's Black community. As white flight and the flight of capital continued to accelerate, the movement of industrial manufacturing jobs to the suburbs, the Sun Belt, and the Global South decimated working class Black Detroiters. Meanwhile, heroin and crack cocaine flowed into American communities of color, a development directly tied to US military and CIA involvement in Southeast Asia and Central America.[10] Sensationalized media coverage of the "crack epidemic" served to justify the rise of the War on Drugs and mass incarceration,[11] which has devastated countless families and communities in Detroit and across the country. During this time arsons became more frequent, commonly ascribed to young people lighting fires for fun but also due to absentee landlords hoping to collect on insurance money (as in the fire-ravaged 1970's South Bronx).[12] Finally, predatory lending by banks led to the foreclosure crisis, further destroying Detroit's neighborhoods.

None of the above factors is accounted for in mainstream conversations around Detroit's "rebirth," or if they are included, they are presented in ways that pathologize the people of Detroit as responsible for the effects of the larger structural forces which they have been forced to endure. Missing in these conversations is a recognition of those who stayed and continued

As white flight and the flight of capital continued to accelerate, the movement of industrial manufacturing jobs to the suburbs, the Sun Belt, and the Global South decimated working class Black Detroiters.

"Detroit has a national reputation for its spunky organizers, innovators, ingenious leaders and problem solvers. But these innovators have not been included in planning Detroit's future."

their lives through this incredibly brutal convergence of crises. In the face of innumerable challenges, Detroiters have worked to sustain and rebuild their neighborhoods: planting gardens, reclaiming abandoned properties, supporting their neighbors, and through it all, surviving. The scholar, writer, activist, and longtime Detroiter Gloria House has described these efforts in the context of recent resistance to Emergency Financial Management, foreclosures, water shut-offs, and privatization:

> *In pockets throughout the city, individuals and groups are resisting this takeover in every way we know how. Moratorium Now is continuing its struggle against foreclosures, others are working towards food security through farming, others are creating artist co-ops, small businesses, forums for resolving conflict, educational and cultural programs and activities. And most recently we are working to provide emergency water relief.*
>
> *Detroit has a national reputation for its spunky organizers, innovators, ingenious leaders and problem solvers. But these innovators have not been included in planning Detroit's future. In fact, the resources and energy of many such organizers are being exhausted in the daily work of resistance.*

This individual and collective resistance draws on the city's rich history of social movements going back to the time of slavery. During the period preceding and following the 1967 rebellion, Detroit was home to numerous organizations devoted to Black Liberation, including the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, the Shrine of the Black Madonna, the Republic of New Afrika, The Revolutionary Action Movement, and the Black Panther Party. The legacy of these movements has continued in the work of organizations like the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, D-Town Farm, Feedom Freedom Growers, the Detroit People's Platform, the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, East Michigan Environmental Action Council, Detroit Eviction Defense, Detroiters Resisting Emergency Management, Moratorium NOW!, the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, and the African-centered educational work of Timbuktu Academy and Nsoroma Institute. Significantly, Detroit activists James and Grace Lee Boggs (former members of C.L.R. James' Correspondence Publishing Committee) were central participants in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in Detroit as well as a succession of organizations dedicated to articulating alternatives for the city's future. During the 1980s James and Grace Lee Boggs were deeply involved in groups such as the National Organization for an American Revolution (formed as a cadre organization with the intention of deepening participants' engagement with revolutionary struggles), the anti-gun violence group Save Our Sons and Daughters, and We the People Reclaim Our Streets, a group focused on combatting drug abuse. In the late 1980s, James and Grace Lee Boggs joined Detroiters Uniting, which opposed Mayor Coleman Young's (eventually successful) attempt to introduce casino gambling to Detroit. Grace Lee Boggs wrote that, "During the struggle Young denounced us as 'naysayers.' 'What is your alternative?' he demanded. Responding to Young's challenge, Jimmy made a speech in which he projected an alternative to casino gambling."[13] This grassroots vision led to the 1992 creation of Detroit Summer, a "Multicultural, Intergenerational Youth Program/ Movement to Rebuild, Redefine, and Respirit Detroit from the ground up" inspired by the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964. Today, this legacy continues through the Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership as well as James and Grace Lee Boggs' influence on a wide range of organizations, including those that have taken part in the Detroit Digital Justice Coalition and the Detroit Food Justice Taskforce.

"SOCIAL INNOVATION" AS MARKET-BASED INTERVENTION

In recent years many social justice activists in Detroit have been involved in efforts to shift the city's image from one of abandonment to one of vibrant possibility. Grace Lee Boggs, who recently passed away at age 100, has been at the center of articulating this vision of Detroit. She wrote in her book *The Next American Revolution* that "Detroit is a city of Hope rather than a city of Despair. The thousands of vacant lots and abandoned houses provide not only the space to begin anew but also the incentive to create innovative ways of making our living—ways that nurture our productive, cooperative, and caring selves."[14] In formulating this vision, Boggs brought to bear over seventy years of experience as an anti-capitalist organizer. The range of individuals and organizations that she and her husband James influenced during their lifetimes include many who seek to create solutions against and beyond capitalism. However, in recent years a different network of organizations has begun to leverage remarkably similar rhetoric to long-time Detroit activists around seizing the "opportunity" that Detroit, and its re-building, represents. This emerging network of businesses, non-profits, foundations, and "social entrepreneurs" does not call upon Detroit's rich history of movement building. Instead, it presents itself under the decidedly ahistorical and market-based language of "social innovation." At a 2010 talk in Detroit hosted by the Knight Foundation, Stephen Goldsmith (author of *The Power of Social Innovation: How Civic Entrepreneurs Ignite Community Networks*) argued that, "Social innovation provides a platform from which we can harness the entrepreneurial spirit, creativity, compassion and resources that live in our communities." In this approach, Detroit's "social

ESSAY

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innovation" movement also follows in the footsteps of Richard Florida, the urban studies theorist who coined the concept of the "creative class." Florida, in his 2002 book *The Rise of the Creative Class,* describes the creative class (comprised of artists, knowledge-workers, and intellectuals) as a crucial sector of the emerging "information economy," one that tends to cluster in urban centers such as New York, San Francisco, Austin, Seattle, and other so-called "cool cities."[15] Florida's arguments have influenced urban planning and development policies across the nation, with cities seeking to attract creative class professionals in order to boost their local economies.

The "social innovation" movement in Detroit follows this paradigm, seeking to "place-brand" Detroit as a city where "social innovators" and "creatives" are flocking. This narrative has been crafted and promoted by entities such as Opportunity Detroit, Bedrock Real Estate Services (an arm of Dan Gilbert's Rock Ventures, which owns Quicken Loans, the Cleveland Cavaliers, and over 75 buildings in downtown Detroit), Detroit Venture Partners (also a Rock Ventures company), Downtown Detroit Partnership, Midtown Detroit, Inc., Model D Media (as well as its offshoot Urban Innovation Exchange), and a host of business incubators and co-working spaces such as Ponyride, The Department of Alternatives, Green Garage Detroit, The Madison Building, Grand Circus, and TechTown. In Detroit there are countless technology and small-business start-ups that fall under the umbrella of "social innovation," but the catch-all term encompasses both for-profit companies and non-profit organizations who express an interest in advancing the broader social good. The barrier for entry to become a "social innovator" is nebulous at best because if you are a member of the creative class, simply living or working in Detroit is seen as contributing to "re-building" the city. The Urban Innovation Exchange project (a website created by the development-boosting Model D Media) exemplifies this framework, offering profiles of various "social innovators" in Detroit, who are ultimately linked only by their inclusion on the website.

What is apparent from the above organizations and initiatives is that those categorized as social innovators are primarily young, college-educated, white, and not originally from Detroit. While the profiles on Urban Innovation Exchange contain a number of long-time community members involved in deeply rooted community institutions such as the Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership or the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, these are by far the exception. To be a social innovator means to be a member of the "creative class," which is a small sector of Detroiters overall, and one that does not reflect the majority of the city in terms of race, class, level of formal education, or place of birth.

While this model of creative class development differs from the top-down model represented by the Renaissance Center, these two models intersect in their ultimate goal: gentrification, or the displacement of Black poor and working class people by an influx of primarily white residents with more wealth and formal education. Ironically, the idea that gentrification brings economic prosperity for all has been repeatedly discredited, even by Richard Florida, who was one of the foremost advocates of the economic benefits of attracting the "creative class." Florida's own recent research concludes that the benefits of gentrification "flow disproportionately to more highly-skilled knowledge, professional and creative workers whose higher wages and salaries are more than sufficient to cover more expensive housing in these locations. While less-skilled service and blue-collar workers also earn more money in knowledge-based metros, those gains disappear once their higher housing costs are taken into account." The start-up-centric nature of "social innovation" makes much of individual success stories, but the idea that broader economic benefits are gained from this kind of exceptionalism is precisely what Florida's recent research challenges. Florida writes, "There is a rising tide of sorts, but it only lifts about the most advantaged third of the workforce, leaving the other 66 percent much further behind." Florida concludes, "It's not just a vicious cycle but an unsustainable one — economically, politically, and morally."

THE PATH AHEAD: BELOVED COMMUNITY OR GENTRIFICATION AND AUSTERITY?

It seems clear that the vision of economic development as "social innovation" rests heavily on the premise that poverty in Detroit is a result of a lack of access to markets. As should be obvious to anyone familiar with Detroit, the city does not lack from corporate investment. Detroit is permeated by the kind of corporations and businesses who profit from and prey on the poor: fast food restaurants, liquor stores, gas stations, and check cashers. How will this wave of "social innovation" be any different? While it may claim to seek general prosperity, if this trend contributes to the exclusion, displacement, and dispossession of poor and working-class Black Detroiters, who ultimately benefits?

The vision of economic development as "social innovation" rests heavily on the premise that poverty in Detroit is a result of a lack of access to markets.

Poverty does not rise from a "lack of access to markets" but from the way that market-based solutions themselves create benefits for the few at the expense of the many. After all, Detroit's economic devastation was itself the effect of markets. From the creation of segregated suburbs to the offshoring of manufacturing jobs to the foreclosure crisis, market forces have been at the center of Detroit's race and class-based divisions.

In August 2013 the head of the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation publicly issued a call to "bring on more gentrification" in order to renew the city's tax base. This argument presents gentrification as a remedy to white flight, when in fact gentrification continues the very same patterns of segregation, inequality, and dispossession. The push to attract "creatives" and "social innovators," paired with "Live Midtown" and "Live Downtown" financial incentive programs for employees of Blue Cross Blue Shield, Compuware, DTE, Marketing Associates, Quicken Loans, Strategic Staffing Solutions, Detroit Medical Center, Henry Ford Health System and Wayne State University, all promote gentrification at the same time that drastic austerity measures are being imposed by Detroit Mayor's office and the Michigan state government.

Former Mayor David Bing's Detroit Works Project (later renamed Detroit Future City) initiated a process of categorizing neighborhoods that would receive differing levels of investment and city services. After strong citizen push-back against the idea of forcibly moving people out of their homes using eminent domain, Mayor Bing shifted to reducing lighting, trash collection, police and fire services for areas of the city that were deemed blighted. Furthermore, with the appointment of Emergency Financial Manager (EFM) Kevyn Orr, the city began to move towards privatizing key services such as trash pickup, the Water and Sewage Department, and the Department of Public Lighting, as well as breaking its pension obligations to city employees in order to pay off its other creditors. This is certain to result in increased economic hardship for pensioners and open the door to greater consumer costs for city services through the process of privatization and outsourcing already underway in other EFM controlled cities across Michigan (a process which infamously led to the Flint water crisis). For example, just this past year in Detroit 25,000 families faced the threat of water shutoffs and 100,0000 home owners faced tax foreclosure and the threat of eviction. Detroit's educational system has been under the control of an EFM for many years (from 2009-present and from 1999-2005 under the control of a state-appointed "CEO," the EFM's predecessor position) resulting in the growth of the school district's debt, massive waves of school closings, and the expansion of charter schools and privatization-based education reform. This process of privatization, gentrification, and corporatized development has further accelerated under the guidance of Mike Duggan, who in 2014 became the first white mayor of Detroit since before Coleman Young was elected as the city's first Black mayor in 1974.

In light of this process of privatization, Detroit's "social innovation" movement mirrors the

Detroit's "social innovation" movement mirrors the "Big Society" program of David Cameron's Conservative government in the UK, where austerity measures have been camouflaged under the guise of re-distributing power from the central government to local actors.

"Big Society" program of David Cameron's Conservative government in the UK, where austerity measures have been camouflaged under the guise of re-distributing power from the central government to local actors through volunteerism, social enterprise, and charitable activities. The recently deceased Black British cultural theorist Stuart Hall wrote of the "Janus-faced" or two-sided manifestation of this process: "the 'soft' face of compassionate conservatism and The Big Society here, the hard edge of cuts, workfare and the gospel of self-reliance there."[16] Hall writes that in addition to cutting pensions, healthcare, and food and housing benefits, "libraries, parks, swimming baths, sports facilities, youth clubs, community centres will either be privatised or disappear. Either unpaid volunteers will 'step up to the plate' or doors will close. In truth, the aim is not - in the jargon of '1968' from which the promiscuous Cameron is not ashamed to borrow - to 'shift power to the people', but to undermine the structures of local democracy."[17] Sound familiar? Yet this is by no means unique to Detroit and the UK, it has happened all over the world, particularly in the Global South, where the massive growth of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has coincided with the austerity measures of International Monetary Fund-imposed structural adjustment.[18]

As Hall points out, one of the truly nefarious aspects of this strategy is that it borrows from the rhetoric of its political opponents and turns the meanings of words on their head. In the Detroit context, in order to give families "choice" in where they send their children to school, public schools are closed, creating more room for charters. In order to redress corruption and "mismanagement," unelected Emergency Financial Managers are appointed to enact privatization. While the Michigan Legislature cuts food stamp benefits and revenue sharing with cities, it also lowers the state business tax in order to "create jobs." This kind of double-speak forms the basis of what the late Uruguayan author Eduardo Galeano called the "Upside Down" world.[19]

So what is to be done? With the use of concepts such as "social innovation," "social entrepreneurship," and "place-branding," the grassroots solutions and visions that Detroiters have been advancing for generations (urban gardening, block clubs, community-based education) become hinged to market-based policies that result in displacement and dispossession. As Hall writes about the "Big Society" program in the UK context, "The left, which

A useful guidepost might be Martin Luther King Jr.'s conception of the "beloved community," whose goal is freeing all members of the human community from violence; not just physical violence, but also structural violence, economic violence, spiritual violence, the violence of racism and exploitation.

feels positively about volunteering, community involvement and participation - and who doesn't? - finds itself once again triangulated into uncertainty."[20]

This presents a profound challenge for those involved with social justice movements in Detroit, because so much recent organizing in the city, particularly efforts influenced by the work of James and Grace Lee Boggs, has advocated increased self-reliance, less dependency on the government; growing our own food, creating our own consumer goods, opening our own businesses. As powerful and necessary as these ideas may be, they can also quite easily align with the neoliberal tropes of limited government and extra-governmental freedom sought by real estate and financial moguls like Dan Gilbert, Michael Ilitch, and John Hantz or the privately appointed boards of philanthropic foundations.

That said, it is easy to become trapped in false binaries. While advocating increased grassroots activity by communities in order to become less dependent on the oppressive apparatus of the corporatized State, we can also fight against cuts to services that those same communities depend on for their survival. A useful guidepost might be Martin Luther King Jr.'s conception of the "beloved community," whose goal is freeing all members of the human community from violence; not just physical violence, but also structural violence, economic violence, spiritual violence, the violence of racism and exploitation. In her later years, Grace Lee Boggs drew heavily from the work of King and his idea of "beloved community." In *The Next American Revolution,* she describes the Montgomery Bus Boycott as an enactment of the principles of the beloved community through what she calls a "two-sided transformation"[21] wherein participants not only struggled to change the society that was oppressing them, but also in the process transformed themselves and their relationships to one another. It is important to remember that as we work to build alternatives to the status quo we cannot simply pay lip service to this idea of beloved community and we cannot allow others to do so either. Institutions and policies that are complicit in perpetuating economic violence should be held accountable; rhetoric that frames exclusion and dispossession as empowerment and progress should be unmasked as the lie that it is.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

I would like to close with some reflections from my own experience. I was not born in Detroit. I grew up in Northern California, where my parents moved in the 1980s. My father's family moved to the Detroit suburbs in the 1950s, contributing to the larger process we know of today as white flight. Was their intention to take part in the devastation of Detroit's Black community through what amounted to race-based economic warfare? Absolutely not. Nonetheless, that was the consequence of their (and many others') actions. My grandparents were firm believers in social justice. They and their children were active participants in the Civil Rights, Labor, and Anti-War movements. The values that they instilled in me, as well as my visits to Detroit while growing up, contributed to my desire to move to the city after graduating from college in California. I had studied Detroit's history as an undergraduate, read the work of James and Grace Lee Boggs, and attended the Allied Media Conference. These experiences deepened my interest in moving to Detroit in order to learn from and participate in the educational, artistic, and organizing work taking place in the city. As a result, I have become a participant in the influx of young, predominantly white, college-educated, middle class (or middle-class aspiring) professionals who have moved to Detroit in recent years. Many of my peers have traced their parents' and grandparents' paths backwards from the suburbs to the city. Others have moved to Detroit from different parts of the country or even from other countries, drawn by the narrative of the city's rebirth or for an attractive job offer.

Many have also become involved in community-based work, either working for non-profits or volunteering their time with community-based organizations. Still, regardless of the work we may be involved in, as members of the creative class we are, whether we like it or not, by our very physical presence participants in the gentrification of Detroit. Our needs are being privileged over the needs of people who have lived here for generations. Our identities are being mobilized by corporate developers who, for all their rhetoric about "building community," are ultimately concerned with turning a profit regardless of who they displace. These developers may believe that they are contributing to the "rebirth of Detroit" in the same way that we do, but what is most important is not our intentions but whether or not we are being accountable. Are we willing to feel uncomfortable and to make others feel uncomfortable when their/our actions are damaging to community? Most importantly, are we willing to take leadership from those who are of and from the community we are seeking to join? Are we willing to center the struggles of poor and working-class Black Detroiters? Are we willing to join in struggle alongside those who do not share our identities, and to see our struggles as connected, without forcing our opinions or agendas

on others? Many commenters have pointed out that Detroit is quickly becoming a "tale of two cities." As Malik Yakini, lifelong Detroiter and co-founder of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network has recently stated:

> *"We have downtown, Midtown, Corktown, East English Village, which seem to be highly resourced, lots of capital being poured into them, and new mostly white residents... The rest of the city, as far as I can see, continues to languish... I think that some very dangerous precedents are being set with the purchasing of large tracts of land and of multiple buildings by a few wealthy white men. And so it looks like what's being set in place will define Detroit for the next 50 to 100 years, and it seems like the same disparities are based on race and income, and will continue to exist."*

In this context, is it possible for members of the "creative class" to ethically participate in building Detroit's future? As always, there are no easy answers.

Isaac Ginsberg Miller is a poet, scholar, and educator. For the past ten years he has worked as a teaching artist in the Bay Area, Detroit, and New York City, working with InsideOut Literary Arts Project, Detroit Future Schools,Youth Speaks, Urban Word NYC, and the James and Grace Lee Boggs School. He is currently a PhD candidate in African American Studies at Northwestern University, where he is also a member of the Poetry and Poetics Graduate Cluster.

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PHOTO ESSAY

HOLI: GENDER DYNAMICS AND THE FESTIVAL OF COLORS IN NORTHERN INDIA

by SIDDHI BHANDARI

Holi is the Hindu festival of colors, one of the Indian subcontinent's more famous holidays. The manner in which the festival is observed varies from region to region — but whatever its beginnings, the celebrations of *holi* have by and large come to have clear sexual intonations with men at the forefront. The festival has become associated with drunkenness, street harassment and sleaze, in northern parts of India in particular. There are police advisories against drunken driving and harassment in light of the high number of arrests that have been made on this particular day in the past.

Yet in the midst of such countrywide issues, the celebrations of *holi* in one region stood out in stark contrast. While gender norms in India are highly tilted in favor of males, the experience of *holi* celebrations in a village in *Kumaun* puts women at the forefront and turns the assumed androcentric practice on its head. Yet this facet of *holi* is often overlooked in scholarship and media. The photographs in this essay focus on the celebration of *holi* in a village called Chilkiya located in the foothills of the Himalayas in the *Kumaun* region of the northern hill state of Uttarakhand, India.

The significance of *holi* encompasses the mythological, folk, cultural and social. Just as most religious festivals are timed to coincide with the change of seasons, and are usually at the turn of agricultural cycles, *holi* is celebrated during springtime in India. This is a time when the *rabi* crop that was sowed in winter is completing the growth cycle and is near ready to be harvested.

Appropriately, the main economic activity in Chilkiya is agriculture, followed closely by employment in an electrical equipment factory that is located five miles away from the village. Agricultural engagement is being reduced at a fast pace due to the changing nature of land usage, however, with a major portion being sold for construction of houses to the new members of the village community. In the Indian context, a village does not merely denote a small cluster of houses in rural surroundings with a small population. Sociologists who have studied the Indian villages have noted them to often be a community of people mutually dependent on each other in a predominantly agrarian setup and surrounded by poor amenities, be it roads, schools, markets, hospitals and so on. In this village, most of the households are connected to each other by way of kinship networks or belonging to the same extended clan.

Holi is also a celebration of the interconnectedness of this world and the other world. According to the Hindu mythological story, a demon king, Hrinyakashyap, having attained near immortality and drunk on this new power, demanded that he be worshipped as God. The king's own son, Prahald, was tortured upon refusing to obey his father, but nothing could change the boy's resolution. Enraged at being unable to convert Prahlad's devotion towards him, the king sought the help of his sister and the boy's aunt, Holika (after whom the festival is named). Holika called Prahlad to her lap and sat on a pyre in an attempt to have him killed. However, the other gods, upon seeing Prahlad's devotion to them, came to his rescue while Holika—who was supposed to be immune to the flames—burned to ashes. Traditionally, *holi* celebrations begin with the burning of a pyre on the eve of the festival, symbolizing victory of good over evil.

Though the sacred is invoked, the religious dimension of this festival is near invisible. The invocation is limited to the eve of *holi* when the symbolic fire is lit (out of which Prahlad emerged unharmed), to the perfunctory application of color on statues of gods and deities, or to festivities at local temples. Though *holi* is a Hindu festival, there is a marked secular content to it that helps to explain its appeal. People with different religious beliefs partake in, if not the festivities, then at least in the savories, usually offered by friends and neighbors.

In Vrindavan in the state of Uttar Pradesh, widows have in recent years come out against tradition to partake in the festivities of color. In Hindu tradition, widows are regularly expected and coerced to live a life of deprivation, giving up all worldly pleasures, including the use of color even in their clothing. By participating in the celebrations, they have begun to defy those expectations and traditions.

Here, *holi* has become more of a musical festival that lasts most of the spring season, with women, both young and old, taking the lead. Another peculiarity of *Kumauni holi* is its division into *baithaki holi* (more in the form of gatherings to sing, dance, savor festival related snacks and only dry color is applied sparingly; mostly organized in people's homes) and *khari holi* (this is the main day of the festival and held in public spaces like village temples and squares). At least a week before the festival date, women take turns to invite each other into their homes, carefully dividing the time so as not to clash with another's. Sometimes when time is short and the list of inviters long, two or more sessions are organized in a day — afternoon and night. The gatherings are organized keeping in mind that they get to go home and perform their domestic duties as well; and then reconvene.

The women have paved the way to make this festival equally participatory for them, often taking over conventional spaces like the village temples or the verandas of their own homes. They are often lively and social, meeting and greeting each other by exchanging side hugs (called the *Holi Milan*), followed or preceded by the exchange and application of colors. The local culture and tradition has enabled this change, as the women are seen to be equally or more participative in domestic as well as external chores. Men in this village have the reputation of being gamblers and idlers. Even during *holi*, they meet at separate gatherings, preferring to gamble and drink. Taking the festival outside of their home saves the womenfolk the effort of cleaning a house full of colors later, a chore which in all probability would be the women's responsibility.

It is not only during these festivities that women are able to come out of the home and feel empowered. Nor do I believe that the women see it as empowerment either. In fact, this is just as much a "normal" part of life to them as the sexually overt celebrations of *holi* in other parts of India. While what these women have been able to accomplish can and should be admired, it is important to not read a message of defiance into this practice. Women-centered *holi* celebrations have over time come to be part of tradition in this particular village, not resistance. So much so that these village women did not see themselves or this as an aberration from what the norm in the country is — they thought that every village celebrated *holi* as they do! Interestingly, newcomers to the village were often shy about taking part in the festivities, and had to be coerced by other older women, who had been in the village longer, to become comfortable enough to freely participate and celebrate in this manner.

The seeming empowerment of women in the region, however, is not altogether a sign of progressive attitudes or changing times. It must be noted that their involvement in day-to-day or economic activities is often a necessity rather than a privilege. The women find themselves in situations where to feed and provide for the family, they cannot rely on the men. They have to be more involved and take the lead — by working the fields, taking up employment in the electrical factory, all the while performing the daily domestic duties.

Yet while the *holi* festival continues, these women are able to find time to celebrate with one another. With dancing, eating, music, the application of color and even a relaxing catch-up, the women carry on the festival until they are visibly exhausted. The final day of the festival is celebrated outdoors, with snacks bought from pooled money shared between everyone present — until just after noon, when the women return to their respective homes.

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THE CASE FOR SCHOLARLY REPARATIONS

A REVIEW OF ALDON MORRIS' *THE SCHOLAR DENIED*

by JULIAN GO

If Aldon Morris in *The Scholar Denied* is right, then everything I learned as a sociology PhD student at the University of Chicago is wrong. Or at least everything that I learned about the history of sociology. At Chicago, my cohort and I were inculcated with the ideology and ideals of the Chicago School. We were taught that American sociology originated with the Chicago School. We were taught that sociology as a scientific enterprise, rather than a philosophical one, began with Albion Small and his successors; that *The Polish Peasant* by W.I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki was the first great piece of American sociological research; and that the systematic study of race relations and urban sociology originated with Robert E. Park and his students. We were taught that we should not only read the Chicago school but also venerate it, model our work after it, and pass its wisdom on through the generations. But *The Scholar Denied* shows that the Chicago school was not the founding school of sociology in the United States. Neither Small, Park, Thomas and Znaniecki nor their students originated scientific sociology. The real credit goes to W.E.B. Du Bois, whom leading representatives of the Chicago School like Robert E. Park marginalized – perhaps wittingly. Moreover, and perhaps more contentiously, *The Scholar Denied* suggests that Park plagiarized Du Bois, and that venerated sociologists like Max Weber were as influenced by Du Bois rather than the other way around.

The implications are far-reaching. If the Chicago school is not the originator of sociology, then why spend so much time reading, thinking about, or debating it? If Morris is right, graduate students should instead focus upon the real innovators and founders: Du Bois and his "Atlanta School" of sociology. It only struck me after reading this book that Du Bois had barely if ever appeared on any of my graduate school syllabi. Yet, this is not a question of *adding* more thinkers to the sociology canon. If Morris is right, there is an argument to be made that Du Bois and the Atlanta School should *replace* the Chicago School, not just be added alongside it. For, with *The Scholar Denied*, Du Bois can no longer be seen as the "first black sociologist", the originator of "African-American sociology," or the one who pioneered the study of African-American communities. He must instead be seen as the first scientific sociologist who is

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the rightful progenitor of American sociology itself. And it works the other way around. With Morris' book, the Chicago school – and indeed early mainstream American sociology in general – can be exposed for what it was: a parochial if not provincial body of thought that reflected little else than the worldview and groping aspirations of a handful of middling white men whose interests were tethered to the interests of the American empire: men who had to suppress those others from whom insights they drew in order to be.

Admittedly, this exaggerates the arguments made in Morris' landmark book. It is perhaps the most extreme conclusion one might draw. But what makes *The Scholar Denied* so important is that it renders this conclusion possible and plausible at all. Thankfully, *The Scholar Denied* helps those of us who are willing to go there, get there.

FROM THE MARGINS

Let us return to the first issue on the table: the Chicago School. There is at least one good reason for why Chicago heralds itself as the founding school of American sociology. It is not mere self-congratulation. Nor is it the fact that Chicago founded *The American Journal of Sociology*. The reason why Chicago heralds itself as the founding school is because everyone else does too. "[T]he history of sociology in America," declared Lewis A. Coser in 1978, "can largely be written as the history of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago."[1] It is "hard not to see Chicago," declares Ken Plummer more recently, "as the *fons et origio* of modern sociology."[2] Sociology's "first great institutional base was at the University of Chicago," Calhoun announces.[3] And, presumably, it was the first great *intellectual* base: the leading sociologists at Chicago transformed sociology into an empirical science, finally turning "sociology from social philosophy toward empirical research."[4]

Morris is alive to the fact that this is the "hegemonic narrative" about the origins of sociology, and his masterful book does not so much puncture holes in it as overthrow it entirely. "There is an intriguing, well-kept secret regarding the founding of scientific sociology in America," reads the opening paragraph of *The Scholar Denied*. "The first school of scientific sociology in the United States was founded by a black professor located in a historically black university in the South."[5] The origins of scientific sociology, in other words, do not lie in the Chicago School but in W.E.B. Du Bois and his Atlanta School. In the early twentieth century, "the black sociologist, scholar and activist W.E.B. Du Bois developed the first scientific school of sociology at Atlanta University. [...] Du Bois was the first social scientist to establish a sociological laboratory where systematic empirical research was conducted."[6]

Du Bois and his school innovated on several fronts. The first has to do with the "scientific" aspect of sociology or, rather, the empirical aspect. According to the hegemonic narrative, it was the Chicago School that innovated: the sociologists of Chicago were the first to go into communities, observe, collect data, and then systematically analyze it. "The city of Chicago served as a social laboratory where empirical research was conducted on the major social processes unfolding in one of the world's great modern cities."[7] As Andrew Abbott avers, one overarching characteristic of the Chicago School was that "it always has a certain empirical, even observational flavor, whether it is counting psychotics in neighborhoods, reading immigrants' letters to the old country, or watching the languid luxuries of the taxi-dance hall." The culmination [of this approach (or "scientific sociology"?)] was *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918). But Morris persuasively shows that *The Philadelphia Negro* by Du Bois, completed in 1897 and published in 1899 (nineteen years before the publication of *The Polish Peasant*), is the more deserving text. *The Philadelphia Negro* was motivated precisely by Du Bois' interest in systematically studying African Americans. Whereas previous work "on the Negro question" had been "notoriously uncritical," in Du Bois' own words, and lacking "discrimination in the selection and weighing of evidence," Du Bois insisted upon "scientific research" to study the issue, and *The Philadelphia Negro* was his early testament. Focusing upon the Seventh Ward of Philadelphia, and replete with historical and comparative analysis, the work resulted from "extensive interviews, with all families in the ward...surveys, archival data, and ethnographic data from participant observation."[8]

After moving to Atlanta University, Du Bois continued this innovative work. Though his resources paled in comparison to those of the wealthy Department of Sociology at Chicago, Du Bois put together a team of researchers to study African Americans in their communities and held conferences for researchers on black life in America. They carried out the sort of empirically driven work he had pioneered in *The Philadelphia Negro* but this time studying a variety of African-American communities, from rural communities to urban Atlanta. His teams included black scholars like Monroe Work, who had previously earned his AB and MA from the University of Chicago but who then joined Du Bois' research team to conduct studies on race, politics, crime and the black church. His teams included graduate as well as undergraduate students, alumni of black colleges, and community leaders. Morris shows how an entire "hidden generation" of sociologists was connected with the school. Besides Work, there was Richard Wright, Jr. and George Edmund Haynes. These and others "who apprenticed with Du Bois constituted the first generation of black sociologists" and went on to make significant contributions to the field.[9]

The conferences held at Atlanta University were a vital part of the School. Held each spring, they brought together white, black, male and female scholars and attracted wide interest. Already by 1902, the "Atlanta Conference" was being heralded by some as an important graduate training institution for the "study of the social problems in the South by the most approved scientific methods" – as Frank Tolman wrote in his survey of sociology courses and departments.[10] For at least a decade, a period spanning the first years of the twentieth century, the Atlanta School worked ceaselessly, producing published work like *The Negro Artisan* (1902), among a variety of papers. Morris declares "no comparable research programs existed that produced empirical research on

African Americans" in these years.[11] And the Atlanta Conference saw the participation of people like Charles William Eliot, the twenty-first president of Harvard University, as well as Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Walter Wilcox, and Franz Boas – the famous anthropologist whose thinking on race purportedly helped upend biological determinism in social science.

Du Bois is often noted to be the first "black" sociologist, but Morris' point here is that Du Bois more rightfully deserves to be among the first empirical sociologists, period. Given his work on Philadelphia and his painstaking research at Atlanta, Du Bois stands as "the first number-crunching, surveying, interviewing, participant-observing and field-working sociologist in America," even originating what we call today "triangulation." Notable (white) journalists like Ray Stannard Baker declared Du Bois in 1908 to be "today one of the able sociologists in this country", whose work from Atlanta was "work of sound scholarship" that "furnish the student with the best single source of accurate information regarding the Negro at present obtainable in the country."[12] At this point Robert E. Park had not even started his position at the University of Chicago. And it would take another ten years before Thomas and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant* would hit the bookshops.

The erasure is almost pernicious.[13]

UNSEEN INFLUENCES

Still, just at this point of possible historical recovery, even the most sympathetic readers might raise questions. If everyone at the time, and everyone still, turns to the Chicago School for influence, and heralds the Chicago School as the real founding institution, does not that itself prove that Chicago deserves the title of originator? How can Morris claim that Du Bois is the rightful founder of scientific sociology if he was not influential as such?

On this point, anonymous posts on the internet forum "Sociology Job Rumors" are telling. The site is a repository for students to post information about the sociology job market, but it has morphed into a site that gives license to certain would-be sociologists with a little learning to say a lot. Recently on the site, someone mentioned *The Scholar Denied*, and many of the posted responses were incredulous. One declared that since Du Bois was not cited and was instead marginalized, he cannot be considered a founder: "a citation analysis would be necessary evidence to make an argument for the 'founder' of any scientific advance." Another post added "I'm not sure how Du bois can be a founder while also being so marginalized." "I'd venture that of the early 20th century black sociologists," wrote another, "Cox, Frazier, and perhaps a few others were at least as influential on the field as Du bois, if not more so."[14]

The remarkable thing about *The Scholar Denied* is that it shows us that, in fact, Du Bois was influential at the time. Morris mobilizes an array of impressive information revealing that Du Bois influenced a range of thinkers whose debt to Du Bois has been covered up. Standard histories of sociology, for example, overlook the black sociologists of the Atlanta School and instead point to Oliver Cox or E. Franklin Frazier from the

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1920s and 1930s who were advised by Park at Chicago (the influence of these histories upon present-day students is seen in the forum discussions noted above). But the impact of Du Bois upon these thinkers is clear. Frazier's most important book was *The Negro Family in the United States*, and in 1939, just after its publication, Frazier wrote to Du Bois to tell him that Du Bois' "pioneer contributions to the study of the Negro family" was influential upon him, and that much of Frazier's own work – and of his colleagues – is merely "building upon a tradition inaugurated by you in the Atlanta studies."[15]

The list of others influenced by Du Bois is long. It extends to Gunnar Myrdal, whose book *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944) influenced Supreme Court decisions and became a social science classic. Morris notes that Myrdal himself pointed to Du Bois' *The Philadelphia Negro* as a model for the sort of work done in *An American Dilemma*. Even more significantly, Mydral's influential work cites Du Bois eighty-three times, but Park only nine.

According to Morris, Du Bois' influence even extended to Park himself. Park's 1928 article on "marginal man" in *The American Journal of Sociology* is the smoking gun. In that article, Park proposed that migration produces a hybrid type of social being, someone trapped in the "traditions of two distinct peoples." Park credits Simmel's concept of the stranger as inspirational. But according to Morris, who ably marshals evidence provided by Chad Goldberg and others, it was Du Bois' concept of "double consciousness" that was determinant. Park just did not bother to cite it.[16]

Or, take another example: Max Weber. While many histories of sociology claim that Weber mentored Du Bois while Du Bois studied in Germany in the 1890s, they are just plain wrong. Weber was not yet a famous sociologist (and he would not be until after the Second World War) and was only four years older than Du Bois. While the two were in Germany, "they were both essentially graduate students."[17] By the time Weber had travelled to the US in 1904, Du Bois had already published influential works (not only *The Philadelphia Negro* but also the widely popular *The Souls of Black Folk*), and in this sense it was Du Bois who was the known sociologist, not Weber. This probably explains why Weber wrote to Du Bois on a number of other occasions, extolling the virtues of Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, urging it be translated to German, and inviting Du Bois to come to Germany. It is also probably why Weber asked Du Bois to write something on caste relations for Weber's journal, *Archiv für Sozialwissenshchaft and Sozialpolitik*. The invitation resulted in the 1906 publication of "Die Negerfrage in den Vereinigten Staaten" (might make sense for a title translation here) nestled between articles by Robert Michels and Georg Simmel, and its theorization of race in the US

as a caste system shaped Weber's own thinking on caste stratification.

In short, the elevation of the Chicago School has served to marginalize Du Bois, even as Du Bois was profoundly influential for his time. Narrating this tension is one of the many virtues of Morris' book, and it marks the tragedy that *The Scholar Denied* writes for us –that we have erased the history of Du Bois' profound influence upon sociology from our most influential histories of sociology. We assume Weber taught Du Bois. We herald Frazier as the most influential black sociologist. We herald Robert E. Park as the innovator. So how did this marginalization and erasure happen?

HETERODOXIES OF RACE

It would be comforting to think that Du Bois was marginalized because of the narrow racism of the white establishment – the result of white racists who suppressed Du Bois out of their own deep prejudices against African-Americans. It would be comforting not because the story would be a happy one, but because the ending would be hopeful. Since we sociologists are no longer racists, we can rest peacefully knowing that we would not conduct such an injustice today. And we can excuse the early racists as being men of their time. Who was *not* racist in early 20th century America?

There is no doubt that naked racism played a role in the marginalization of Du Bois. In *The Scholar Denied*, Morris has multiple examples. How Gunnar Myrdal or Robert Park directly prevented Du Bois from receiving the right resources, assignments, and credit are riveting parts of the book. But the story Morris tells in *The Scholar Denied* is also subtler. It does not boil down to acts of racial discrimination by a few men. Morris instead reconstructs the field of sociology at the time, and, drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, shows how Du Bois suffered from his particular position within the field as a black man operating in institutions without sufficient resources. His marginalization was a matter of the unequal distribution of capitals in the field of sociology at the time.[18]

Still, there is another explanatory current amidst the flow. It is not only that Du Bois was black and other sociologists were white, or that Du Bois suffered from lack of capital, it is also that he had dangerous ideas. To be sure, Du Bois innovated by his empirical orientation and methodology. But Du Bois also innovated substantively, birthing a sociology of race that aimed to wrestle discourse on race away from the Darwinistic, biological and frankly racist sociological episteme of the day. Participants and promoters of that episteme included most all other white sociologists, and Morris pulls no punches when pointing out how the Chicago School was at the center of sociologically racist thought. In

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riveting swaths of *The Scholar Denied*, we learn about Robert Park's racist sociology, for example, a sociology that "portrayed African Americans" as "handicapped by a double heritage of biological and cultural inferiority."[19] These views compelled Park to side with Booker T. Washington in suggesting that the best route for African-Americans was to become manual laborers rather than to try to overcome their "savage" origins (in Park's own terminology). These views also compelled Park to conclude that blacks should stay away from cities, for there they would "only succumb to the vice, disease, crime, and other evils rampant in city life."[20] And Park's own famous theory on the cycle of race relations was underwritten by Darwinistic thought on the inferiority of non-whites. Park's thought was merely the "conceptual framework" that could explain and hence legitimate why the whites of Europe and the US were dominating the world through colonialism –and why race relations throughout the globe were so tumultuous.[21]

Du Bois would have none of this. For, unlike Park, Du Bois' thinking on race was rooted not only in his personal experience as an African-American but also in actual empirical research. Indeed, as Morris demonstrates, Park was the subjective, unscientific sociologist, not Du Bois. Morris points out how Park's study of the black church was based upon "assertions and the testimony of questionable informants", unlike Du Bois' truly scientific research.[22] And Park's other work, including his theory of the race relations cycle, relied upon little else than deduction, along with his own "impressions, opinions and beliefs." Worse still, it was based upon "intuition, impressions, opinions, and travelers' tales told by individuals with ideological axes to grind and power to protect."[23] Du Bois' work, using systematically and painstakingly collected data on communities about which Park had little inkling, instead showed the social production of racial inferiority rather than its biological or even cultural determination. In contrast to Park, therefore, Du Bois' sociological research led him to break completely from social Darwinism and claims "that biology and cosmically driven forms of interaction determined race dynamics and racially based social conditions."[24]

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In this sense, Du Bois prefigured or at least paralleled the thinking of Franz Boas, showing that racial as well as gender inequalities "derived from exploitation, domination, and human agency exercised by both oppressors and the oppressed."[25] Boas is typically taken to be the major thinker who moved social science "beyond biological explanations of race to explanations highlighting culture as the determinant of racial outcomes."[26] But along with Boas (with whom Du Bois corresponded for decades), Du Bois also "advanced and supported with his

scholarship the idea that races were socially created categories and that, despite the scientific racism of the day, blacks were not racially inferior."[27]

Morris thus raises the possibility that Du Bois should be credited with shifting the paradigm of thinking on race in the US. In any case, Morris is unequivocal on just how seminal and important Du Bois' line of thinking is, at least compared to Park:

> While Park clung to the heritage of nineteenth-century thinking who stressed natural racial hierarchies, and biological determinism, Du Bois foreshadowed the current social constructionist approach, which emphasizes race as a social construct and highlights the role of power in establishing and maintaining racial inequalities.[28]

The astonishing thing is that Du Bois came to his thinking on race at least a decade if not more before Robert E. Park was spouting his theory of the race relations cycle. Park's thought was retrograde, even as the hegemonic narrative heralds Park's thought on race as innovative.

We can now begin to see that the reason for why Du Bois was marginalized, and why his influence has been obscured, is not just his skin color. It is also that he was intellectually insurrectionary – intellectually heterodox – challenging the hegemony of scientific racism upon which white sociology had been mounted at the time. Heterodoxies rarely win over orthodoxy, but imagine how much more difficult it must have been given that the heterodoxy came from a black man in early twentieth century America? And how much more if the orthodoxy in question – scientific racism – had institutions with money behind it, while the heterodoxy had almost no resources? This is the story Morris tells: Du Bois was marginalized partly because Du Bois and his colleagues were right, and mainstream sociology was wrong, and yet mainstream sociology had all the power to define right and wrong in the first place.

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Throughout *The Scholar Denied* we see more closely how this marginalization and erasure worked. Morris shows, for example, how the anti-scientific racism of Boas and Du Bois developed in tandem, and that they corresponded and held each other with mutual respect and admiration, but that Boas' views were later accepted and Du Bois marginalized because Boas was better positioned as a white male at Columbia University. We see how Du Bois laboriously built his Atlanta School but how he faced countless difficulties stemming from limited funding and institutional help. And we see how he was repeatedly set aside due to claims that, as a black man, his sociology was taken by the powers-that-be to be "biased" (while work by Myrdal, by contrast, was presumed to *not* be biased despite the fact that Myrdal was white).

One instance of this suppression of heterodoxy is especially worth noting. When Du Bois argued that his findings proved that black people were not inferior, the US Department of Labor refused to publish his work and even destroyed the manuscript report on the grounds that it "touched on political matters."[29] All the while, when Park at Chicago or Giddings at Columbia proclaimed the inferiority of the "savage races", their views were taken to be *not* political. They were taken to be objective, while the views of Du Bois were not. Institutional racism here took the form of claims to objectivity and science - and both functioned to suppress heterodoxic social theory.

SOCIOLOGY'S PAROCHIALITY

The story told by Morris is tragic. But, on the other hand, it should not be entirely surprising. After all, sociology, as it has come to us through the Chicago School, Columbia University and other major white institutions was founded as a project of and for power. It emerged in the nineteenth century as an intellectual formation meant to manage disorder from below: to stave off the threats to social order and coherence posed by recalcitrant workers, immigrants, women, and natives.[30] Let us not forget: the earliest use of the term "sociology" in the title of a book in the United States came from George Fitzhugh and Henry Hughes, who used it as part of their intellectual effort to vindicate the slave system in the American South.[31] And later in the nineteenth century, as sociological ideas conjoined with scientific racism, and as sociology began to be institutionalized at Chicago or Columbia, sociology's task become one of giving intellectual coherence to the fact of ongoing imperial domination, offering a putatively scientific justification for Anglo-Saxon rule over those whom sociologist Franklin Giddings and others referred to as the "savage hordes" and "inferior races" of the world.[32]

Orthodox sociology as it first emerged was parochial to the core, in the sense that it represented a very particular worldview and standpoint. It embedded and embodied the mindset of white elites in the dominant imperial metropoles that, in those tumultuous decades of the early twentieth century, were extending their violent imperial hand around the world in the name of civilization – and to the tragic detriment of Du Bois' distant African ancestors.[33]

No doubt, *all* social science is parochial. It comes from a place. It is shaped by the interests behind, around, and subventing it. Each theoretical construction embeds a specific standpoint. Did Du Bois and the Atlanta School have a distinct standpoint? Of course. Theirs was a standpoint that came not only from their personal experience but also through their empirical research into black communities. Theirs was

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a standpoint that summoned the question that Du Bois famously asked in *The Souls of Black Folk*: "how does it *feel* to be a problem?"[34] This is the standpoint that emerged from the field research of Du Bois and his teams. But white privileged departments of Sociology also had their distinct standpoint. And theirs was the standpoint of imperial power. Theirs was the standpoint that did not ask how it "felt" to be a problem but that thought in terms of "social problems" that had to be managed. And theirs was the standpoint that defined social problems as anything that disturbed, upset, or challenged the social order of the metropole and the global order of racial domination.

So yes, all social science is parochial. The difference is that some of these standpoints get valorized as universal and others get marginalized as particularistic. Some become heralded as objective and true, others get resisted as subjective or irrelevant. Orthodox sociology, such as that which emerged at Chicago, is parochial yet it masquerades as universal, and it has only been able to pull off this God trick because of the money and resources behind it – money and resources which the Atlanta School were not afforded.

Running through *The Scholar Denied*, however implicitly, is this very story of standpoints, power, and marginalization. And this is why the story of *The Scholar Denied* is much bigger than a professional insider's debate about founders; bigger than something that only the History of Sociology Section of the ASA should bother with. It is also bigger than questions about who to include on our syllabi, or what stories we tell of the University of Chicago. It is a wake up call about our own professional doxa. It is a call to be just a little more skeptical about those sociological standpoints that purport universality when they are not – and can never be. And it is a call to be just a little more open to those standpoints that get occluded: standpoints which would otherwise lead us to real and valuable insights into the social world, just as did the work of Du Bois.

Amidst the discussion of the *The Scholar Denied* on the website "Sociology Job Rumors", one respondent wrote that they will not bother reading the book because "it's not relevant to the discipline today." If this is representative of the minds of sociology PhD students in the US today, we are in a sad state indeed. For what this sort of presentist response misses is that the story of Du Bois, his influence, and his occlusion is relevant to the discipline today. It is crucial for the discipline today. For it speaks to a general social process in the academy that reenacts today what had happened to Du Bois back then (however in ways that we might not easily see). *The Scholar Denied* is a powerful and persuasive plea to pay attention to those voices that might still be unwittingly relegated to the margins on the grounds of their ostensible particularism or subjectivism. And it is a reminder that the cost of such marginalization is not simply an ethical one, it is an epistemic one. And it is one that sociology cannot afford.

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1 Lewis A. Coser, "American Trends," in A History of Sociological Analysis, ed. Tom Bottomore and Robert Nisbet (New York: Basic Books, 1978), po. 311.

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3 Craig Calhoun, "Sociology in America: An Introduction," in Sociology in America: A History, ed. Craig Calhoun (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 1.

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5 Aldon Morris, *The Scholar Denied*: W.E.B. Du bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), p. 1.

6 Ibid., p. 2-3.

7 Ibid., p. 2.

8 Ibid., p. 47.

9 Ibid., p. 62.

10 Tolman quoted in ibid., p.74.

11 Morris, p. 76.

12 Baker quoted in Morris, p. 95.

13 Morris is also quick to note how Jane Addams' work and the Hull House can also be seen as establishing scientific sociology early on.

14 http://www.socjobrumors.com/topic/groundbreaking-book-argues-du-bois-is-primary-founder-of-modern-empirical-sociology/page/4. Accessed November 1, 2015.

15 Quoted in Morris, p. 197.

16 Morris, pp. 145-6.

17 Morris, p. 150.

18 Morris, pp. 182-194.

19 Morris, p. 119.

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28 Morris, p. 130.

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30 Patricia Owens, Economy of Force: Counterinsurgency and the Historical Rise of the Social (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

31 Calhoun, "Sociology in America: An Introduction,", p. 5.

32 Franklin Henry Giddings, Democracy and empire; with studies of their psychological, economic, and moral foundations (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1900).. For more on racial thought and empire in early sociology, see R.W. Connell, "Why is Classical Theory Classical?," American Journal of Sociology 102, no. 6 (1997), Julian Go, "Sociology's Imperial Unconscious: the Emergence of American Sociology in the Context of Empire," in Sociology and Empire, ed. George Steinmetz (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), and Julian Go, "Beyond Metrocentrism: From empire to globalism in early US sociology," Journal of Classical Sociology 14, no. 2 (2013).

33 Connell, "Why is Classical Theory Classical?." On the racial origins of International Relations, and the marginalization of the "Howard School" of International relations that is not unlike the marginalization of the sociological Atlanta school, see the illuminating excavation by Robert Vitalis, White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

34 W. E. B. Du bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1994 [1903]).

FORUM ON W.E.B. DU BOIS

At the 2015 conference of the American Sociological Association, five eminent scholars of W. E. B. Du bois came together to discuss his works and contributions to sociology. The essays in this forum have been adapted from the ASA panel discussion.

INTRODUCTION: FROM DU BOIS TO BLACK LIVES MATTER

by ALDON MORRIS

One of Du Bois' most powerful ideas was also most discomforting to the establishment: a belief in rigorous scholarship that was also engaged in the project of political transformation. It's a legacy we ought to reclaim.

Today black blood flows in streets throughout the nation. A century ago, the great sociologist and activist. W. E. B. Du Bois, witnessed white mobs murder and maim African Americans to keep them at the bottom of American society. Little did I know when I started my research over a decade ago for my just-published book on Du bois entitled *The Scholar Denied* that his role as scholar/activist would provide a lens for me to think and act in 2016. But I find myself seeking counsel anew from his work.

We all know that racial violence and oppression is hardly new. And it was not new a century ago when Du Bois wrote, "We bow our heads and hearken soft to the sobbing of women and little children." The Black community sobs today. Racial oppression has not lifted. Black poverty still stalks the land and as Du Bois observed in 1903, "To be a poor man is hard, but to be a poor race in a land of dollars is the very bottom of hardships."

Over a century ago, Du Bois founded a field of sociology that demands that we hold up for examination hard truths about racism and that forces one to separate myth from reality. He uncovered the ways in which the "white" West dominated people of color globally. His scholarship set out to prove all races were equal and that race was "socially constructed." Through his penetrating scholarship on racial oppression, Du Bois set out to do nothing less than produce an academic and public sociology that sought to further social justice. Du Bois was one of the first scholars to examine the origins and purposes of whiteness. It was clear to him that a white identity was crafted by human beings and not by nature or happenstance. For Du Bois, "The discovery of a personal whiteness among the world's peoples is a very modern thing,—a nineteenth and twentieth century matter, indeed." Whiteness was created to establish racial hierarchies among peoples so that those with the designated superior skin color could exploit those deemed as having inferior pigmentation. As he observed: "I do not laugh. I am quite straight-faced as I ask soberly: 'But what on earth is whiteness that one should so desire it?' Then always, somehow, some way, silently but clearly, I am given to understand that whiteness is the ownership of the earth forever and ever, Amen!" The disproportionate rates of poverty, murder, and incarceration of people of color today demonstrate that white skin color continues to be privileged while Black lives in particular are denigrated.

While activists have used a new social movement moniker "Black Lives Matter" to give voice to a sense that racial injustice continues to dominate the lives of people of color, I find myself wondering about what responsibilities I have as a black scholar to speak out. It's risky to be an activist sociologist: as often as not it derails careers, limits social networks and curtails upward mobility in the profession and in the public media. But, again, Du Bois illuminates my own path, declaring: "I am one who tells the truth and exposes evil and seeks with Beauty for Beauty to set the world right." Like Marx, and *The Berkley Journal of Sociology*, Du Bois believed that scholarship had a political purpose: The point, after all, is to change the world. Through scholarship and political activism Du Bois was always a scholar/activist who performed the two roles seamlessly throughout his career. Clearly activism is no hindrance to first rank scholarship.

I have concluded that one of the primary tasks of black sociologists — actually all sociologists – is to produce pointed and critical scholarship, even when it is discomfiting to the powers-that-be. As black intellectuals we need to follow Du Bois's lead in speaking truth to power. White sociologists should also follow Du Bois' lead and execute research enabling them to speak racial truth to power. But, ah, white privilege is a stubborn beast, standing in the way of truths. *The Scholar Denied* challenges social scientists to think critically about scientific disciplines. The book raises questions whether disciplines' theories of their origins contain myths and inaccurate accounts that exist because what is thought to be scientific knowledge is often driven by existing power relations and reigning ideologies. *The Scholar Denied* argues that power, money, politics and the ideology of white supremacy led to W.E.B. Du Bois being 'written out' of the founding of sociology and having his intellectual breakthroughs marginalized in the field well over a century. Time is long overdue for major curricula and pedagogical changes to be made in sociology. The field should include sociological works of Du Bois so that scholars can engage the social world with a critical eye and become more reflexive regarding their own biases absorbed from a world still practicing globe racism and human exploitation.

That great Black bard, Countee Cullen, in a poetic conversation with God concedes, "Yet do I marvel at this curious thing: To make a poet black, and bid him sing!" Our calling is to sing sociological truths. Black scholars should heed Frederick Douglass' insight: "He who would be free must himself strike the first blow!" As I try to show in *The Scholar Denied*, our work needs to be political, engaged, rigorous—Du Bois has paved the way for us in his path breaking, brilliant body of scholarship and activism. The scholarship of the oppressed, and those seeking a more just world, must be more scientific and rigorous than that of the guardian of the status quo precisely because there is so much at stake.

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FOR COLORED SCHOLARS WHO CONSIDER SUICIDE WHEN OUR RAINBOWS ARE NOT ENUF

by MARCUS HUNTER

W.E.B. Du Bois was deeply aware of the capacity of marginalized people to produce new knowledge about oppression and inequality. He is still a beacon for young black scholars today.

A melodic steel drum echoes. Black women chant down Babylon. A funk infected with the skank of Lee Scratch Perry. "If you are a big big tree," Bob Marley announces in rhythm, "then we are a small axe." In triumphant repeat, Marley coos, "Ready to cut you down, to cut you down." Recorded in a modest studio under a Jamaican sun in 1973, "Small Axe," would appear on Marley's album 'Burnin'.

The song, performed in the key of Black freedom, gives musical trappings to an important truth. The small axe is the Black experience. Marginalized and oppressed peoples are the small axes. The big trees are topics and issues that animate what C. Wright Mills called our 'sociological imagination': inequality, incarceration, unemployment, urbanization and race relations.

The life and sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois amplify this critical perspective. Over the last decade, I have spent much time with Professor Du Bois' work. In that time, one reflection of his has especially stayed with me. Reminiscing over eighty years of life, Du Bois makes a powerful confession in his autobiography. "From the Fall of 1894 to the Spring of 1910, for 16 years," Du Bois intimates, "I was a teacher and student of social science." After becoming Harvard University's first Black PhD, Du Bois would then spend two years "at Wilberforce...a year and a half at the University of Pennsylvania; and for 13 years at Atlanta University in Georgia." Du Bois "sought in these years to know my world and to teach *youth* the meaning and way of the world."

In this reflection, we are given a glimpse of Du Bois' motivations and intentions. He confesses that his work and teaching were intended for the youth, an effort to gather and spread as much sincere and scholarly information on the ex-

periences and realities of Black and Brown peoples as possible. We are given not just his personal and professional trajectory, but also the sentiment that his work was explicitly for us: *US sociologists*, all of us being youths in light of Du Bois' seniority; *US Black and Brown folk,* scholars and voices seeking a lighthouse in the wilderness of Cartesian-dominated white logics and methods; *US social scientists*, researchers braving the complicated and dynamic terrains of people science. For my part, I took the passage as directly aimed at me. I believed Du Bois to be confessing that he wrote the blueprint—*The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*—for me.

> *Du Bois' work and teaching were intended for the youth, an effort to gather and spread as much sincere and scholarly information on the experiences and realities of Black and Brown peoples as possible.*

Allow me to provide some background. My Du Bois journey began here, in Chicago, in 2005. A 1996 Nissan Altima carried my family and me from there to there in search of my PhD in sociology—traipsing from Philadelphia, through Pittsburgh, pass Cleveland and Youngstown, beyond Indianapolis and Gary. We arrived amidst a humid August evening, rolling up the ragged asphault of Lakeshore Drive towards Northwestern University's Evanston headquarters.

We were excited. My mom smiled as her brown eyes swallowed the beauty of Lake Michigan, a visual reprieve from the vast and flat plains of Middle America. I, too, was taken with the scene. I remember the lake, the green space, the smell of deep-dish pizza and separate black and white regions that went on for miles. As we made the left around the bin known as Sheridan Road, reflecting on Chicago I thought to myself "This was a spacious but thoroughly segregated city."

After several years in the Windy City, I was struck by the chokehold Chicago, the university and the city, had on the discipline of sociology, especially urban sociology and ethnography. Convinced of Chicago's peculiarity despite its prominence as the go-to-spot for sociological inquiry, I began to rethink Philadelphia—the city from where I had left to come to Chicago. My intellectual emancipation led to rediscovery. Enter Professor Du Bois.

Many years of reading, re-reading, writing and re-writing on *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899) have led to the conclusion that Du Bois and his work stand in stark contrast to the sometimes-right-sometimes-very-racist-logics of ecology that emanate out of a urban sociological tradition began by Robert E. Park and Ernest Burgess at the University of Chicago in the early 20th Century. As I have shown in my own work, most notably in *Black Citymakers: How The Philadelphia Negro Changed Urban America*, Du Bois was deeply aware of what I call *small axe sociology*—the capacity of marginalized and oppressed peoples' actions, attitudes, and histories to produce new knowledge and identify patterns and causes of inequality.

Du Bois knew that in order to understand human development and society, as is our intellectual mission, one must have full, sincere, and deep appreciation and study of the Black American experience. How did a population devastated by hundreds of years of brutalization, enslavement and racism manage to thrive and survive? In a lifelong quest to answer and animate this question, Du Bois' work shows time and again that the Black American experience is sociologically rich and dynamic.

Despite providing much of sociology's earliest and most insightful scholarship, Du Bois remains deeply under-taught, underappreciated, and underutilized. As shown by a whole host of scholars–including Ange Marie-Hancock, James Mc Kee, Aldon Morris, and Earl Wright II—over the course of the 20th Century Du Bois' works, such as *The Philadelphia Negro*, would be denied and invisibilized in and by the very discipline and profession he spent years toiling to enhance and create.

Du Bois' scholarship, while massive, is melded with a personal biography all too sobering and all too familiar. A promising young Black scholar, the first of his kind, attends the top schools and is still the last to be chosen and the last to be listen to and respected. Newly married, Du Bois and his first wife Nina arrived in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1896 with high hopes. Called to study the Black lifeworld of Philadelphia, Du Bois was careful and detailed in his quest. After speaking with nearly 5,000 Black residents and combing archives miles-high-and-miles-long, he researched and wrote *The Philadelphia Negro* in two years.

During those two years, he would witness his first child, a boy named Burghardt, die, succumbing to diphtheria. Yet, he endured.

Not provided an office or a legitimate academic title at the University of Pennsylvania, Du Bois pressed on. Sent packing unceremoniously after completing his masterwork and with little academic prospects, Du Bois forged ahead. Just a few years later, he would spend more than a decade establishing the first school of sociology at (Clark) Atlanta University. While there, he would supervise and author numerous projects on the experiences, politics, religion, and histories enmeshed in the Black American experience.

This he would do with less support, less sociological notoriety and before Park, St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, William Foote Whyte and all the other scholars that would later take interest in urban Black lifeworlds. Despite his abundant scholarship, Du Bois' career would take yet another turn in 1910. As Du Bois later admits 1910 is quite the pivotal year:

> *"And so I changed from studying the Negro problem to propaganda—to letting people know just what the Negro problem meant and what colored people were suffering and were kept from doing. I was practically compelled to make this change because the people who were supporting Atlanta University were a little uneasy about the way in which I talked about the Negro problem and pressure began to be put upon the University to do without my services. I had begun to criticize Booker [T.] Washington, saying it wasn't enough to teach Negroes trades. The Negroes had to have some voice in their government, they had to have protection in the courts and they had to have trained men to lead them. Well all of this together put such pressure upon Atlanta University that at last I resigned...They would have had to drop me if they wanted to keep the philanthropic gifts that were coming from rich people in the North. So I accepted an invitation to New York in 1910 to come help the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People."*

Despite having a CV that included at least 5 books, over 100 articles (a conservative estimate), and a cadre of brilliant and well-trained students, Du Bois would be compelled to formally leave the academy in 1910. Fluent in more than 3 languages, Du Bois would be ignored, dismissed, and plagiarized by scholars of lesser talents. And so the story has gone until recent decades.

With all this in tow, a reasoned person should kindly ask: How do we come to terms with the lessons of Du Bois' personal and professional experience? To which I respond: *Intellectual Reparations!* —accompanied by a swelling chorus comprised of Ntozake Shange's colorfully complicated protagonists.

How do we repair this problematic disciplinary history? How do we make good on the errors of sociology as it relates to noting and citing the tremendous imports of Du Boisian sociology previously unacknowledged? Shouldn't we go back through the work of our earliest writers and thinkers and make explicit reference to the implicit yet obvious contributions Du Bois' work has made to areas like social movements, religion, urban sociology and politics etc.? Wouldn't it be appropriate for the *American Journal of Sociology* to provide its long-overdue review of *The Philadelphia Negro* now? If you're looking for reviewers, this brotha is available. As the phrase goes: Better late than not at all.

The truth of the matter is quite simple. While we have critical institutional interventions such as the *Association of Black Sociologists* and the *American Sociological Association*'s Minority Fellowship Program, we *need* more. We sociologists of all ilks and interests owe a great debt to scholars of color like Professor Du Bois—and here I would also add the mighty Anna Julia cooper, the plucky Ida B Wells-Barnett, the wise Zora Neale Hurston and the poignant James Baldwin, to name a few. To deny these scholars is to deny our true role, place and responsibility in the science of society and human development. To deny them is to allow a pernicious and racist epistemology to continue to dictate who and what are considered bodies of knowledge.

We must manifest a disciplinary and professional agenda that seeks to reconcile and repair the racial and intellectual injuries endured by Black and Brown scholars, from Du Bois to Horace Cayton to current sociologists of color subjected to the cynicism and dismissiveness similar to that which hovered Du Bois' life and scholarship. Du Bois' life and sociology reveal that understanding, conveying, and centering the Black experience does NOT limit our science. Rather, the intellectual and material category of 'Black' is a powerful tool for measuring and apprehending the social world.

I take stock in Du Bois' personal and professional example not only because he thrived and survived in the post-Emancipation academy, but also because the patterns of mistreatment and diminishing of Black scholars and Black scholarship persists. There are still departments across our great discipline, for example, where students and professors are racial pioneers—the first of something in something somewhere where they are the token or marginal minority.

I am encouraged by the new sunshine that has been poured upon Du Bois' work in recent years. For it means that despite all efforts to exclude marginalized and oppressed people, history can be a great filter. For instance, most people, if

To deny these scholars ... is to allow a pernicious and racist epistemology to continue to dictate who and what are considered bodies of knowledge.

asked, likely have no clue the names of the sociology faculty at the University Pennsylvania while Du Bois was there. But some of US, and hopefully now more of US, know that Du Bois was there and what a missed opportunity not giving him a full appointment is and was—a disciplinary tragedy of the highest-order. Unlike Du Bois, many scholars of color cannot and are not able to endure these same racial and intellectual injuries. Nor should they have to. When we reduce the voices we include, we do damage to our profession and many scholars and students die. Many scholars of color leave the discipline in the quiet of the night, unnoticed and easily forgotten. Others perish due to the intellectual, political, economic and physical tolls of being treated in ways similar to which Du Bois experienced. This reality is the true problem for the discipline in the 21st Century. For all of the colored scholars considering suicide, our rainbows are enough for they are patterned with the blood, sweat and tears of the elders. Thank you Professor William Edward Burghardt Du Bois. We are because you are.

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Three Great Revolutions: Black Women and Social Change

by CHERYL TOWNSEND GILKES

Long before "intersectionality" gave us a language to analyze the interactions of race, class, and gender, W.E.B. Du Bois examined the particular experience and role of black women in American capitalism.

"What is today the message of these black women to America and to the world? The uplift of women is, next to the problem of the color line and the peace movement, our greatest modern cause. When now, two of these movements—women and color—combine in one, the combination has deep meaning."

–W. E. B. Du Bois, 1920

In 1915, sociologist and mathematician Kelly Miller submitted an essay to The Crisis that argued against woman suffrage. A contemporary of W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, Miller sought a middle ground between the educational and political philosophies of the two leaders. A scholar committed to the growth and expansion of Howard University, Miller had also worked with Du Bois at *The Crisis*. As a committed intellectual, Du Bois could thus not simply ignore Miller. Miller was a powerful peer who was sometimes an ally on matters of education and uplift. Du Bois, the editor of *The Crisis*, decided to publish the essay. But he also decided to utilize his editorial authority to counter his colleague's arguments in support of woman suffrage.

Woman suffrage was something that Du Bois passionately supported. Introducing Miller's essay as editor, Du Bois insisted on answering and opposing every point that Miller made.[1] Giving black women the vote, as far as Du Bois was concerned, would be a more powerful benefit to black people overall than white women's votes would empower white people (who were oppressors with too much power already). As far as Du Bois was concerned, the role of women in black America was so vital that there was, in effect, a multiplier at work when women got involved. That multiplier effect would benefit the entire "small nation of people", in the words of David Levering Lewis and Deborah Willis, within the nation of the United States.[2] It was tied to what Du Bois called black women's "three great revolutions."

This essay points to the early role of W. E. B. Du Bois in developing the perspective that we now call intersectional—analyses that account for the interactions among gender, race, and class, especially when evaluating and understanding black women's experiences and the experiences of women of color.[3] While I am tempted to call him the pioneer of such analysis, one colleague suggests that Frederick Douglass and Anna Julia Cooper may have beat him to the starting line. However, Du Bois's sociological approach to black women not only embraced a holistic understanding of black women's experience, but he also saw black women's agency as a central constitutive component of black culture, consciousness, and social organization. While contemporary feminist and womanist analyses seek to identify the double jeopardy or, taking into consideration the interaction effects among the multiple dimensions of African American women's experience, what Deborah King identified as black women's "multiple jeopardy,"[4] Du Bois could have used a phrase like "multiple threat" to describe black women's multiple capacities for agency and social change. Writing early in the twentieth century, however, Du Bois used the term revolution.

Black women embodied, according to Du Bois, the "three great revolutions" that defined the age: labor, black people, and women.

Black women embodied, according to Du Bois, the "three great revolutions" that defined the age: labor, black people, and women. The rise of capitalism and industrial economies engendered a range of social upheavals, especially involving labor and the dynamics of political economies. Before the end of the civil war, there were women's rights conventions that argued for woman suffrage. Black women, especially and most famously Sojourner Truth, were a part of these conventions although they had to press their way in against white opposition. At the end of the Civil War, during Reconstruction, black men acquired the vote. Rather than resent black men's gaining the vote, black women insisted upon participating in the political meetings to make black men accountable to their entire community. In some cases, where violence was threatened, black women provided the security for political meetings. For example, in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1898, black women insisted that black men confront the threat of violence and vote; the women threatened to label black men as cowards if they did not attempt to go to the polls.[5]

Du Bois viewed the political participation of black people as the critical renewal and expansion of democracy in the United States. The role of women in this process, without the vote, was already considerable; with the vote, this struggle for progressive change would be far more effective. He thus evaluated the public impact of women and men differently, and viewed women as more politically trustworthy. But this was not simply an argument that cast women as morally superior, as was common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In countering Kelly Miller, Du Bois argued that black women could not be bought, and that therefore their votes would have a greater collective effect. Had Du Bois lived to see the last two elections in the United States, he would have observed the fruits of his trust: black women had the highest voter participation of any group, white or black.

Du Bois argues that black women's roles as workers serve to emancipate all women by contradicting the ideology that excludes women from the labor force.

Beyond his arguments for woman suffrage, Du Bois saw black women's experiences, their community activities, and their labor experiences as an integral part of the powerful material, cultural, and political contribution to the making of America that Du Bois called The Gift of Black Folk.[6] In the book, Du Bois expanded upon a question he asked and began to answer in his earlier 1903 book, The Souls of Black Folk. In the book's final essay, "Of the Sorrow Songs," Du Bois asked: "This country, how came it yours?" He began to answer by pointing to the "gifts" that black people brought to America—their labor, their songs, and their "spirit." In *The Gift of Black Folk*, Du Bois expanded his answer to the question by extending his analysis of the role of black people in "the making of America." Instead of three gifts, Du Bois identified nine. Before the labor of slavery (2), labor that Du Bois believed shortened the development process by two hundred years, there was the role of the black explorers (1) and black soldiers (3). Along with the creation of the folk song (4), Du Bois pointed to the importance of folklore, art, and literature (5). The "gift of the spirit" (6) represented the African and African American impact on American religion, an aspect of Du Bois's analysis that begs for what Peter Coclanis calls "thickening description."[7] Two highly linked additional gifts acting as forces in shaping America were represented in the challenges that Black people brought that expanded democracy, what Du Bois calls the emancipation of democracy (7), and the role black people played in reconstructing democracy after the civil war (8). The list constituted a rehearsal of ideas that later blossomed into *Black Reconstruction in America*, Du Bois's 1935 book that Anna Julia Cooper had passionately urged him to write.[8]

But the most important of the nine gifts, for our purposes, was Du Bois's setting apart the role of women as a distinct gift or cultural and social force in the making of America. That chapter Du Bois problematically titled, "The Freedom of Womanhood." In it, he offers a comprehensive understanding of the importance of black women to the "making of America."[9] In their roles as laborers, as community activists, and, ironically and problematically and in ways that would be considered highly "politically incorrect" today, in the exploitation of their sexuality and reproductive labor skills, black women are a significant cultural and social force. Du Bois argues that black women's roles as workers serve to emancipate all women by contradicting the ideology that excludes women from the labor force. It is an argument that anticipates Angela Davis's later analysis of the role of black women during slavery[10] and Paula Giddings's assessment of black women's work roles as a vanguard for white women in the labor force in the late twentieth century.[11]

Du Bois attempted to redeem the horrors of black women's history by pointing to the role of black women as pioneers in cross-cultural relations. Ironically, this included black women who worked as domestic workers. It is quite possible that he was influenced by the work of women such as Nannie Helen Burroughs, who saw the occupational role of the majority of black women at that time as an opportunity to do missionary work in obliterating race prejudice and white supremacy. A major project of African American agency, in the face of American racism, has been asserting and establishing the full humanity of black people, a project echoed currently, I think, in #BlackLivesMatter. Du Bois tried to argue that the dialectics of certain aspects of black women's suffering provided painful opportunities for what today we might call euphemistically "intercultural understanding."

For me, the most important part of Du Bois's 1924 analysis is his assessment of black women's club and community work. He pointed out that black women did not have the economic resources that white women enjoyed. But although black women lacked money, they managed through their missionary societies and their clubs—through church participation and civic engagement—to bind together the black community and to engage in social uplift. My reading of Du Bois is to feel comfortable in arguing that black women are responsible for the organizational integrity of the black community and in shaping its infrastructure of black liberation. Du Bois's analysis of black women's community work provides an angle of vision that makes one actually see black women's agency in labor struggles, women's issues, and black liberation. The "three revolutions" that black women embody may also account for the particular viciousness of the stereotypes that serve as weapons in enforcing the subordination of black women and their communities, something that Patricia Hill Collins identifies as controlling images.[12]

During the period of Du Bois's most intense observations and analyses of the black experience, black people were in the process of forming distinctive public spheres, largely through the national conventions of their denominations. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham demonstrated that between 1880 and 1920, black Baptist women established one of the most significant of these spheres: the Women's Convention of the National Baptist Convention.[13] The growth and development of this sphere coincided with the emergence, in 1896, of the National Association of Colored Women, an organization of organizations that drew together the leaders and members of two national organizations: the Colored Women's League and the National Federation of Afro-American Women. Those two organizations encompassed at least 400 local and state organizations and federations of black women. A few of these black women, most notably Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, also participated in federations, clubs, and suffrage organizations of white women—sometimes only if the black women were light enough to "pass." The formation of the National Association of Colored Women (which would later become the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs) represented the emergence of black church women as national leaders in a sphere that was independent of the control of clergymen and their conventions. Du Bois was especially critical of Baptist men for their fractiousness—their willingness to divide and split churches and conventions over

"In law and in custom, our women have no rights that a white man is bound to respect."

– W.E.B. Du Bois, 1914

doctrinal issues and in competition for power. This was especially prevalent among Baptists, a problem that was exacerbated by the lack of a connectional hierarchy that could bring nationally organized resources to support and defend small rural congregations, especially during the period known as the *nadir* of American race relations. Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin made it clear that black women were not separating or alienating but were simply moving to the front to join with anyone, women or men, willing to do the work of racial uplift.

Because of their ability to organize and transcend differences through multiple organizational memberships, Du Bois viewed women as responsible for what I like to call the infrastructure of black liberation.

Du Bois assessed the value of women's organizations as vital to the development of the black community. Because of their ability to organize and transcend differences through multiple organizational memberships, Du Bois viewed women as responsible for what I like to call the infrastructure of black liberation. He regarded women and their organizations as the fundamental organizational infrastructure of the black community.

Higginbotham also noted that the politics of black Christian women evince what she called "the politics of respectability." That concept, I think, has been frequently mischaracterized and used dismissively in pop ideology and academia; the way it is dismissed and denigrated represents another subtle attack on the viability of black women's politics. As part of their political activities, black women sought to demonstrate their fitness and capability for participation in the public affairs of their churches, their communities, and the nation. While these practices have been labeled "middle class", and some of the most prominent women leaders were clearly elite—for instance, Mary Church Terrell and Margaret Murray Washington—the majority of women in churches and clubs were working class or, to utilize the language of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), "women in industry."

Black women and their work reflected a cultural contradiction that black people address with difficulty, if at all. Noting the response of black people to the fictional works of Barbara Neely and Kathryn Stockett about black women household domestics, it is clear that the dialectics and unintended consequences of black female domestic labor have not been integrated into our analysis of black women's labor, political, and cultural histories. For many African American women, however, that occupational heritage fuels their consciousness and commitment to the black community. Once when doing fieldwork at a 1983 convention of sanctified church women, I observed the closing remarks provided by the daughter of the denomination's founder. She reminded the women—whose various class positions were evident and sometimes masked by their dress and other status characteristics, but who were united in their roles as evangelists, missionaries, supervisors, and deaconesses—to be sure to leave a tip for housekeeping by saying, "Remember when we had those jobs!" The speaker who was saying "we" had never had such a job but considered herself as part of the "we."

Du Bois recognized the platforms on which black women gathered to deliberate across class and status lines as the spaces in which the "three great revolutions" received their energy. When organizations mobilized to produce what we now appreciate as the civil rights movement, many of the platforms that were mobilized were shaped and peopled by women, especially the churches. A famous male civil rights leader is reputed to have stated that, "If women ever leave the movement, I'm going where the women are going because nothing's going to happen without the women." Du Bois, if he were alive to hear this, would probably express relief that one of the representatives of those male leaders he criticized for their fractiousness has finally grasped the importance of black women to the total wellbeing of the entire black community, of society, and of the world. We need to take seriously Du Bois's understanding of these "three great revolutions," thicken our descriptions of black women's communities, culture, and consciousness, and harness the power of this interaction among revolutions.[14] In times like these we need this kind of intersectionality at work.

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1 Du Bois, W.E.B. 1972[1915]. "Votes for Women." In: Daniel Walden (ed.), *The Crisis Writings*. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications. Also see: Du Bois, W. E. Burghardt. 1898. "The Study of Negro Problems." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. January, 1898. | Du Bois, W.E.B. 1972[1912]. "The Black Mother." In Daniel Walden, Editor, *The Crisis Writings*. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications. | Du Bois, W.E.B. 1969[1920]. "The Damnation of Women." Pp. 163192 in *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*. New York: Schocken Books.

2 Lewis, David Levering, and Deborah Willis. 2003. *A Small Nation of People: W. E. B. Du Bois & African American Portraits of Progress*. New York: HarperCollins (Amistad) Publishers.

3 It is important to remember that in a racialized, stratified society, everyone's experiences reflect the intersection of gender, race, and class; my focus on black women reflects the highly problematic and adverse consequences of this interaction.

4 King, Deborah. 1988. "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14(1) 265-295.

5 See "The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow" Episode 2. http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/

6 Du Bois, W.E.B. 1975 [1924]. *The Gift of Black Folk.* Millwood, New York: KrausThomson Organization Limited.

7 Coclanis, Peter. 1990. "Thickening Description: William Washington's Queries on Rice." *Agricultural History.* Vol. 64. No. 3 (Summer), pp. 9-16.

8 Du Bois, W.E.B. 1979 (1935). *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880.* New York: Atheneum Publishers. Also see: Lewis, David Levering. 2000. W.E.B. Du BoisThe Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963.

9 It is important to remember that what can be considered Du Bois's mission statement, his 1898 article in *The Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science* focused on the role of sociology in understanding the United States—a society whose unique circumstances provided a tremendous opportunity for the growth of sociology. For Du Bois, the black story was essential to the whole story and it made him conscious of the ways that others in the "whole story" were excluded and erased. Such an example can be found in his critical essay at the end of *Black Reconstruction in America* where he reminds us that the way southern history is approached excluded not only free black people but also the majority of white people by only focusing on the enslaved and their enslavers.

10 Davis, Angela. 1971. "The Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves."*The Black Scholar* 3 (4).

11 Giddings, Paula. 1984. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America.* New York: William Morrow and Company.

12 Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Unwin Hyman, Inc.

13 Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks. 1993. *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 18801920.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

14 See: Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. 1996. "The Margin as the Center of a Theory of History: AfricanAmerican Women, Social Change, and the Sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois." Pp. 111-139 in Bernard W. Bell, Emily R. Grosholz, and James B. Stewart, Editors. 1996. *W.E.B. Du Bois on Race and Culture.* New York: Routledge.

The First American School of Sociology:

W.E.B. Du Bois and the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory

by EARL WRIGHT II

At Atlanta University, W.E.B. Du Bois and his collaborators pioneered empirical research on race, inequality, and urban communities. It was the first truly American school of sociology.

At the end of my first year as a master's level student I began working on a thesis on Black male friendship bonds within the barbershop setting. Since there was relatively no data on Black barbershops in the existing literature my thesis chair instructed me to focus broadly on urban sociology as part of the literature review. While conducting the literature review search I came across information concerning the significance of the Chicago School to the discipline. I also came across information recognizing the Pittsburgh survey as the first urban sociological study in the nation. These discoveries bothered me but I could not understand why. While reading yet another glowing account of the contributions of non-Blacks to the origin and development of the discipline in the United States sometime later I had an 'aha' moment. I flashed back to my grandparent's bookshelf to a book with a provocative title written by a man with a funny and long name.

I lived with my grandparents for part of my childhood. Periodic stays with my grandparents was a welcome escape from the hit or miss opportunities of eating food at my mom's home and the lax security provided by a single parent who's job often made both she and I vulnerable to attack given the late and early hours of arrival and departure from our duplex home. Beyond the assurance of a guaranteed meal and physical security, I enjoyed living with my grandparents because they had a bookshelf that contained volumes of writings that enabled me to imagine life beyond my circumscribed community. I remember looking at the bookshelf one day while trying to decide which book, at the age of ten, I wanted to read. All of a sudden *The Philadelphia Negro* by William Edward Burghardt Du Bois jumped out at me. As a ten year old I began to read, or more accurately stated, look thru the pages of Du Bois's book. While I did not understand most of what

was written I absorbed the writings as best I could and I examined the maps of the Seventh Ward Philadelphia community for hours. While the provocative title and author's funny name were memorable, the most engaging part of the book was that it was published in 1899. The idea that I was reading a book published in the 1800's simply floored me. Over the next few years this book was always on my mind. Whenever I visited my grandparents I would look for the book to make sure it was still there. Little did I know how much that book would influence the trajectory of my life.

Why is W. E. B. Du Bois's The Philadelphia Negro, *published in 1899, not considered the first urban sociological investigation or even acknowledged by sociology instructors or in sociology textbooks?*

While conducting my literature review search I realized that the discomfort I experienced in my seminar some time earlier and the uneasiness of conducting the urban sociology literature review were probably my subconscious mind prodding me to think back to my grandparent's bookshelf and challenging me to use that book to push back against claims promoted by virtually every sociologists that I had come into contact with to that point. Sitting alone in the library I thought to myself, "If the Chicago School of Sociology studies were conducted in the 1920's and the Pittsburgh survey was conducted in 1907, why are they considered the earliest and most important urban sociological investigations?" Why is W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro*, published in 1899, not considered the first urban sociological investigation or even acknowledged by sociology instructors or in sociology textbooks? This question necessitated that I explore the existing literature to ascertain if and where Du Bois's book fit within sociological discussions concerning early American urban sociological studies.

USING THE MASTER'S TOOLS

I was singularly focused was on proving why Du Bois's *Philadelphia Negro*, not the Pittsburgh survey, was the first urban sociological study conducted in the United States. Having no knowledge of his works prior to *The Philadelphia Negro*, the literature review search began with a quest to discover any works that Du Bois published prior to the Philadelphia study that could be considered an early, if not the earliest, example of urban sociological inquiry. During my search I became increasingly aware of references to Atlanta University and the annual investigations Du Bois directed at the school. Shortly thereafter, I became aware of the twenty volume series titled the *Atlanta University Study of the Negro Problems*. After reading the entire set of studies I was simultaneously awestruck and dumbfounded. If I were correct in the assessment of what I had read then what I uncovered was a finding more significant than simply the discovery of the first urban sociological study. What I had discovered was the first American school of sociology.

Not secure that I was the first person in more than one hundred years to draw this conclusion, I conducted a literature review search on the *Atlanta University Study of the Negro Problems*. To my surprise, since its inception in 1895 at Atlanta University and up to my literature search in 1999, there existed only two sociological analyses of the Du Bois led school. The first was a 1957 article by Elliott Rudwick on the sociological significance of the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory – the moniker bestowed by me on scholars engaged in sociological inquiry at Atlanta University between 1895 and 1924 – to the discipline.[1] Rudwick ultimately concluded that Du Bois's sixteen year tenure at the institution was not sociologically relevant because it did not produce any noteworthy findings and, more importantly, because it was simply a vehicle for the promotion of his propaganda on race and race issues. The second article that I discovered proved to be more important. Shaun L. Gabbidon wrote a piece that attempted to fit the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory into Martin L. Bulmer's construction of a school.[2] Bulmer's notion of a school, the most developed to date, included nine criteria. Of the nine criteria, Gabbidon concluded that Atlanta Sociological Laboratory did not qualify for school status because it failed to meet three. First, he argued that Du Bois never stated any theoretical perspective that he tested. Second, he argued that Du Bois did not collaborate with any prominent figures during his tenure at Atlanta University. Last, he proposed that the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory did not incur strong philanthropic support and, thus, did not qualify for school status as defined by Bulmer. Convinced that Du Bois's Atlanta Sociological Laboratory did qualify for school status, I thoroughly examined the volumes Atlanta University studies and applied Bulmer's characteristics to the school.

Bulmer's first criterion for a school is that there be a central figure around which the sociological enterprise is organized. W. E. B. Du Bois was the central figure around whom the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory was organized. His tenure as director of the Atlanta University Study of the Negro Problems lasted from 1897 to 1914. It is worth mentioning that a second, and failed, attempt to revive the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory was tried upon his return to the institution between 1933 and 1944.

The second criterion for a school is that it must exist in a university setting and have direct contact with a student population. Atlanta University was the institution within which the research laboratory was housed. In fact, the department of sociology at Atlanta University was one of the earliest and most advanced units in the nation as it offered courses covering statistics, general sociological principles, social and economic conditions, and methods of reform in the emerging discipline of sociology. So advanced was it curriculum that Du Bois boasted, "We have arranged" at Atlanta University, "what amounts to two years of sociological work for the junior and senior college students."[3]

The third criterion for a school mandates that there be interaction between those who work at the university and the general community in which the university is located. A little known aspect of Du Bois's career is his grassroots civil rights activities as a faculty member at Atlanta University. Both he and department faculty participated in civil rights activities at the dawn of the

twentieth century that both endangered their lives and the fiscal stability of the institution. Du Bois addressed his civil rights record in autobiography when he noted how "I joined with the Negro leaders of Georgia in efforts to better local conditions; to stop discrimination in the distribution of school funds; and to keep the legislature from making further discrimination in railway travel."[4]

A school must have as its key figure, per Bulmer's fourth criterion, someone with a dominating personality (i.e. personal loyalty and admiration of colleagues and one who looks for talented collaborators). Without question Du Bois possessed a dominating personality, as evidenced by his critical assessment of the two studies conducted prior to his arrival that he regarded as not being scientifically relevant. Add to this his plan to overhaul the entire Atlanta research enterprise to fit his specific notion of sociological inquiry and Du Bois's dominating personality is unquestioned. Dorothy Yancy noted the personal loyalty and admiration that he engendered from colleagues. According to Yancy "colleagues had warm memories [of Du Bois] and called him the perfect host."[5] Additionally, Du Bois's collaborative efforts with colleagues was noted in many of the volumes of the Atlanta University studies where it was pointed out that, "In addition to the publications," according to Du Bois, "we did something toward bringing together annually at Atlanta University persons interested in the problems of the South. Among these were Charles William Eliott, Booker T. Washington, Frank Sanborn, Franz Boaz, Walter Wilcox, [Max Weber, Jane Addams, and a myriad of Black social scientists in the South]."[6]

The fifth criterion of a school is that its leader possesses an intellectual vision and has a missionary drive. Du Bois' intellectual vision for the Atlanta School included a plan for a one hundred year program of sociological studies on Blacks in the United States. The primary theme upon which this one hundred year program of research was to be based was 'The Economic Development of the American Negro Slave.' For Du Bois, "on this central thread all other subjects would have been strung."[7]

The sixth criterion of a school mandates that there be intellectual exchanges between colleagues and graduate students (e.g., existence of seminars) and that the school must have an outlet for the publication of its scholarship. Evidence of intellectual exchanges is found via the attendance and participation of leading scholars of the era on the topics addressed at the annual conferences hosted by the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory between 1896 and 1924. Concerning intellectual exchanges with graduate students, the Atlanta University catalog of 1897 noted that "Graduate study of the social problems in the South by most approved scientific methods [was] carried on by the Atlanta Conference, composed of graduates of Atlanta, Fisk, and other institutions."[8] Last, the school did have an outlet for the publication of its scholarship as the twenty volumes of the Atlanta University Study of the Negro Problems was published between 1896 and 1917 by the Atlanta University Press. Additionally, the Atlanta University Press published a variety of books, catalogues, and pamphlets.

The seventh criterion for a school indicates that it must have an adequate infrastructure that includes advances in research methods, institutional links, and strong philanthropic support. Evidence of advances in research methods is found in the school's groundbreaking achievements. Specifically, this school

This school was the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the public dissemination of the limitations of its research; the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the use of insider researchers; and the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize method triangulation.

was the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the public dissemination of the limitations of its research; the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the use of insider researchers; and the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize method triangulation. Prior to the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory these practices were not a part of any collective sociological research program in the United States. Institutional links, the second component of this prerequisite, are found in the pages of the yearly studies where the cooperative efforts and activities of faculty and students from predominately Black and predominately White institutions as well as the United States Department of Labor that are listed. Concerning strong philanthropic support, it is without question that the small all-Black school in Atlanta, Georgia could not accrue philanthropic gifts comparable to those received by the Rockefeller funded University of Chicago. However, I argue that, given the racial climate of the era and the intense difficulty that Atlanta University experienced while attempting to obtain funding for many controversial monographs, the fact that Du Bois and his colleagues managed to publish twenty monographs and host almost thirty conferences during an almost thirty year span without the financial support enjoyed by institutions such as Chicago, denotes a high level of philanthropic support.

The eighth criterion of a school is that it cannot last beyond the generation of its central figure. Du Bois was affiliated with the Atlanta University research program for sixteen of the twenty years for which studies were published. After his departure in 1914 his successors only managed to publish one original monograph and edited volume of previously written articles on race.

The ninth, and final, criterion for a school is that it must be open to ideas and influences beyond its home discipline. The very fact that the school addressed ten separate topical issues (e.g., business, crime and deviance, education, health, etc.) each decade indicates its openness to interdisciplinarity. Werner J. Lange stated it best when he wrote, "The fact that these social scientific domains – now departmentally separated at most United States universities – constituted a single unit for Du Bois reflects the degree to which the young scholar valued and used a cross-disciplinary approach in his work."[9]

CONCLUSION

It can be argued that the biggest scandal in American sociological history is its nearly complete disregard of the sociological contributions of the W. E. B. Du Bois led Atlanta Sociological Laboratory. This school lasted more than twenty years and produced sociological accomplishments including the establishment of the first American school of sociology; the first program of urban sociological research; the first institutionalized program of 'Sociology of the South' research; the first American study on religion; the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the public dissemination of the limitations of its research; the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize the use of insider researchers; and the first sociological program in the nation to institutionalize method triangulation.[10] Had these accomplishments been made by White sociologists at predominately White institutions it is without question that the discipline would be continuously singing their praises, ad nauseam, to this day. However, because of their race their accomplishments were rendered negligible and ignored. The more than one hundred year sociological negation of the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory leads one to believe that Du Bois was correct when he pondered on the exclusion of Blacks from mainstream acceptance within academia.

> *So far as the American world of science and letters is concerned, we never 'belonged'; we remained unrecognized in learned societies and academic groups. We rated merely as Negroes studying Negroes, and after all, what had Negroes to do with America of science?*[11]

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1 Rudwick, Elliott M. 1957. "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Atlanta University Studies on the Negro."*Journal of Negro Education* 26:466– 76.

2 Gabbidon, Shaun L. 1999. "W.E.B. Du Bois and the 'Atlanta School' of Social Scientific Research, 1897–1913." *Journal of Criminal Education* 10(1):21–38.

3 Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt. ([1903] 1978). "The Laboratory in Sociology at Atlanta University" Pp. 61-64 in *W. E. B. Du Bois on Sociology and the Black Community*, edited by Dan S. Green and Edwin Driver. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 62-63.

4 Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt. 1968. *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century*. New York: International. P. 219.

5 Yancy, Dorothy C. 1978. "William Edward Burghardt Du Bois' Atlanta Years: The Human Side—A Study Based Upon Oral Sources." *Journal of Negro History* 63: 63-64.

6 Du Bois 1968, p. 219.

7 Du Bois 1968, p. 217.

8 Atlanta University. 1897. *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Atlanta University (Incorporated 1867–Opened 1869)*. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta University Press

9 Lange, Werner J. 1983. "W. E. B. Du Bois and the First Scientific Study of Afro-America." *Phylon* 44: 143.

10 See, for example: Wright II, Earl. 2016. *The First American School of Sociology: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.

11 Du Bois 1968, p. 228.

IT IS EXPENSIVE TO BE POOR:
A REVIEW OF MATTHEW DESMOND'S *EVICTED*

by MARTIN EIERMANN

In *Evicted*, Matthew Desmond's recent book on poverty and housing in the Milwaukee area, the world of the protagonists is marred with the scars of racial and social antagonisms but unified by a pervasive sense of neglect: It is a world of broken sinks, leaking ceilings, stunted aspirations, rebuffed calls for leniency, and rebutted pleas for support.[1] The waitlist for public housing is measured in uncertain years, tenants go without legal representation because there is no funding for public defenders in civil cases, and decrepit housing stock is declared "unfit for human habitation" and cleared out rather than repaired. "The poor," Desmond writes, quoting from *Behind Ghetto Walls,* Lee Rainwater's classic study of black families in inner-city public housing, "are constantly exposed to evidence of their own irrelevance."[2]

Perhaps it is so. But as Desmond's book demonstrates, it is also profoundly misleading to conceive of poverty primarily as a state of deprivation characterized by insufficient resources, failing infrastructure, and a lack of social and political support that thus renders the poor "irrelevant" within the social geography of the city. Far from it: the urban poor are an indispensable part of the city as a population that sustains unregulated and informal markets, supplies clients to landlords who specialize in low-end real estate, contributes fines to municipal budgets, and pays fees to private entrepreneurs who increasingly conduct the unglamorous but profitable business of forcing people out of their homes. In short, they are not just victims of neglect but targets of persistent exploitation.

Accounts of urban poverty from the decades before World War II regularly foregrounded the extractive and exploitative relations that linked poor tenement residents to the owners of real estate or the proprietors of shops, and often locked them into a state of disadvantage and dependency. In *The Philadelphia Negro*, published in 1899, W.E.B. DuBois summarized the lot of those who found themselves at the intersection of racial and economic marginalization. Poor black families, instead of "being met by aid in the direction of their greatest weakness,..."

> *are surrounded by agencies which tend to make them more wasteful and dependent on chance than they are now. One only has to watch the pawn-brokers' shops on Saturday night in winter to see how largely Negroes support them; and it is but a step from the insurance society to the pawnshop and thence to the policy shop.*[3]

The meatpacking workers in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* likewise struggled and strove in a city rife with corruption, where backroom deals between politicians and industrialists ensured the non-enforcement of sanitary standards, the perpetuation of abysmal labor conditions, and the continued exploitation of immigrants.[4] And as Jacob Riis, the great early documentarian of urban poverty in the United States, observed about the rise of tenement construction in poor neighborhoods in the 1880s:

> *It was soon perceived by estate owners and agents of property that a greater percentage of profits could be realized by the conversion of houses and blocks into barracks, and dividing their space into smaller proportions capable of containing human life within four walls... Blocks were rented of real estate owners, or 'purchased on time,' or taken in charge at a percentage, and held for under-letting. With the appearance of the middleman, wholly irresponsible, and utterly reckless and unrestrained, began the era of tenement building.*[5]

Yet one of the most vivid accounts of urban poverty during the industrial age comes from the German playwright and author Bertolt Brecht. Set in London around the turn of the 20th century, Brecht's *Dreigroschenroman* ("Threepenny Novel") paints a detailed portrait of the human costs of inner-city business that did not usually appear in bookkeepers' records (or, for that matter, in many economic histories).[6] He writes of invalid soldiers who are pulled into an organized begging racket in exchange for a temporary roof over their heads; of small franchise owners who are baited with economic independence but find themselves tied to extortionate contracts and are driven into homelessness and despair; of landlords and petty bourgeois entrepreneurs who are squeezed by banks and quickly pass the pressure onto their tenants and employees. The enforcement of contractual obligations – to repay one's debt or to supply one's labor power – appears not as evidence of the rule of law but as legally sanctioned violence against the less fortunate. "The law was made for one thing alone," observes the daughter of an entrepreneur who is trying to ascend from the working class by squeezing profit from the alms of well-off passerby, "for the exploitation of those who don't understand it, or are prevented by naked misery from obeying it." Indeed, as Walter Benjamin noted,[7], the novel's great if slightly didactic achievement lies in its stubborn insistence on revealing the crimes that are latent in business and the relations that link the city's poor to its rising bourgeois elite. It politicizes rather than aestheticizes the plight of its characters: "It's plain to me now," remarks one of the novel's central figures, "why people don't examine the injuries of beggars more closely before they give. They are convinced that the wounds are there, because they themselves have dealt them."[8]

In short, there is a long tradition of situating poverty at the nexus of deprivation and exploitation, and thus of understanding it not just as a condition of neglect but as a set of relationships among unequals. Desmond's book wisely returns to this tradition. It is written in a literary cadence even if it is based on a wealth of statistical and ethnographic data and comes with 63 pages of endnotes (not unlike *The Jungle*, for which Sinclair prepared by spending considerable time in the factories and

tenement communities of Chicago), and its greatest contribution may well lie in the centrality of exploitation to its argument. Ostensibly focused on the prevalence and the dynamics of evictions, it is really a book about the winners and (more often) the losers of the inner city in the 21st century and about the most prominent market through which they interact: the rental market. In Desmond's telling, this market constitutes the powerful but often overlooked link between the profoundly different and dissociated social worlds of the urban poor and the city's entrepreneurial and clerical middle-class.

Yet this link also has a history: Decades of "redlining" excluded black tenants from the mortgage market and forced them into certain neighborhoods and into the arms of predatory lenders, who sold homes at inflated prices and repossessed them when tenants failed to meet steep monthly payments. For inner-city landlords, it meant windfall profits as white tenants fled to the suburbs. For many poor black tenants, the result was an intergenerational cycle of economic insecurity and precarious housing. Indeed, the current composition of many American inner-city neighborhoods continues to correlate strongly with the Home Owners' Loan Corporation's (HOLC) historical mortgage assessments. Neighborhoods that were "redlined" by the HOLC still experience much higher rates of poverty and eviction.

This history — and the theoretical scaffolding that allows us to conceptualize its relevance to the present — is remarkably absent from Desmond's book even as it provides the largely unmentioned background against which the biographies of his respondents unfold.[9] Yet it sometimes resonates eerily: Sherrena, a landlords who rents almost exclusively to poor tenants, "has been dabbling in rent-to-own ventures."[10] She works with her tenants to improve their credit score, helps them secure a loan to cover the Federal Housing Administration's 3.5 percent down payment requirement, and then sells them their building at inflated housing-bubble prices. "Sherrena would reinvest the cash in more properties," Desmond concludes, "and the new homeowner would inherit a massive debt." Likewise, in a trailer park whose residents populate many of the book's pages, those who cannot meet payment deadlines regularly leave behind their homes – which are then repossessed by the park owners as abandoned property and sold to new occupants.[11]

Throughout the book, then, debt is a pervasive presence even as the history of indebtedness recedes into the background. In some cases, tenants who fall too far behind their rent payments are simply served the pink papers and evicted. In other cases, their debt turns a financial relationship into one of explicit power imbalances: Tenants who owe money to their landlords are discouraged from asking for necessary repairs, are compelled to work without or with minimal pay for the property owner, and are prevented from making emergency calls for robbery or domestic violence, knowing too well that regular "nuisance calls" to the police will likely trigger eviction proceedings.[12] And when tenants attempt to service one debt, they frequently incur another: Using the Earned Income Tax Credit to pay back rent (a fact that explains the low eviction rate in February) means that children will often go without

The exclusion of poor tenants from mainstream markets forces them into others that are frequently more informal, less regulated, and more exploitative.

clothes or school supplies. Requesting a payday loan to meet a landlord's payment schedule means accepting steep interest rates and fees that will eat into subsequent paychecks or welfare checks. For the 47 percent of Americans who, according to a 2015 report by the Federal Reserve, lack resources to cover an unexpected $400 bill for emergency medical services or car repairs, debt and the dependencies it engenders are a pervasive fact of everyday life.

This points to another crucial story in Desmond's book. The exclusion of poor tenants from mainstream markets forces them into others that are frequently more informal, less regulated, and more exploitative. There are no labor laws that govern the informal hiring of indebted tenants for menial labor and fewer laws that constrain the practices of payday lenders. (According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, average annual percentage rates for payday loans currently hover around 400 percent.) And when tenants dwell at the margin of existing markets – such as the residents of the trailer park –, existing regulations often aren't enforced. Building inspectors routinely ignore health and safety violations, aware that landlords are eager to rent out units in questionable condition and renters are forced (and often relieved) to accept them. The poor are being served when mainstream institutions abandon them as risky business, but not without paying a steep price for their disadvantage. A population that is perennially transient – as Desmond has previously argued, the social ties of the urban poor are often "disposable" and are cultivated and severed as routines of daily life are disrupted – also remains firmly locked into costly market relations.[13]

Indeed: It is expensive to be poor. As Desmond writes, "in the city's poorest neighborhoods, where at least 40 percent of families lived below the poverty line, median rent for a two-bedroom apartment was only $50 less than the citywide median."[14] As a result, many tenants who do not receive housing vouchers commit a disproportionate amount of their monthly household income to cover rental expenses; one third of evictees in Milwaukee spent at least 80 percent of it.[15] If they fall behind on payments, landlords routinely charge $55 late fees to forestall an eviction and may also ask the courts to seize a tenant's savings and up to 20 percent of their income, unless they are on welfare.[16] If tenants are evicted, they incur additional court fees, moving fees, or storage fees. One trailer park resident spent a total of $1000 to store her possessions when she was evicted.[17] When she was unable to make monthly payments, her boxes were trashed.

Some of these hidden costs of poverty were recently thrust into the public consciousness, when it was revealed that the city of Ferguson relied heavily on court fines and traffic tickets to fund its municipal budget. According to one study, $2.6 million (out of $20 million total annual revenue) came from fines and fees that were disproportionately extracted from

the city's black poor. If they failed to meet court-imposed deadlines, they were put on mandatory payment plans (which sometimes come with steep interest rates) or were taken to jail, and sometimes to prison. But prisoners in the United States are not allowed to handle their financial transactions independently, so they have to rely on private contractors like JPay, which handles the transactions of around 70 percent of American inmates and also extracts a fee between 35 and 45 percent.

In Desmond's book, too, the boundaries between private enterprise and the state are often blurred, with agents of the state (en)forcing participation of the poor in specialized markets. As he writes,

> *Exploitation within the housing market relies on government support. It is the government that legitimizes and defend landlord's right to charge as much as they want; that subsidizes the construction of high end apartments, bidding up rents and leaving the poor with even fewer options; that pays landlords when a family cannot, through onetime or ongoing housing assistance; that forcibly removes a family at landlords' request by dispatching armed law enforcement officers; and that records and publicizes evictions, as a service to landlords and debt collection agencies.*[18]

For example, sheriffs supervise evictions but leave much of the dirty work to moving companies that have discovered a lucrative market in the inner city and give concrete empirical weight to Schumpeter's observation, from 1928, that "the modern enterprise has outgrown the driving forces and human types of economic competition and, in its essence, structure and methods, has started to resemble a kind of public administrative body."[19] The welfare state and the penal state cannot function without a penumbra of businesses that have traded competition in the private sector for a symbiotic relationship with public authorities. The management of populations, in Foucault's terminology, is not only a particularly modern *raison d'état* but also a thriving enterprise. Or, as Desmond observes, "there was a business model at the bottom of every market."[20]

Given this dynamic, it is perhaps surprising that *Evicted* is largely a book without culprits. Sherrena might be a slumlord, but she also struggles to pay her utilities bills to the city. Due process in the eviction court has been replaced with assembly-line processing of cases, but judges also ache under the volume of cases. Tenants rob and beat and betray each other, but also provide temporary shelter and emotional support. Some – like the trailer park owner who takes home more than $400,000 per year and escapes the Midwestern winter by moving south – get by much better than others, but everybody hustles. (Tellingly, leisure features in *Evicted* only in the form of gambling: late-night games of spades or trips to the local casino.) The inner city of Desmond's book is not a world of bifurcated class warfare or carefully executed schemes against the poor but a web of unequal relations and a nexus of exploitation that routinely and predictably disadvantages some groups and explains their intergenerational concentration at the bottom of the social hierarchy. This also means that there is no original sin, no ultimate explanation

for how the country ventured astray (Desmond makes it clear in the epilogue that he considers the present as a profoundly troubling aberration). The fates of landlords and tenants "are bound and their interests opposed," even if there is no attempt to explain how their particular relation came to be. The account of exploitation is profoundly presentist. But what is the price of this relative ahistoricity?

In the closing chapter of Brecht's *Dreigroschenroman*, the beggar Fewkoombey dreams of "the greatest arraignment of all times," when testimony must be given and judgment must be passed on the source of everyone's wealth (he conservatively estimates that the trial will take several hundred years).[21] The poor will have the final word: How did it come to pass that some have plenty and others have little? Slowly, the judge moves through a series of cross-examinations: Is it because religion contributes to an acquiescence of the masses? Is it because people are lazy or irresponsible or of bad character? Is it because some are born into wealth and others are not? But he quickly grows frustrated: Behind each commodity lies but another layer:

> *There is the wall of the house – where is the bricklayer? Is he ever really paid in full? And this paper! Someone had to make it! Was he sufficiently compensated for it? And this table here! Is there really nothing owed to the man who planed the wood for it? The washing on the line! The line itself! And even the tree, which didn't plant itself here. This knife here! Is everything paid for? Fully? Of course not!*[22]

Thus disillusioned, the judge resigns: The source of value cannot be traced back to the dawn of primitive accumulation, and the fate of individuals can scarcely be disentangled from the tides of history. All he can ascertain is the centrality of exploitation in the present. Some have to be underpaid and have to overpay so that others can thrive. Some have to increase their misery so that others can increase their wealth. This is what Étienne Balibar, in his critique of Marx's *Das Kapital*, refers to as the "ahistorical historicism" of capitalism: We know that social relations are neither natural nor eternal and can accurately describe their present constitution, but we cannot precisely retrace their origins.[23] Likewise, Desmond has largely done away with the past, and has replaced it with detailed accounts of the present. *Evicted* opens a window into the inner city that is rich in social relations but curiously divorced from social history. The legacies of racial and class discrimination are acknowledged but do not significantly shape the analysis.

Ultimately, Desmond casts his vote for an expansion of the voucher program that helps poor tenants find housing in the private rental market through taxpayer-funded assistance. Echoing Jacob Riis' insistence that "the business of housing the poor, if it is to amount to anything, must be a business," he rejects massive investments into new public housing in favor of expanding voucher eligibility and regulating rent ceilings.[24] This is perhaps a surprising choice: Having quoted Martin Luther King's proclamation that "every condition exists simply because someone profits by its existence"[25] Desmond endorses a vision of profit without exploitation. It would be a marvelous world indeed: Instead of dwelling in limbo for years on public housing waitlists, and

instead of having to spend 80 percent of their income on rent, the poor could scour the private market while knowing that median rents were well within their reach. But this is where the lack of historicity is most significant: If the history of housing and poverty in the United States is of any indication, the markets of the inner city often haven't responded kindly to this sort of intervention. The poverty and high mortgage default rates of African-Americans during much of the 20th century were not the cause but the consequence of exclusion from certain neighborhoods and from mainstream rental markets: Neighborhood associations and landlords had deep interests in concentrating them in parts of the city with sub-par housing and high crime. When housing discrimination on the basis of race was outlawed in 1968 in the Fair Housing Act, the deed had already been done. Saddled with debt and eviction records, the black poor were frequently priced out of stable neighborhoods, shut out of mortgage markets, and forced into the outstretched arms of predatory lenders.

Perhaps the situation has changed: Since the 1970s, public support for explicitly racist or segregationist statements has declined significantly.[26] But it occasionally rises to the surface even in Desmond's book, and remains a powerful obstacle to policies that focus primarily on narrowing resource gaps and broadening market participation. In the 2008 General Social Survey, 28 percent "still support an individual homeowner's right to discriminate on the basis of race when selling a home, and even nearly 1 in 4 highly educated Northern whites adopt this position."[27] Likewise, as Devah Pager has shown, the exclusion from mainstream markets can result from historically rooted stigmatization as well as from contemporary economic disadvantage. Convicted felons are significantly less likely to receive job offers in the regular labor market, especially if they are black.[28] This is what Loïc Wacquant has called the "negative sociodicy" of the urban poor: a double stigma of race and class that "produces an institutional justification for the misfortune of the precariat at the bottom of the social scale."[29] It is a stigma with great intergenerational persistence: an artifact of history that continues to be reproduced in the present, illuminates contemporary patterns of exploitation, and must inform our search for efficacious solutions.

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1 Matthew Desmond. 2016. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. New York: Crown Publishers.

2 Desmond: 257.

3 W.E.B. DuBois. [1899] 2007. *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 134.

4 Upton Sinclair. [1906] 2001. *The Jungle* London: Dover Thrift Editions.

5 Jacob Riis. 1890. *How the Other Half Lives*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

6 Bertholt Brecht. [1934] 1989. *Threepenny Novel*. New York: Penguin.

7 Walter Benjamin. 2003. *Understanding Brecht*. London: Verso.

8 Brecht: 155. Quoted in Benjamin: 82

9 For example, the book does not focus on exploring and explaining spatial segregation in the inner city – in Desmond's narrative, landlords profit off the poor not because they are concentrated in certain neighborhoods but because the poor pay close to median rents for substandard housing.

10 Desmond: 156

11 Desmond: 47

12 Desmond: 190-191

13 Matthew Desmond. 2012. "Disposable Ties and the Urban Poor." *American Journal of Sociology* 117(5): 1295-1335.

14 Desmond: 74-75

15 Desmond: 97

16 Desmond: 96

17 Desmond: 222

18 Desmond: 307

19 Joseph Schumpeter. [1928] 1987. "Unternehmer." P. 144 in *Beiträge zur Sozialökonomik,* edited by Stephan Böhm. Vienna: Böhlau.

20 Desmond: 90

21 Brecht: 354

22 Brecht: 364

23 See Devin Fore. 2013. "The Time of Capital: Brecht's Threepenny Novel". *Nonsite* 10: 102-115. Origin stories are, as Nietzsche writes in the *Untimely Meditations*, well-sustained fictions that render the present intelligible and the future navigable.

24 Desmond: 311-312

25 Desmond: 305

26 Peter V. Marsden (ed). 2012. *Social Trends in American Life: Findings from the General Social Survey since 1972*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

27 Marsden 2012

28 See Devah Pager. 2007. *Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

29 Loïc Wacquant. 2014. "Marginality, Ethnicity, and Penality". P. 287 in *Criminalization: The Political Morality of Criminal Law,* edited by R.A. Duff, L. Farmer, S.E. Marshall, M. Renzo and V. Tardos. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PIMP MY CARROÇA BOGOTÁ:

FROM DISPOSABLE PEOPLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUPERHEROES

Words: MANUEL ROSALDO
Photos: LA VIDA ALEGRE, SILVIA SANTOS, BIANCI TAVOLARI, THIAGO MUNDANO, and MANUEL ROSALDO

On Sunday, November 8, 2015, at a vacant lot in downtown Bogotá, hundreds of volunteers painted and reupholstered the *carroças* (Portuguese for "carts") of informal recyclers, who earn a living by salvaging materials from the waste stream. This was the first edition of *Pimp my Carroça Colombia,* a transnational movement that uses political art to increase the visibility of some of the world's most undervalued workers.

The movement's origins date to 2007, when a 20 year-old Brazilian graffiti artist named Thiago Mundano began befriending recyclers and painting their carts in his home city of São Paulo. Mundano calls the recyclers "invisible superheroes" because though their labor provides great ecological and economic benefits, they rarely receive state compensation or protections like other waste management workers. To the contrary, they commonly face hazardous working conditions, extreme exploitation, police harassment, and public scorn.

By linking a marginalized art form (graffiti) with marginalized workers (recyclers), Mundano sought to raise the status of both. Over the next five years, he painted 160 carts with funky cartoons and humorous messages like "my car doesn't pollute" (below) and "my work is honest, how about yours?" (second below). It was a good start, but Mundano soon realized that the scale of the problem that he sought to address—15 million recyclers worldwide working without recognition—far outstripped his capacities as a one-man-show.

In 2012, Mundano enlisted friends to create *Pimp my Carroça*, a play on words of the MTV show "Pimp my Ride"; however, instead of souping up old cars, Mundano and his *camaradas* (friends) hosted large crowd-funded events in which volunteers paint and reupholster recycler carts, provide social services, and make "artivist" interventions (e.g., painting recycler logos on bike lanes and parking spots to support recyclers' right to the street). Four years later, *Pimp my Carroça* has painted 507 carts in 32 cities and 8 countries, with the help of 1,443 volunteers and 2,686 donors.

In the summer of 2015, a Bogotá-based environmental services company called Ecoworks organized a kickstarter campaign to host what would be the largest *Pimp My Carroça* event outside of Brazil to date. After a week of non-stop thunderstorms, the sun emerged on the day of the event and beamed brightly on the 240 volunteers and 40 recyclers who participated.

The day's activities included a children's Halloween parade, a college student competition for projects to improve recycler/community relations, a team of 15 professional mechanics who fixed up recycler carts, a station in which design students added ergonomic adjustments to recycler carts (e.g., arm cushions, rain covers), a "Pimp my Pet" station that offered veterinary services for recyclers' pets, a haircutting station, breakfast and lunch by Crepes and Waffles (a famous Colombian chain), safety equipment kits for recyclers, and a concert by salsa legend Edgar Espinosa and his 6-piece orchestra.

The highlight of the event, of course, was the painting of the carts. Many recyclers requested religious imagery, others marijuana leaves and skulls. Still others wanted animals, space scapes, names of loved ones, and political messages.

Bogotá-based Artist, Lorena Skunkrocker, told me, "One man asked for Jesus Christ and a Virgen of Carmen on his cart, but no one was volunteering to do it. So I said '*de una!*' (let's do it!) Even though I didn't have the proper tools and [the subject matter] was totally outside of my comfort zone. It was just incredible—I tried out so many new things today. When I finished the cart, the man was very happy—he said 'you are the most *aspera* (awesome) artist in the world. Now my cart is a *brutal* (brilliant) work of art.'"

Skunkrocker continued, "It was one of the *mas chévere* (coolest) days of my life. I'm so moved. The recyclers' reaction was *brutal*—they were so enthusiastic and joyful... One recycler, whose cart I hadn't painted at all, just came up to me and gave me a hug and said that he loved me so much."

Stigma against recyclers is prevalent around the world, but has manifested in an exceptionally sadistic form in Colombia. Since the late 1980s, fascist-inspired "social cleansing" groups, often acting with police complicity, have kidnapped and killed at least 2,000 recyclers, beggars, and prostitutes—to whom they refer as "*desechables*" (disposable people). In 1992, eleven corpses of murdered recyclers were discovered at a medical school in Barranquilla. Their organs had been sold for transplants and their bodies used for dissection.

Colombian recyclers face many other forms of discrimination as well. Two recyclers reported to me that up until the early 2000s, police in wealthy neighborhoods routinely rounded them up with other recyclers, jailed them for 24-hours, burned their pushcarts, and forced them to sweep streets.

Jose Maria Quevedo, a recycler who participated in the event, said that two of his daughters were denied entrance to a public elementary school in 1998. "They told me there was no space in the school, but when other kids arrived, there was space for them. But not for my daughters, the children of the *piojosos* (lice-ridden) recyclers. They thought my daughters would rob the other students or even the teachers, but that was all a big lie. We are human beings too." Quevedo had to fight with the Secretary of Education to win school access for his children and for those of other recyclers.

In response to such hardships, thousands of recyclers across Colombia have collectively organized to increase their voice and power. This development began in the 1980s when a Catholic foundation helped recyclers in 20 cities build cooperatives where they could collectively sort and sell their own materials, thereby moving up the value chain. Eventually, the cooperatives built regional, national, and transnational associations aimed at sharing strategies and resources, and collectively promoting recyclers' political rights. During the first decade of the 2000s, the recyclers and their pro-bono legal aid won seven landmark cases in the Constitutional Court, establishing their right to continue in their trade, and to be recognized and remunerated for their public service. Quevedo says that these victories have improved recyclers' social standing: "There is no longer such ugly discrimination. That died when they legalized the recycler."

Bogotá's recyclers have recently pressured the city government into implementing some of the world's most progressive recycler rights policies. From 2013-2015, the city government provided 18,000 official uniforms to informal recyclers and gave trucks to 3,000 recyclers who had previously worked by horse-and-buggy. Also, the government began making bi-monthly payments to 13,000 informal recyclers through a historically unprecedented scheme in which recyclers were paid via text messages with codes that were redeemable for cash at ATMs, based on the quantity of goods that they had sold to registered scrap dealers.

This is a picture of me (left), with Mundano (right), who was on hand for the event, and Nohra Padilla (center), the president of the *Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá* (ARB) and winner of the 2014 Goldman Prize, the so-called "Nobel Peace Prize for environmentalists." The painting on the truck reads "recycling without recyclers is garbage," a critique of the private waste firms that seek to take over the increasingly lucrative recycling industry and displace its historic protagonists.

I first met Mundano in São Paulo in 2014, while conducting research for my dissertation, a comparative study of recycler rights movements in Colombia and Brazil. Initially, I was skeptical: was this merely an aesthetic intervention by well-meaning outsiders that sanitized the recyclers' appearance without improving their material conditions?

I posed this question to Padilla and other recycler leaders in Bogotá, who warned that too much focus on artistic projects could indeed distract from recyclers' need for material improvements. They argued, however, that when artistic projects were linked to popular recycler movements, the two could complement one another in three concrete ways. First, they argued, art can help recast recyclers' work from parasitic survival activity to productive labor in the popular imaginary. This directly improves the life chances of recyclers, for whom stigma is often as serious of a threat as low incomes and hazardous working conditions. Second, by visibilizing recyclers' contributions, art can mobilize popular and political support for policy change. Conventional protests also serve this role, but for better or for worse, art often attracts more media attention, especially when it includes popular participation and a "cool factor." Thus, the Pimp My Carroça event generated stories in 12 of Colombia's leading newspapers, new shows, and news blogs, while the media wholly ignored a march of five thousand recyclers just two months earlier. Third, art can help constitute and activate the movement's base by contributing to the construction of a dignified collective identity. "Recyclers can't organize politically or economically until they have a measure of self-respect," affirmed ARB-cofounder Silvio Ruiz Grisales.

Still with some doubts a month later, I followed up with six recyclers from the ARB cooperative *Formando Comunidad* (Forming Community) whose carts had been "pimped." Four reported that people continually stop them to compliment their carts, and three said that residents had started giving them more materials.

Claudia Celis, who is pictured above, said that the intervention came at an optimal time because her cart had been damaged in an accident and they refurbished it for her. “I feel proud to work with this cart,” she said. “I really hope this is just the beginning. It would be *chévere* (cool) to do this every year. This could be the start of something much bigger.”

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La Vida Alegre is a Bogotá-based photo and design collective dedicated to documenting joyful moments of life. La Vida Alegre loves nature, sunshine, travel, and people who dare to expose their most unadorned and effusive sides.

LA VIOLENCIA AFTER WAR: THE LONG LEGACY OF CONFLICT IN GUATEMALA

by CAMAR DÍAZ

As if prepared for public humiliation, firearms sentenced to destruction lay on the street in front of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Guatemala City. They lay tightly assembled like a completed jigsaw puzzle, over a five by fifteen-foot board, wide enough for a single drum road roller to drive over and crush them. On the left side of the board were rifles and shotguns. On the right, pistols and revolvers. The verdict: guilty of *la violencia*.

To facilitate peace building after internal conflicts, the United Nations promotes the destruction of firearms. Making the destruction public is intended to induce confidence in the state, confidence apparently necessary to build peace and security. On February 2nd, 2006, the Supreme Court of Guatemala withdrew 501 guns from government storage and, with the support of the presidential office and the Catholic Church, used them to carry out this first public destruction of firearms in front of the Cathedral. Ten years had passed since the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit, the military, and the government finalized signing the Peace Accords, committing to end violence that left about 200,000 people killed. Firearms were the main weapons of mass killing, and the proof is in the collection of bullet-perforated skulls of men, women, and children that have been exhumed by the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation from clandestine graves since the 1990s.

I placed my hands on the orange plastic barricades that kept spectators a safe distance from the firearms puzzle and scanned the people on the other side. I noticed the leader of the National Commission for the Eradication of Illegal Arms adjusting the podium’s microphone. During an interview at his office, he had previously told me that the Commission was created in 2004 with UN guidance, because the 1996 Peace Accords neglected to address the problem of surplus firearms left from the war. In relation to the surplus, a social justice activist shared with me this story: “I went to La Libertad, Huehuetenango a couple of years ago to investigate a series of lynchings. While there, a lady had sold her land and thieves arrived at her house to steal her money. She was alone with her two boys, eight and eleven years old. The eleven year old grabbed an old Mauser, got up on the roof, and killed two of them. The Mauser was his dad’s, one of the rifles that

paramilitary patrols used. The dad hadn't handed it over after the Peace Accords."

Whereas wartime guns that weren't handed over after the Accords presented a problem, the challenge was magnified by the arrival of many new illicit guns into Guatemala. The National Commission for the Eradication of Illegal Arms estimated that there were about two million illicit firearms in circulation. Mainly due to narco-trafficking and the rise of violent youth gangs, the proliferation of guns far outpaced the capacity of the Commission. In response to the asymmetry, the Commission began with what was in reach, working with sympathetic state offices to carry out a public destruction of 501 guns.

While waiting for the arms destruction event to begin, I looked up and spotted a pigeon atop the neoclassical cathedral, between its two bell towers. The sky was clear and the air crisp, rightly illustrating Guatemala City's motto, "the city of eternal spring." The word "spring" also had political significance to many Guatemalans, as in the Ten Years of Spring or the Democratic Spring that began with the civic-military revolution in 1944, a revolution that enabled free elections after a long history of dictatorship as well as economic reforms to benefit the country's majority, the rural poor. The Democratic Spring ended in 1954 with the US-engineered military coup that overthrew President Jacobo Arbenz. President Arbenz had threatened US economic power in Guatemala with agrarian reforms that expropriated land owned by the United Fruit Company, a move that carried more insult than injury to the company's economic empire, since 85% of the land it owned was uncultivated. United Fruit's monopoly not only comprised prime banana land but also ownership of Guatemala's single port on the Atlantic coast and railroad expansion throughout Central America. United Fruit's dominance in Guatemala and throughout the rest of Central America gained it the popular name *El Pulpo* / The Octopus, its eight arms extracting everything it touched. After having worked at *El Pulpo* for 20 years, Thomas McCann wrote in his 1976 book, *An American Company: The Tragedy of United Fruit:* "United Fruit's profits [in Guatemala] flourished for fifty years. Then something went wrong: a man named Jacob Arbenz became President."

The company's persuasive lobbyists in the US exploited Cold War rhetoric and convinced the Eisenhower administration to take out democratically-elected Arbenz under the pretext that he presented a communist threat. Arbenz's overthrow resulted in the reversal of agrarian reforms, the birth of revolutionary groups like the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, more military coups, and the four-decade civil war. Meanwhile bananas continued to be grown for export. Today, bananas are still the leading produce imported into the US from Guatemala. United Fruit became Chiquita, whose labels on bananas at US stores often read "Guatemala." McCann witnessed that change; he began working for *El Pulpo* the year before Arbenz's overthrow. And this is what he had to say after his tenure there: "Two decades since United Fruit Company and the Central Intelligence Agency conspired to make this

Lobbyists in the US exploited Cold War rhetoric and convinced the Eisenhower administration to take out democratically-elected Arbenz under the pretext that he presented a communist threat.

hemisphere 'safe' for their particular version of democracy—Guatemala remains one of the most unstable governments in Central America, as well as one of the most dangerous countries to live in or to visit." Now 40 years after the publication of McCann's book, this assessment continues to be mostly accurate.

Guatemala has yet to live another democratic spring. Today the rural poor account for 70 percent of the country's entire poor population. And exploitation of land and people as well as extrajudicial killings continue to scar their lives. According to the Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC) website, the CUC was founded in 1978 "when peasants and farmworkers united to fight for better salaries and against militarization and discrimination of indigenous populations." I interviewed two CUC leaders who spoke to me specifically about Izabal, a region crowded with plantations growing bananas for export. One said that, since 2000, 15 CUC members had been killed by "paramilitary groups that have continued to operate after the Peace Accords." The other CUC leader added: "In Izabal, we see landowners who move around better armed than the Army. These armed people intimidate the peasants and farmworkers. We cannot raise our voice." Barely pausing to take a breath, he continued, "We've been struggling on some farms for about 20 years, and we haven't been able to get land redistribution. Peasants can't pay for land they've occupied, so they have to leave. The farm owners arrive with their armed people to remove them."

Soon after I left Guatemala, I read disturbing reports by trade union organizations, including the International Trade Union Confederation, about banana farmworkers who were shot to death in Izabal as a result of their union leadership roles. If Miguel Angel Asturias, Guatemala's Nobel laureate who wrote protest fiction about exploitation of banana farmworkers during the first half of the 20th century, were still alive, he'd have enough material to publish a sequel to *The Banana Trilogy*, enough material to make George Orwell roll in his grave with envy.

Before the Cathedral's colossal wooden doors, government and church officials gathered for the arms destruction event. They were all ladinos and ladinas, that is, Guatemalans of European descent. Eight bodyguards in suits, some wearing sunglasses, protected the small group. Guarding the Cathedral stood twelve large pillars carved with names of *desaparecidos y*

Guatemala has yet to live another democratic spring. Today the rural poor account for 70 percent of the country's entire poor population

desaparecidas / the disappeared—a euphemism for civilians considered subversives who were abducted, assaulted, detained, tortured, and executed, and then whose bodies were hidden during the war.

Behind me, Plaza Mayor spread over half a square kilometer in its Spanish colonial elegance, with a fountain at its center. The fountain's water dripped down one, two, three gradually larger bowls and then into the ground pool. Around the fountain, in that same public square years ago, a protest took place against the Carter Administration. "I still remember a manifestation at the Plaza Mayor against Jimmy Carter," a political scientist told me, "because he and Congress put a ban on Guatemala based on human rights violations. I was there. The Plaza was full! It looked like one of the manifestations in Teheran against Ayatollah Khomeini. Carter was playing the game of the guerrilla; that was our interpretation of the situation. The communist insurgency was our common enemy. We were at the most explosive, most crucial point in the war." He paused, squinted and darted an accusatory look at me that made me feel guilty simply for being a US citizen, and calmly concluded, "It's just that our army was fighting the enemies of the United States, then the US took away support after getting the Guatemalan Army into a civil war." As he spoke, I imagined him as a young man at the plaza, sharing his indignation among fellow Guatemalans who had believed in such a thing as US loyalty and who couldn't yet envision their own country's autonomy.

Plaza Mayor is nestled in the historic center, the Cathedral stands at the east while the National Palace stands north. Inside the palace, in 1999, President Bill Clinton publicly conceded: "It is important that I state clearly that support for military forces or intelligence units which engaged in violent and widespread repression of the kind described in the [UN Historical Clarification Commission] report was wrong, and the United States must not repeat that mistake."

The mistake need not be repeated for the one already made to continue to have repercussions. A human rights advocate shared her experience: "Since 2000, clandestine structures started attacking human rights defenders. Clandestine structures are, in reality, military intelligence turned illicit. During the war, their actions concerned counterinsurgency. In the present, they have diversified. When I was the director of the Rigoberta Menchú Foundation, we decided to accuse—in Spain—General Ríos Montt, six military officers, and two civilians involved in state terrorism and genocide. That generated a series of attacks against myself and the lawyer." Then, in a dispirited tone, she added, "If you listened to the declarations by the Ministry of Defense three months ago, they continue to think that the so-called 'radical human rights movement' is an enemy of the military. After so many attacks, they have weakened the networks of solidarity and cooperation among us. Today, the human rights community is a scared community."

However scared that community may have been, they have persevered in their effort. They waited when their hands were tied while Ríos Montt sat in Congress from 2007 to 2011, a position that had granted him prosecutorial immunity. But after he was out of office, in 2013, the High Risk Court Tribunal of Guatemala found him and his chief of intelligence guilty of war crimes. During Ríos Montt's short presidential rule between 1982 and 1983, his leadership managed "the most closely coordinated, intensive massacre campaign in Guatemalan history, killing an estimated 75,000 in 18 months," borrowing Jennifer Schirmer's words from *The Guatemalan Military Project: A Violence Called Democracy*. After the unprecedented prosecution, presiding Judge Yassmín Barrios sentenced the accused to 80 years in prison commencing immediately. A few days later, the Constitutional Court annulled the trial judgment, suspended Judge Barrios, and ordered a retrial. Since then, the trial has been rescheduled several times, with delays based on procedural grounds and excuses based on Ríos Montt's mental incapacity to participate in the proceedings. Those who have awaited justice for decades put their hope on the latest scheduled trial of January 2016. The prosecution was once again postponed, allowing for senility and impunity to further mature.

More people continued to arrive to watch the arms destruction. At any given time during the hour-long event, I saw about fifty spectators watching curiously. Some people stopped, looked, and resumed their course. The majority in the audience were Mayan men who reminded me of the CUC leaders who told me about the murders of banana farmworkers. A man near me looked intently at the guns, then said to anyone who would listen, "*Ba, esas son armas viejas que ya no sirven.*" / "Bah, those are old guns that don't work anymore." Later that day, a source in the Supreme Court would reveal that the firearms chosen for the destruction event were, in fact, inoperable. And that they had been seized from "delinquents"—meaning, insurgents—during the war.

Once all the official guests arrived, about 25 in total, the event finally began. Taking turns at the podium were the vice president of Guatemala, Eduardo Stein, the president of the Supreme Court, Beatriz de León, and Cardinal Rodolfo Quezada, who in a press conference a few days later would hold a bullet in one hand and a packet of contraceptive pills in the other to compare them as equally destructive and to dramatize his opposition to proposed family planning legislation. The speakers referred to the event as a historic moment and spoke succinctly about

la violencia, the eradication of illegal firearms, Guatemala's future, and hope.

De León shared her hope that the destruction would be a message reaching the hearts of Guatemalans and especially *la juventud* / the youth. Aside from the small group of male high-school students conscripted to hold white balloons for the finale, youth were absent from the event. Neither was there any identifiable attendance of those who had lost family members to armed violence during or after the war. That day, the Human Rights Ombudsman Sergio Morales was quoted in a local newspaper saying, in translation, "The situation of *la violencia* continues to be severe. The World Health Organization says that an epidemic of violence starts when there are 10 homicides per every 100,000 inhabitants, and here we already have 40. The great majority of those homicides are caused by firearms.

Cardinal Quezada talked persuasively about the "immense quantity of lives cut by *la violencia*." He urged Guatemalans to commit to *una cultura de vida* / a culture of life. A man near me turned his face away from the Cardinal, the Cathedral, the guns. We made eye contact, so he spoke as he began to leave his spot in the front, "*Eso no va a parar ninguna violencia.*" / "That's not going to stop any violence." My eyes followed him to see if he was shifting his place in the audience, but he simply left.

Guatemalans who I interviewed during my eight-month stay in their country often told me about *la violencia*, which primarily referred to gun violence. It still does, even to a US photojournalist. In her photo essay, published in 2013 in Newsweek.com as 'Life is Worth Nothing in Guatemala,' Lianne Milton displays *la violencia*. Some of her photo descriptions read: "man who was shot in his car"; "blood-soaked gurney from a shooting victim"; "young woman was shot and killed." For her photo essay, Milton won a Latin American Photography Award. In Guatemala, her work would have encountered steep competition given that so many graphic exhibits of the aftermath of gun violence appear daily in local newspapers. To Guatemalans, those images aren't art or admirable photojournalism, but merely a stark reminder of the absence of peace and security.

Others have grown numb and indifferent. In telling me about a project he led called 'For Life, Against Guns and Violence,' an artist shared a finding by one of his colleagues: "When one of the photographers would go take pictures of someone killed by gun violence, she'd ask the children who would be looking at the cadavers,

> 'What do you see?'
> 'Nothing.'
> 'What do you feel?'
> 'Nothing.'

She titled her work '*La violencia* is leaving us blind and without feelings.' So with the project, we want to rescue values." Then the artist somberly added, "Guatemala has been a violent country in the past, but not at the level of the current conditions. I can't say, 'This is who we are.'"

The road roller that had been parked next to the guns-sentenced-to-destruction rumbled to life. Everyone quieted. The government officials and

The World Health Organization says that an epidemic of violence starts when there are 10 homicides per every 100,000 inhabitants, and here we already have 40. The great majority of those homicides are caused by firearms.

Cardinal stood up, adjusted their suits, then crossed their hands in front, some behind. Five short men with copper brown skin and wearing jeans, casual jackets, and baseball caps, grabbed the chicken-wire that had fenced the guns and laid it over them. They stepped back and the roller moved slowly forward. Once fully over the guns, the driver stopped the vehicle and reversed a bit. "*¡No se rompen*!" / "It's not breaking them!" yelled a young man in the audience with a concerned look but who was clearly enjoying the spectacle. Very slowly, the driver continued forward until he traversed the puzzle exhibit and parked at the other end. A public works label adhered to the side of the roller read, *¡Haciendo Buenas Obras!* / Doing Good Works! In this context, the irony of the inscription reminded me of words a former guerrilla member had said to me. We were talking about the end of the war when he said that the Peace Accords meant *el silencio de las armas* / the silence of the guns, referring to the cease-fire between the guerrilla and the military. Yet, the opposite of *el silencio de las armas* has transpired following the war's end.

I went to Guatemala, that Central American Cold War icon, for a glimpse of postwar reconstruction, to witness that a Latin American country can grow out of a violent past and toward peace and security. Instead what I found was widespread armed violence. In the press coverage of this violence, deaths were attributed mainly to organized crime and youth gangs, known in Guatemala as *maras*. And when the press did cover incidents by other groups, it was primarily incidents of the poor against the poor. Some papers ran countless stories about armed passengers—always men—on buses who would decide to take justice into their own hands by attempting to shoot thieves looking for petty cash. Instead, the "justice seekers" would hit the bus driver or fellow passengers, sometimes even children. Buses were affordable and the main form of transportation for most urban residents, and hence very many Guatemalans risked gun violence in this way.

Armed violence was also a risk for those with cars. Anyone who honked their horn at another vehicle was under threat of getting shot. Informants regularly told me about such incidents. The director of the organization Security in Democracy shared her story: "I see armed people in shopping centers, in gas stations, and my first reaction is of anguish and

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worry that 'anything can happen here.' I believe that the great circulation of firearms in Guatemala generates a climate of insecurity. I have lived it! A couple of years ago, my sister and I were leaving home in the car. Another vehicle overtook us at high speed. My sister honked. So the boys in the other car, they were about 17 years old, rolled down their windows and pointed three, four shotguns at us. We slowed down and stayed behind," she said sinking back into her chair, manifesting the fear she experienced. Then she added, "A friend of mine was shot four months ago, here on this avenue. He was driving out of work on a Friday afternoon when a car overtook him, so he honked. The man in the other vehicle got out and shot him. The car had seven bullet impacts; one hit my friend in the arm. In my opinion, there isn't more security with more people armed. To the contrary."

Any connection between the increase in violence and increased civilian gun possession is strongly refuted by Guatemala's gun rights association, ACTEPAR. The association's spokesman told me about their work: "We lobby in Congress, explaining what has happened in other countries. In England, Canada, Australia, where handguns are prohibited, violence has increased. So it's not true that violence is going to end by taking away guns. That doesn't happen anywhere in the world. There are studies by Dr. John Lott and Gary Mauser, of the University of Chicago and Simon Fraser University, that demonstrate that it's not like that." Reading and citing Lott's and Mauser's work was rather a pastime for him because Guatemala's Constitution is unambiguous in its protection of gun rights, which, of course, is ACTEPAR's anchor. When I asked the spokesman about a membership certificate of the US National Rifle Association that he had framed and hung on an otherwise bare wall by his desk, he said, "One writes to them and can become affiliated. For them, the more members they have the better. Because in the United States, the same as here, it's a constitutional right. The constitution of my country guarantees it in Article 38, Owning and Bearing of Arms." Tapping his index finger on the desk, he added, "It's in the section of human rights. For me it's not a privilege but a right that we all have." He then talked about the great responsibility that comes with bearing a gun. "It's not a toy," he assured me.

While I believed there were responsible gun owners, I heard and read more frequently about the ones who were not. To that effect, another informant referred to the phenomenon of random, careless use of guns as "the most common story." She said, "My dad and my brother are armed. And my dad is a doctor, a common person of middle-upper class who one would think is the last to get a gun. My brother started it, got a gun with the excuse of protection. My parents have had five break-ins. The desperation and impotence provoked my dad to get a gun. My parents feared that sooner or later a robbery would occur while they were home. Indeed it happened. My mom, dad, brother, and sister-in-law were in the house. My dad had his gun on his back..." She paused momentarily as her face reddened. I think she was embarrassed to reveal her dad had gone as far as bearing the gun. "The thieves hadn't noticed his gun. My mom got very nervous and they started hitting her. When they saw my dad's gun, they shot him in the leg and ran away. They blasted his femur. My brother just asked my dad if he was alive," she said laughing and turning red again, "then went to get his gun and ran after the men to shoot them. He wounded one, and then got shot in his arm. This is the most common story here." She became silent for a few seconds, allowing the story to sink in. "Four minutes later, I had arrived to visit them with my son who was very little at the time." This she added, I think, to emphasize how just about anyone could become caught in the crossfire. She then concluded, "This is a personal story, I share it with you to illustrate that the topic of firearms and of violent responses is everywhere here."

After the road roller presumably crushed the guns in front of the Cathedral, the event moved on to the final item in the agenda. The boys freed their white balloons into the city's already polluted air, then a dull sound of clapping hands signaled the end. The government officials and Cardinal turned to talk to one another and then progressively departed.

Most all of the spectators were gone when a passerby, a woman wearing black eyeliner and holding a grocery bag, stopped to ask me what was going on. I told her about the gun destruction. She half whispered in response, "*Ay sí, pa' que se acabe tanta violencia*" / "Ah yes, so that so much violence will end," and then walked on.

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THE SHIPWRECK OF ALL HOPES:
LIBERALISM AND THE POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN LEFT

by THOMAS KRENDL GILBERT and ANDREW LOVERIDGE

For the first time in over eighty years, the definition of "liberalism" has been unmoored from the institutional matrix underpinning American politics, and the future of the progressive movement is up for grabs.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

American politics has a knack for finding antinomies in antagonisms. Patterns of social conflict flare up as conflicts of political principle: Lincoln's second inaugural ordained the struggle between North and South as divine retribution for the moral paradox of our founding; FDR's first cashed in on financial crisis to produce a discourse on "fear itself"; Reagan decreed the Soviet Union an "evil empire" incommensurate with the ideals of the free world.

This knack can fuel our sense of collective purpose and clarify our national character. But it can also obscure the actual political stakes of our present moment.

The 2016 Democratic Presidential primaries exemplified such a transmutation. Amid the emergence of a Trump-led populist revolt, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders portrayed[1] their opposition as a referendum on the nature of political and social progress in America. Both candidates deprecated conservatism, but one would compromise rather than let the status quo perpetuate, while the other would risk defeat rather than let hope for a real revolution perish, and the primaries came.

We should have seen this coming. Early on Paul Krugman characterized[2] Sanders and Clinton as the respective legacies of "Obama the candidate" and "Obama the President," castigating anyone who endorsed the former as misunderstanding the nature of progress. Meanwhile, Christopher Cook in *The Atlantic* offered a "pragmatic case" for Sanders[3] in that no progress can be made for a more just social order without a candidate willing to fight for the best of all possible ones. Adam Hilton in *Jacobin*[4] portrayed the Sanders candidacy as an exercise in "raising consciousness" that made socialism safe for mainstream politics.

For the chattering class, and unfortunately for many voters as well, the stakes were thus demarcated. Progressives had to choose between realism (through the establishment coronation of Clinton) and idealism (through Sanders' call for a political revolution).

Such narratives are entertaining, but this story betrays a sophomoric grasp of the driving forces and stakes of this election and its significance as a sequel to the Obama presidency, one that voters must overcome if this primary season will have lasting political significance.

We might have expected a long-standing empirical pattern: the Clinton machine would rack up endorsements and secure a juggernaut of campaign financing, before Sanders' moral crusade was extinguished with a peroration at the national convention. Such a narrative has several precedents (e.g. Ted Kennedy 1980, Mario Cuomo 1984, Bill Bradley 2000), but has spectacularly failed to manifest itself: Sanders more than matched Clinton's fundraising, and his convention endorsement of Clinton after the conclusion of all contests was met with outrage from his former supporters, some of whom threatened to support Trump's own crusade against the status quo.[5] And all this while Democratic voters under 30 self-identify as majority "liberal" for the first time since before the Reagan realignment.

How can we explain this unexpected fervor? Clearly not through Sanders' charisma (the subject of Saturday Night Live parody)[6], generational schisms (Sanders, six years Clinton's senior, easily locked up the youth vote) the excuse of identity politics (does anyone care that Sanders is a secular Jew?), or the eternal flame of a liberal silent majority.

But it is also not about how much compromise liberal voters should accept. The Obama Presidency has liberated the left's political imagination from years of habitual triangulation, and compelled a re-imagination of our politics. This imaginary shapes the reliability of polls, the judgment of elites, the expectations of party brass, and the engagement of the polity. It has prevented our own ideals running aground in the face of political reality, directly impeding our capacity to remake them. For the first time in over eighty years, the definition of "liberalism" has been unmoored from the institutional matrix underpinning American politics, and the future of the progressive movement is up for grabs.

The Sanders-Clinton conflict was not a manifestation of a timeless dichotomy of how progress is achieved, but a moment of transition for an ever-evolving political movement. We are ideologically in irons. What is needed is not resolution of a phony opposition between realism and idealism but a greater understanding of contemporary liberalism: its reasser-

tion and partial climax under Obama, its role in constituting the Sanders-Clinton suppuration, and a cool re-appraisal of its tenets in the context of 21st century political action.

A SPECTER IS HAUNTING AMERICA—THE SPECTER OF PROGRESS

Progressives do not reject history. We treat it not as a futile march of mistakes, nor the fatalistic certainty of human nature, nor the normative confirmation of law and order, but as a series of lessons in how to realize collective goals.

The rubric of modern liberalism stems from the policy articulation, implementation, and unfulfilled promise of the New Deal. Its innovative social policies—the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Works Progress Administration, the now decrepit Glass-Steagall Act, the transformation of America's workforce into the world's arsenal of democracy—helped redefine the game of postwar Democratic politics. One could gin up votes only if they were taken from this totally reconfigured model of the American voter, now the product of assembly line Fordism and mass union membership. The New Deal's promise was transposed into an ideal towards which American society was to set sail on the rising tide of unprecedented economic growth.

The achievements of FDR and midcentury liberalism mobilized the challenges and resources of the moment in an experimental approach to progressive change that redefined the ideological space of liberalism itself. They were successes simultaneously idealistic and pragmatic—a new map for politics that could only ever approximate ideals rooted in the American firmament.

The parallelism with Obama cannot go unnoticed. While his 2008 candidacy echoed the unfinished campaign of RFK in 1968, the trajectory of his Presidency mirrored FDR's quite closely: unprecedented financial crisis, a deliberate refusal to federalize the banking system, the birth of right-wing oppositional movements, and prolonged economic stagnation paired with novel conditions for institutional change, as reflected in the Affordable Care Act.

The Obama Presidency embodied the unification of liberal ideals with pragmatic realism. His policies consistently, if imperfectly, transcended any postwar antinomy of pragmatism and idealism by recognizing pragmatism itself as a guiding principle of governance.

As a candidate, facing ridicule from both neoconservatives and Clinton herself, Obama advocated direct negotiation with America's geopolitical adversaries as well as native sources of disagreement out of realism as much as idealism.

This vision was finally consummated in 2015 through the Iran nuclear deal and grounded in the articulated but unimplemented foreign policy of JFK.[7] Iran was neither embraced nor shunned, but reintegrated into the international order through a mix of stringent economic sanctions, eleventh hour diplomacy, and the projected interests of Iran's own future middle class.

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba furnishes another resounding example.[8] When the Cuba embargo was finally lifted, it was not

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any profound historical or political principle Obama invoked but the sheer empirical fact that the status quo "hasn't worked." In fact he scolded the "ideological barrier" preventing us from transcending our history with Cuba, tarnished by JFK's embarrassing Bay of Pigs fiasco and the near disastrous missile crisis.

Obama's rhetoric, from his inauguration on, has consistently kept an even keel between allegiance to the foundational documents of American society, in which our highest ideals are enshrined, and executing their values through novel policy implementations:

"As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers…faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man—a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake."

On the domestic front, Obama has embraced legislation that reflected the highest aims of 20th century liberalism, in particular the dream of universal healthcare, but realized these aims through improvisational methods (implementing private health care exchanges, passing executive orders for climate change policy through appeal to national security interests). He "evolved" to support gay marriage as fast as politically possible, and no faster, unlike the Clintonian overreach responsible for Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

Why should such pragmatism offend our ideals? This is how change actually happens: dragging the world as it is closer to the world we imagine should be, a confidence that we can change our tack against unexpected gusts and currents without losing sight of our ultimate goals. Many were let down by Obama when he entered office, but whether from an expediency born of crisis or personal political skill, his Presidency has been transformational on almost every policy front.

This is not a blanket endorsement. The Obama Presidency had its fair share of domestic and foreign missteps, such as inconsistent and worrisome military endeavors in the Middle East, legally dubious drone warfare, and the scuttling of a supposed "grand bargain" with Boehner's Republican-controlled Congress.

But these actions comprise instances of failed experimentation beyond the framework of New Deal liberalism, not a policy schizophrenia born of flitting around the buoys of idealism and realism. Whatever the legacy of this presidency, it is a chapter in American history qualitatively beyond those of the New Deal or the Great

Conservatives go into the intellectual wilderness when they lose. Progressives do it when they win.

Society. Its own antinomy has yet to obtain mature social expression. In that sense, Obama's greatest accomplishment was how widely the playing field has been opened for a discursive reinvention of progressivism for the 21st century.

Conservatives go into the intellectual wilderness when they lose. Progressives do it when they win. And so a specter is haunting the American left. Not the specter of a phony contradiction, but the disorienting authenticity that comes with finding oneself in a place not down on any map. What fire can now light the way forward?

SOME MEN JUST WANT TO WATCH THE WORLD BERN

Obama recalibrated the compass of progressivism, but our political oratory, searching for heat to match rising ambitions, has regressed to what it was before the postwar consensus: an unproductive dialectic between socialism and elitist centrism.

The Sanders-Clinton economic debate centered on the legacy of the New Deal, the Great Recession, and the unpleasant realities of modern capitalism. Sanders, ever-sanguine and fired up even when dissecting the ooziness of Wall Street, is a walking embodiment of red-meat liberalism. He is right to emphasize the triumphs of FDR, to illuminate our failure to live up to that programmatic legacy, and to give voice to the already half-forgotten grievances of the Occupy movement. But he is wrong, and in an important sense deeply conservative, to suggest that progressive solutions to the problems of a bygone era should be our solutions now.

The popularity of his platform is not a sign of liberalism's resurgence but of its conceptual paucity relative to the needs and hungers of the public. His program largely ignored the hard economic lessons of globalization and financialization that have qualitatively transformed the U.S. economy over the past forty years. His platform disregarded both the profound cultural differences between American entrepreneurialism and Scandinavian statism as well as the historical reality that modern European socioeconomic systems are derived from the ashes of FDR's proposed Second Bill of Rights.[9]

The insistence of Sanders' own Iowa precinct captains to vote with one's heart and not one's mind[10] reveals the immaturity and resentment underpinning one's professed sentiment to "feel the Bern." The motivations underlying liberalism—belief in the possibility of creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable social order—would not have been well served by a Sanders presidency, which would have hypostatized the pipe dreams of postwar Keynesians into Platonic universals.

As has been noted,[11] Sanders' strength as a candidate derived from Obama's success at liberating without completely redefining the expectations of progressive voters. His perceived qualities of authenticity and ideological consistency were charismatic only for their ability to dissociate Sanders from the essence of all politics: compromise itself. His platform will continue to have appeal for exactly as long as it monopolizes the promise of an alternative political order without the responsibility of delivering on it.

Meanwhile for Clinton, government seems nothing more than a contested bureaucracy, and we need only steer it more effectively to achieve change. Most pressing and disturbing is the manifest disrespect this standpoint holds for her very supporters, who must pull her lever in the ballot box and otherwise defer to her own opaque judgment. Whatever one thinks of her email scandal and the political machinations of the Benghazi probe, resignation appears built into her wooden policy platform and defensiveness in presidential debates, whose limited number against Sanders was evidence of her repression of sincere political engagement as well as the Democratic Party's fear of open policy mutiny. As Obama famously recognized back in 2007[12], these are the qualities of a technocratic first mate, not a political leader.

Sanders has a vision and Clinton has a plan, but we are not supposed to have to choose between these things. To claim that Sanders' supporters needed only to wise up and switch to Clinton for the left to have a fighting chance, or that Clinton's are blind to the systemic corruption of our political process, says more about the unworkable nature of our present ideological calculus than it does about the "choice" between their visions.

Is there anything impressive, from a progressive standpoint, about holding the same opinions for thirty years, however left wing? Or blind triangulation in the interest of racking up points on a bureaucratic scoreboard? That's laughable.

We dissect these candidates' limitations not out of cynicism but to uncover the tremendous opportunity of the present moment. Elites are scared right now because Clinton's victory will not end this debate, as its terms are no longer clearly defined.

Sanders and his enthusiastic supporters deserve credit for shifting the Overton window on inequality, for proving the Obama coalition was fueled by more than the President's personal popularity, and for rejecting a Democratic Party status quo that will never live up to either our ambitions or the needs of the country. Clinton's flaws reflect scars earned by opposing a relentless right wing assault on her character and family that has gone on longer than the up-and-coming progressive generation has been alive. Both candidates offered inspiring, if profoundly different, examples of resilience that should instill hope in all of us.

We instead seek to scrub off a corrosive narrative whose journalistic buoyancy the candidates share responsibility for but which coerces them in turn. There is no real contradiction between idealism and realism for the American left; there is instead

There is no real contradiction between idealism and realism for the American left; there is instead the incontrovertible tension, present from our nation's founding, between progressivism and liberalism.

the incontrovertible tension, present from our nation's founding, between progressivism and liberalism. We know we are living in a truly progressive moment because no one—not the ivory tower of academe nor the hipster enthusiasm of *Jacobin*—knows what a new model of liberalism might look like.

THE SHIPWRECK OF ALL HOPES

In one of his most famous essays, Max Weber, drawing on a tremendous knowledge of history and social change, summed up the temperament necessary for all political action:

> *It is perfectly true, and confirmed by all historical experience, that the possible cannot be achieved without continually reaching out towards that which is impossible in this world. But to do that a man must be a leader, and furthermore, in a very straightforward sense of the word, a hero. Even those who are not both must arm themselves with that stoutness of heart which is able to confront even the shipwreck of all their hopes, and they must do this now—otherwise they will not be in a position even to accomplish what is possible today. Only someone who is confident that he will not be shattered if the world, seen from his point of view, is too stupid or too vulgar for what he wants to offer it; someone who can say, in spite of that, 'but still!'—only he has the vocation for politics.*

Disregarding the messianic individualism in these closing lines of "Politics as a Vocation," Weber is getting at a profound truth: anyone who does politics has to face up to the possibility that their ideals will be tested, and possibly destroyed, in the face of adversity. But one could respond to Weber that progressivism, as an ideology, already accounts for this. It depends on a kind of intellectual creative destruction, because when it succeeds we have to go back to the drawing board. If politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards, an American progressive is always scouting for new forests, wood to chop, axes to grind, and a new captain to steer the rebuilt ship of state.

This twilight period of Obama's presidency is remarkable for failing to conform to lame duck clichés. Amidst the lowest approval ratings in Congress's history, perennially weak economic growth, near total legislative inaction, one of the most vitriolic primary campaigns in American history, a Supreme Court vacancy that threatens the constitutional fabric of the federal government, and endemic racial strife, Obama returned to his old haunt of Springfield, Illinois to articulate a progressive case for remaking American politics from the ground up:

> *[I]t's important for us to understand that the situation we find ourselves in today is not somehow unique or hopeless. We've always gone through periods when our democracy seems stuck...We're in one of those moments. We've got to build a better politics, one that's less of a spectacle and more a battle of ideas. One that's less of a business and more of a mission, one that understands the success of the American experiment rests on our willingness to engage all our citizens in this work.*

If our present political calculus appears navigationally useless, we can at least gain succor from our shared philosophical commitments. Liberalism is committed to a stable set of core values and motivations: freedom of expression, individual autonomy, a right to equal citizenship, ensuring the capacity of free men and women to self-realize, and a government robust enough to safeguard these values but limited enough to let them obtain expression. This philosophy, broadly supported by Enlightenment philosophers, has been enacted distinctively in different centuries and countries. Contemporary European liberalism is more often associated with "conservative" policies such as free markets, low taxes, and a pruning of the welfare state.

But American liberalism is distinctive because, stemming from the 19th century coalescence of movements such as pragmatism, education reform, and trust-busting, it was married to a commitment to progressivism. Embedded in the institutional transformations of Wilson, FDR, and Truman (themselves building on Lincoln, Jackson, and the founding fathers) was the viewpoint that history can be made to move in the direction of our own values. If liberalism represents a belief in some ideal promised land of equality, freedom, and opportunity, progressivism is concerned with the nitty-gritty details of getting there—hashing out a plan of action, making a map, stocking up for the journey, and asking for directions when necessary. The history of the mainstream American left should be understood as a sometimes productive, sometimes dysfunctional tension between these two ideologies: liberalism without progressivism is empty of institutional content, while progressivism without liberalism is blind to the true stakes of political struggle. It follows from this that the most transformative moments in the left's history—waves of social inclusion embodied in women's suffrage or the Civil Rights Act—stem from both fundamentally new strategies of political engagement as well as a reimagining and expansion of what we mean by individual freedom and self-realization.

Liberalism's recourse to ideas and progressivism's to reality reflect distinct attitudes towards the problem of political change. They do not enjoy a pre-established harmony, and the creative tension between them—intrinsic to the social fabric of America—can be realized only in the hands of historical agents willing to sacrifice their own idealized hopes on the altar of the possible, an altar that itself must be

continually scrutinized and remade with the values we hold dear. Neither hope nor resilience is audacious in itself. Any true politics of the left is painful, because this brand of politics can succeed only if these contradictions—of holding on and letting go, of acceptance and indignation, of righteousness and prudence—are resolved within ourselves in an act of collective self-reinvention, and a policing of our assumptions about the nature of progress. The torch of liberalism must be gripped in the seaworthy hand of progressivism if we are to light a path worthy of being traversed and capable of bearing ourselves upon, and we must have confidence in turn that whatever whales harpooned or driftwood found will provide fuel for new destinations beyond any yet known.

If we truly want to live up to the promise of social and political liberalism, we have to be comfortable reinventing it. We must challenge its own reifications, reject the fetishization of radicalism, and remain strong enough to be self-critical. Viewing the Sanders-Clinton conflict as the latest battlefront between idealism and realism is erroneous because they in fact both represented the exhausted postwar dialectic between liberalism and progressivism. Clinton focused excessively on strategy while neglecting our capacity to reimagine a just social order. Sanders monopolized purity to democratic socialism while remaining frustratingly vague about realizing this vision within our current institutional configuration. They are talking past each other in the echo chamber of the 20th century American left.

Real political transformation comes not from dismissing the game (as Sanders the "democratic socialist" would have it), nor winning the game (as Clinton the "fighter" would have it), but from remaking the game on new ground—and of all extant candidates, the otherwise reactionary Donald Trump appears the only one with the bravura and tenacity to pull it off. Liberalism must be as future-oriented about itself as it is about our politics and culture. We must reimagine the game in a way that makes progressive change achievable. Part of what distinguishes progressivism from conservatism is that this act of ideological reinvention is itself deeply progressive—we are comfortable reinventing our own political imaginary. Neither Clinton nor Sanders can be relied on to supply our antinomies for us; we can trust only in ourselves.

We sketch a partial blueprint here, however incomplete, out of an authentic attempt to make sense of the curriculum of liberalism's faltering history. Only a full hearing of the grievances and preferences of all constituencies of a progressive coalition, and of those currently excluded, could offer a meaningful contribution, resolution, or even full delineation of outstanding issues.

We need an economic debate that acknowledges the century we live in. Throughout the 20th century liberal economics meant a careful dialectic between capital and labor that underlay a modern industrial economy. But while we may lament the demise of organized labor and blue-collar jobs, it is a reality with which we must contend. Consumers and regulatory agencies have a transformative role to play here. For example, Occupy's Bank Transfer day and other possible boycotts based in social grievances have shown that

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a social media-empowered "organized consumer" may offer future opportunities to check the hegemony of capital. This was a practical impossibility a century prior, when liberals undertook a transition from laissez-faire to state-led economic regulation. The Consumer Financial Protection Agency has been a resounding success that should be replicated, but it is only a first step in rerouting progressive economic policymaking into the hands of consumers themselves and away from both the politicians who nominally represent them and challenger movements that occupy the extreme ends of an outdated political spectrum.

Moreover, we need to re-evaluate the profound liberalizing potential and innovative capacity of free markets as a vehicle for social progress. Liberals should not forget that the liberation of women from the kitchen began with their mass entrance into the workforce following the harsh economic realities of the 1930s and subsequent wartime mobilization. We do a disservice to liberalism by mistaking the efficiency and lack of prejudice of the invisible hand with the prejudiced hands of historical white men—though acknowledging that legacy is a necessary first step. We maintain a healthy critique of command economy and institutionalized sexism for the same reason: they are just different flavors of totalitarian economics.

The recent #Where'sRey controversy concisely illustrates these issues. Fans of the new Star Wars movie were incensed that Rey, the trilogy's female lead character, was absent from toy sets and much other merchandise. Hasbro subsequently came under Twitter-fire for sexism. But, as has been pointed out[13], Hasbro employees were motivated not by simple bigotry but rather outdated assumptions about the preferences of consumers, and a desire to avoid self-competition with other products they were marketing to young girls. Organized consumers punished Hasbro, mobilizing the market to score a win for progressive values by defying producers' expectations and rejecting their economic planning. Social media, in short, can be the market's handmaiden by helping to keep the invisible hand untethered. Neoliberalism has created a reality to which we must adapt: in the 21st century, markets are as much a domain for political struggle and moral action as the state was in the 20th, or the church in prior epochs.

Finally, we need a debate about white America that transcends the "What's the Matter with Kansas" framing implicit in both Sanders' and Clinton's candidacies. It remains imper-

ative that the white working class be relieved of any delusion that the GOP has their economic interests at heart, but progressives must ensure that the new cultural paradigm of a diverse and tolerant America makes room for their own grievances, specific hopes, and causes of concern, including the inherent dignity and deeply American sentiment of gun ownership. 2016's small tide of historical, sociological, and memoir accounts (in particular Nancy Isenberg's *White Trash*, J.D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy*, and Arlie Hochschild's *Strangers in their Own Land*) of the specific plight of poor whites seem to both evoke and subvert familiar narratives of institutional racism, and demand correspondingly counterintuitive solutions. We cannot expect to buy off Appalachia and the South with economic aid even as we strip-mine them of any cultural validation for their enduring contributions to American society and character.

Progress on gun control, for example, can proceed only after we learn self-control by restricting the impulse for cultural judgment and moral sanctimony, and learn to embrace regional solutions to systemic problems.

Until the left puts forward leaders who will challenge the implicit terms of these debates, and not just demarcate the existing boundaries of their contents, we will continue to treat socialism and compromise as two sides of a coin whose conceptual groove is fitted only to the pinball machine of neoliberal America. To view these conflicts as inevitable or rooted in human nature would be to fall off into conservatism. We need fundamentally new ideas about what liberalism means for the 21st century—and we can get them only through the laborious, piecemeal, cosmically hard work of organizing ourselves and supporters in unprecedented ways. Welcome aboard.

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11 http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/attytood/Bernie-Sanders-and-the-revolution-of-rising-expectations.html

12 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI5Vl-scc5I

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