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MENTORSHIP & INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

A WORLD IN CRISIS: ON THE LEGACY OF MICHAEL BURAWOY

by EMILY RUPPEL

Remarks revised from April 2025 symposium, "A World in Crisis: On the Legacy of Michael Burawoy," UC Merced.

Other memorials have recounted Michael's scholarly contributions, so I want to write specifically about Michael as a doctoral adviser. One can't write about Michael without starting with his unbelievable generosity. He read something like fifteen drafts of my master's paper, but I lost count after the tenth, so I'm not sure. In his graduate theory seminar, we found that his comments on our weekly memos were usually longer than our memos themselves. One year he sent me paper comments on Christmas morning. A few months ago, I sent him a new dissertation chapter at 1pm on a Friday, and when I woke up Saturday morning, he'd sent me multiple pages of single-spaced comments in the middle of the night. In my second year of graduate school, when I got demoralizing feedback from another professor, he cleared his schedule so we could discuss the feedback the very next day. And so on.

I knew Michael was famous, but it never felt that way when I was with him. He always acted like my project was the most important thing in the world and nothing could draw him away. Somehow, he was like that with all his students, and with everyone else he met. This generosity reflected one of Michael's most important principles. Michael understood that everyone matters just as much as everyone else, so the person in front of you is always the most important person in the world. Michael knew what his students needed better than we knew it ourselves. One of his other students, Zach Levenson, writes that it was like Michael had different personalities for each student and he finds it strange to hear about Michael's sense of humor when he experienced Michael as intense, serious, and demanding, exactly what Zach needed (Levenson 2025). And in turn, I find Zach's account of Michael's intensity surprising, since with me Michael was always very gentle and encouraging. The only time he ever raised his voice was when I broke down from anxiety before my qualifying exams, when Michael yelled that I'd been ready for the exams since my first day of graduate school. (Untrue, but comforting!) He knew I loved to knit, and whenever I sent him an especially anxious middle-of-the-night email, he'd write back telling me to concentrate on knitting.

Michael used to say that he didn't care about our personal lives, he saw us as vehicles for our dissertations. He wrote about this in his essay "Combat in the Dissertation Zone":

> I remember sharing thoughts on supervision with one of my senior colleagues. We were taken aback by each other's approach – she at my instrumentalism and I at her parentalism. She saw herself *in loco parentis*, caring for her students' many needs, knowing details about their lives and they about hers. I, on the other hand, care only about the dissertation and the rest will have to take care of itself, unless, of course, it interferes with academic progress. You are but the instrument for realizing your dissertation rather than the dissertation as a means for realizing yourself (Burawoy 2005b).

That was Michael's narrative of his mentorship style, but the reality was more complicated. I've heard his other students dismiss his "instrument for your dissertation" line as a complete lie, since he was sensitive to what was going on in our lives and available to discuss it. But it's true that he was intensely focused on work. Let me share the last email Michael sent me:

> Subject line: Dissertation.
> Full text: Emily, I know you are preoccupied with your job decision, but what are your thoughts on completing your dissertation? Best, Michael.

It's a comically blunt email and when I reread it, I'm overwhelmed with how much I love him. Michael cared deeply about us as people, but as part of that care, he helped us maintain focus on our scholarly work as a source of joy and meaning. He knew I was stressed about the job market, and he knew I would handle it best if I focused on my project. Furthermore, he was aware of graduate school as a labor process and of the power relations between supervisor and supervised. Pressure to "bring your whole self to work," in academia as in the corporate world, can become pressure to subsume your whole self to work. By focusing on our dissertations, Michael freed us from the professionalization of our entire lives and gave us back our evenings and weekends. We didn't have to account to him in our personal lives, everyday habits, or political work. Most sociologists are motivated by personal experiences to some degree, but he didn't demand a clean narrative of what those experiences were.

Michael's laser focus on my dissertation kept me true to my sociological instincts. I remember him chastising me for a fellowship application where I'd warped my project to fit what I thought reviewers would want to hear. After I discarded the glossy, professionalized draft in favor of a straightforward description of my project, he told me to tack the side-by-side comparison between the two statements above my desk as a reminder of the kind of sociologist I wanted to be. When I was struggling with a brutal R&R, he counseled me again and again to write the paper that I believed to be most honest, no matter whether the reviewers would be satisfied. I followed his advice and the paper got rejected on the third round, at which point I nearly dropped out of grad school, but it came out in the end and I'm grateful to have written an authentic account of my case. If academic careers are determined by chance, then you may as well keep your integrity. Michael believed that if you produced the best and truest version of your project, it would eventually find an audience, whereas watering down your work wouldn't fool anyone anyway. (Although he did make me take the word "proletariat" out of my job talk.)

In 1975, Edward Shils tried to sabotage Michael's job applications with an extremely critical letter of recommendation. Michael got ahold of the letter, somehow, and hung it on his office wall as counterintuitive inspiration. As Shils wrote:

> It is my impression that Mr. Burawoy is hampered intellectually by excessive and unrealistic preoccupation with what he regards as conflicts between himself and the prevailing trends of sociological analysis in the United States. He seems to think that he must struggle to prevent himself from being overpowered or seduced by 'mainstream sociology.' At the same time, I have not ever detected any originality on Mr. Burawoy's part...It might be that there is no spark of originality in him, or it might be that he is holding it in reserve. Since, however, I have known him for a long time and he has never hesitated to express his opinions to me on a wide variety of political and other subjects, I would incline toward the former hypothesis...Somehow, either the security of sectarianism or a juvenile antinomianism seems to have got the better of him. I first noticed the latter in Cambridge. At that time he was an undergraduate and I thought it would pass. Thus far it has not (Burawoy 2005a).

It was so Michael to save this ridiculous letter, which could have ended his career, and put it up on his wall. Whatever sets you apart, whatever others criticize about you, that's the very thing that gives you your edge and that you must not lose. Shils said he thought Michael's antinomian Marxism would pass, but as of 1975, it had not. And of course it never did.

He was the most principled person I've met in my life. As an untenured assistant professor, he supported Berkeley grad students in filing one of the first sexual harassment lawsuits in the country against one of his senior colleagues. He was subsequently denied tenure for his anti-capitalist politics. He saw the fight against modes of settler colonialism in Zambia, in South Africa, and most recently in Palestine as a guiding struggle of his life. He once got into a physical fight with a senior anthropologist involved in the colonization of Africa. He redistributed much of his own salary back to his graduate students, probably over a million dollars throughout the course of his career. And he never, ever crossed a picket line, instead bringing his classes to the picket line every time UC workers went on strike.

Michael spent his career making sense of global atrocities, most recently the genocide in Gaza (Burawoy 2025), yet he maintained a remarkable optimism. He wrote once that he learned this optimism from the American civil rights movement as he encountered it as a teenager in the 1960s (Burawoy 2005a). Day-to-day he was cheerful, funny, and energetic, and he believed that the world could be radically transformed. He believed that our sociological work should be grounded in this optimism, and that sociology might contribute directly to anti-capitalist struggle through engagement with publics from labor organizers to people living under apartheid to Michael's own students. In his last few years, he supported the Berkeley Journal of Sociology as one such site of public engagement. Losing Michael at the beginning of the second Trump administration feels particularly cruel, as we so badly need his optimism right now to guide resistance to the dismantling of the state and the intensification of imperial violence. As Michael's students and colleagues, we can offer no better tribute than channeling his optimism and working towards the world that he believed to be possible.

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WRITING WITH MICHAEL: BODY KNOWLEDGE, BREAKING RANK, AND THE ART OF BASING WOMEN AS INTELLECTUALS

by AMY SCHALET

His hips and thighs clad in red on denim, with a gleeful smile, swaying to the rhythm at a Berkeley Sociology holiday party, while donning the infamous leather pants, which, apparently, he wore even to lecture in. The bounce in his step when he walked toward me on the sidewalk outside the Merritt Station Café on a late afternoon in early November 2023. The hair on his brow and in his nostrils, as he sat across from me at a small table on a highchair, as we drank our lattes and talked. The smile that lit up his face like a half-moon at the end of what had been a serious conversation. Mourning Michael Burawoy in the days after he was killed in a hit-and-run in February 2025, not far from the café where I last met him, I experience my grief viscerally, down my legs into the soles of me; deep inside, into the bone marrow of me; the images that my mind conjures up are also intensely physical.

The physicality of my grief is partly in the nature of the beast. A body that just recently was responsive to emails, agreed to drink coffee, and bounced in his step is no longer. Sensing abrupt abandonment, our animal body fights, freezes, or huddles in fear. CS Lewis compared grief's sensations to fear. Mine are more like those of a fight, my mind wrestling against the knowledge of this accident's particularly cruel way of undoing a life.

But I believe the physicality of Michael's memory in my body and consciousness has another meaning. The two images that float up—Michael gliding across the floor of a hall against the backdrop of students and colleagues, most of them less full-bodied partygoers, and Michael stepping decisively toward me on Grand Avenue—are separated by twenty-five years. Yet the feeling —as I identify it now—is the same: I feel safe with Michael. I believe my body feels safe with Michael because Michael was good to and for women as intellectuals—not just in the spring of our mind's awakening but at summer's peak, when our mind's accrued value has the potential to rock the patriarchy to its core.

Best known as a theorist of capital, Michael's most consequential praxis within the academy may have been to intervene in structural binds women confront as intellectuals, using his power to break rank and support us in a way that I will call "basing." Support starts with belief, and belief starts with listening, specifically to what the body says.

From my first few years as a graduate student at Berkeley sociology, my body remembers playing fierce soccer with Michael and scoring, surprisingly, because my peers underestimated what I could do with a ball. It was the mid-1990s. Manchester United was breaking records, on its way to win five champion league titles. A newspaper cutout of men in white shorts and red shirts, embracing one another in ecstasy on Michael's office door, brought color to the otherwise drab and unremarkable short end of the rectangle on Barrow Hall's 4th floor. Michael's soccer fever would prove infectious, spilling out into the field adjacent to the building, where a bunch of us would run around with him, getting sweaty on Berkeley's spring evenings. I was not especially skilled at what we would call in Europe, football, but I had grown up in Holland. So, I could receive, redirect, and kick hard.

Kicking hard, with no regard for the ego of the goalie, is what we graduate students did with Michael. "Teaching graduate students is terrifying," he would confide to his overwhelmingly female posse, exposing his vulnerability at finding himself in the crosshairs of our mind's muscles. And yet, he sought it out. He invited graduate students, preparing for our oral exams in theory, to sit in on his undergraduate lectures and meet with him afterwards in small groups. There, unlike adoring undergraduates, we would argue with him and make our cases until our passionate contentions broke with a wide smile that let us know we had won. He invited us to read his manuscripts and take him to town, even though most of us did not yet know the excruciating exposure writers feel circulating work we intend to publish. Our trenchant critiques were recognized in the acknowledgement section of "the extended case method," as the double-edged swords that those gifts were.

My body also remembers the note that arrived at the start of November 1997, when my father had passed away from pancreatic cancer. I had flown east three weeks earlier. It was early fall semester, when students quiver with the energies of the academic year ahead. Instead, I sat in Yale University Hospital, trying to relieve my father from the unique indignities of dying in an American hospital. Death and mourning are always messy. But in a family as dislocated and kinless as mine—twice before I turned 21, it made the migration across the Atlantic—the mess can seep through the seams, like my mother's scream at the sight of the coffin piercing the air. But returning home after the burial, there it was, a handwritten note, sitting next to a big vase of flowers. "From your friends in Sociology." He was the department chair, but signed off as my friend, and stronger, a friend among many.

Kind and generous? Yes. The moniker, friend, though, was not entirely incorrect. Unlike many students alongside whom I ran trying to kick the ball, I would not go

on to become one of Michael's. Early on, I had chosen a different role. Michael and I studied Norbert Elias together, at his invitation. In our meetings leading up to my oral exams in theory, I would bring him passages of the Civilizing Process, authored by a refugee from Nazi Germany who took up residence in an apartment above the Amsterdam home of the Dutch professor Johan Goudsblom. His almost six-hundred-page, two-volume tome was considered a classic in Europe but not included in the canon in America. I wrote essays comparing Elias to sociology's "founding fathers," and we sat together discussing them. Decades later, he would, flatteringly, tell a colleague that it was I who had been his teacher.

We had a bond, but it was strongly differentiated. For one, I was not a Marxist, or even a power theorist. I was blind to institutional games. Psychological pressure I recognized. There was a hint of that one day, when I wrote Michael to say that a paper would be coming late. "I thought I could count on you," came his reply, over email... then still in its early days. Years later, I feel nothing but compassion for the experiences and feelings motivating that rebuke. I recognize it as symptomatic of what some psychologists have called an "anxious attachment" style, which develops when a person suffers a traumatic loss as a child that leads them to overreact as an adult. At age eleven, when fathers are still heroes, Michael had lost his. In a different way, I lost my mother around the same age. Today, I know what it is like to carry along old wounds that creep, unknowingly, into crevices of mentoring relationships. At that time, Michael's words were all the warning signal that I needed not to tie my future to a man who felt so easily abandoned.

There was one more critical juncture at Berkeley. In the early 2000s, I joined the team of graduate students, most of them Michael's, who researched and wrote about the wages and working conditions of the UC Berkeley clerical and custodial staff. Michael shared a draft of his ASA presidential address with us. Realizing he would need cases for his "Public Sociology," I pulled the still inchoate writing together for Berkeley's Betrayal: Wages and Working Conditions at Cal, just in time for our pamphlet to be cited as one. But thereafter, it would be almost two decades before I sought Michael out again. When I did, what pulled me back to him had, I believe, the same root as what initially pushed me away.

For survivors of early trauma, academia can become the staging ground for the redo of a need that was never quite satisfied the first time around; the child's exuberant attachment, ruptured suddenly, animates our intellectual muses and mentoring. In some of us, the pain and isolation we experienced as children seed the will to intervene on behalf of victims whom others abandon. The traumatized child

that lives on in the adult detects the hidden anguish in others and drives an outsized responsibility to extend care. Trauma can be a resource for empathy, springing a yearning for what Buddhists call enlightenment. Enlightened or not, there is no doubt that Michael "got" the burdens placed on others, whose specific brand of pain he could not personally have experienced. In response to suffering, he acted as someone and something stronger than what we tepidly call an "ally."

"He really got gender, which is very rare in white heterosexual men, even the men he trained," I wrote to one such man two days after the accident that took Michael's life. In response, he sent me the link to "In memoriam of Michael Burawoy. The kind of intellectual society needs today" by Martha Soler Gallart. The content was news to me. Three short paragraphs put Michael in an entirely new light: the friend, mentor, and sociologist who is an active and unrelenting supporter of survivors of gender-based violence in the academy.

From Gallart we learn that Michael traveled to Barcelona to support a law that the Catalan government adopted unanimously. The law addresses the problem of "Isolating Gender Violence." That concept pinpoints the weak link in gender violence prevention efforts: namely, individuals who intervene to protect the direct victims are then themselves mercilessly attacked. It was not just abroad. Closer to home, when the natural sciences at Berkeley became embroiled in sexual harassment scandals, The Guardian ran a string of articles, and every time, there was Michael, backing up the victims with his voice and clout.

My own story is both personal and universal—when the many faces of institutional sexism revealed themselves to me. In several consequential conversations during what turned out to have been the last three years of his life, Michael listened intently and never disputed. He got it. Some parts he got before I did. He accurately predicted the future and gave directives, which have helped me respond to that future, even after his life ended.

Just as important, Michael reminded me of who I am—a thinker with heft who, as a student, had taught him something about a theory that lay at right angles with Marxism; a writer who practices my craft fast and fastidiously when I can run the show. "Write books, not articles," he advised, "articles will only frustrate you." That I now write four books—working on them, lazy-Susan style, one at a time—not four articles, is Michael's doing: a teacher with a conscience who acts on the mission to make sociology the antiracist, equalizing, and empathy-building undergraduate learning practice that it is meant to be.

Searching for the right concept to extend out and theorize the highly personal experiences that I and other women had with Michael, Sociology's apparatus, though, falls short. What comes to me, instead, is a concept from my other calling, dance. In a fortuitous overlay with Marxism, the word "base" in Contact Improvisation (CI) refers to the dancer who uses her body to give another dancer the foundation and felt connection to the earth. When you "base" a person, you use your structure for the other to rest on and circle up in spirals, called "flying." This is what Michael did. He used his stature as a man to base women as intellectuals. He broke gender rank, fortifying ground for us to breathe and to fly.

COACH MICHAEL

by MICHAEL LEVIEN

Michael found it occasionally necessary to yell at me. I accepted this without complaint. I was a football player in my youth and had been called worse by more menacing authority figures. Fidan Elcioglu recently recalled Michael shouting at me across the table in our Public Ethnography seminar, when I kept insisting that the software programmers I was playing dodgeball with at a Bay Area chapter of the Hindu Nationalist movement were "objectively fascists" because of their organizational and financial connections, and he insisting that I had shown nothing of the sort and was condescending to my subjects. I believe he was gripping the table as he leaned over it in my direction, face red and saliva spraying with exasperation. His comments on my final paper are still hard to read almost twenty years later: "I think your work is a fascinating case of politically driven ethnography that fails to explore the data, precisely because you are so fixated on the political message, the machinations of the [Hindu nationalists]. Your data don't speak to that, and you don't seem to be interested in letting the field speak back to you." He was right, as painful as it was to admit (much later). The result was a crappy paper I never published, but an important lesson learned. It is the same advice that I now give, a bit more gently, to students in my Participant Observation seminar who refuse to take their own observations seriously.

Michael likened his dissertation supervising to a conflictual labor process in which "it is necessary for me to give you the space to press back, to challenge and contest my direction. You must be able to enter combat without appearing disloyal or untrusting....The continuous banter, resistance, contestation, struggle that so shocks more respectful students, and sometimes even shocks me, is part of an essential looseness and flexibility that keeps your dissertation on track."[1] The advising relationship is a hegemonic production regime that establishes consent by containing resistance within tolerable bounds. But with a difference. First, our product, a dissertation, was to be a creative individual product that appeared to be the fruits of our own labor (obscuring the deep impact of our advisor on its conception). Second, the supervisor deployed his power on a craft scale in highly individualized forms—here, Gramsci arguably gave way to Foucault. Upon comparing notes, my friends and I learned that we all had totally different relationships with Michael: subjected to different degrees and forms of coercion, consent, and reward. Michael landed on coaching as the best analogy, and this seemed right, not only because of his track suits. With his ethnographer's eye, coach Michael studied his players' strengths, weaknesses, peculiarities, and amenability to reform, and devised his methods of correction accordingly.

1 Michael Burawoy, 2005, "Dissertation in the Combat Zone." The American Sociologist, p. 43.

I apparently needed some yelling, but only rarely did I make Michael resort to blunt force. He might have remembered it differently, but I eagerly consented to his hegemony. I had almost complete faith in his uncanny ability to see what was sociologically important in a morass of data and to locate the germ of a theory in a half-formed argument. I idolized his theoretical scope and rigor and was fully onboard with the extended case method. I remember largely following his advice, or at least always taking it seriously. In retrospect, he undoubtedly led me to ideas in ways that I took to be my own. Most of our good-natured combat occurred in the confines of that book-lined office facing the Golden Gate Bridge. I would sign up for a late slot, which often allowed the conversations to go over until a little after I could tell I was exhausting him.

There was also material reward and just plain fun. GSI'ing for Michael's Social Theory was by far the highlight of my time at Berkeley, though not because I loved his meta-theme of the division of labor. I was enamored with the humanist Marxism I absorbed from Dylan Riley, while Michael was a staunch structuralist. I was still a bit of an anarchist, Michael a barely reconstructed Leninist who nevertheless tolerated my petit bourgeois deviations. It was only after graduating and teaching my own theory courses that I realized the true brilliance of Michael's course design, with its well-chose excerpts and tightly interlocking parts summarized and compared through idiosyncratic diagrams (every time I try to improve upon it, I learn the hard way why each page of reading was there). But what made that year magical was a conjunction of world history, the collective effervescence of a fun and brilliant group of fellow GSIs that Michael convened and regaled, and a spirited collection of students that included several future sociologists. Lehman Brothers collapsed while we were teaching Marx and Engels, so it was easy to buy Michael's argument that theory was "living." Michael's ludicrously generous Thursday dinners—I remember thinking, $25 entrees!—there were times to absorb Michael's stories and informal sense of the field, before they descended into inebriated banter in which we applied social theory to our dating lives. Happy to gossip about ours, Michael was famously reticent about his own, though ultimately admitted to one "long war of position, brief war of movement." The raucous year culminated with a class game show and Bollywood dance party, Michael pretending to swig from a vodka bottle while we line danced to the *Slumdog Millionaire* anthem "Jai Ho." We mused that his grandfatherly appearance and British accent allowed him to get away with it.

Perhaps because of the remoteness of my research from his own labor studies, Michael gave me a long leash to figure out how to turn my interest in anti-dispossession movements into a sociology of dispossession. He encouraged me to spend a year-and-a-half in an Indian village, and couldn't have had any clue what I

would find. I marvel now at his apparent confidence, or at least ability to make me confident, that such an endeavor was achievable and worth pursuing. In our hyper-professionalized discipline, I now realize how terrifying it is to encourage students to do ambitious dissertation projects that have no obvious relationship to the concerns of American sociology.

But Michael's theory of "combat in the dissertation zone" is incomplete. I never loved a coach, but I loved Michael Burawoy. This is not because we had an especially personal relationship. It is because of the tremendous intellectual debt I owe him, my greatest teacher, which is both unrepayable and beyond expression because far deeper than ideas. It comes from the example of intellectual and political integrity that he modeled more than expressed, a raised eyebrow more than enough to communicate transgressions. It stems from the gratitude I feel for the countless hours of work he put into comments on papers and chapters of variable quality, usually hiding any exasperation he felt. Not least, there were the responses to my fieldwork memos, dispatched at odd hours of the night, which I would retrieve by taking a bus from the village I was studying to a Jaipur internet cafe. I clung to these missives like life rafts, reminding me what the hell I was doing, lonely and hungry, in a sweltering Rajasthani village. I will never forget the no-show job he gave me when I was suffering from repetitive stress injuries and could barely hold my neck up straight, much less type into a computer. Disbursed from one of the various "funds" Michael used to redistribute his salary, I figured he called it the Antonio Gramsci Fellowship because it was meant for infirm intellectuals. Michael biked to Barrows on a Sunday afternoon to hear the nth version of my job talk. We did not talk much about feelings, but this was emotional labor. Will Michael turn over in Highgate Cemetery if I suggest reconstructing his Gramscian theory of dissertation supervision with Hochschild?

Once I graduated, he said he no longer saw me as a means to my dissertation. I, in turn, tried hard not to use every moment together to suck knowledge from him. On trips to Baltimore, he was keen to hang out with family and friends. He played with my daughter Asha, pushing her around the playground in a little toy car. He told old stories, some even about his parents. In our correspondence, he was keen to ask about family and far less specific with research advice, many of our conversations now focused on my own questions about teaching and advising. I realize in hindsight—always in hindsight!—that he was preparing me to be coachless.

Michael is gone far too soon, and it is hard to find any consolation. He lives in his beloved theory and in his beloved students. I am forever grateful to have played for a great.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL BURAWOY

by GAY W. SEIDMAN

In 1981, in my first week in Berkeley's graduate program, Michael Burawoy asked me why I had decided to come to Berkeley, and what I expected to do with my PhD?

As it happened, I knew I could be honest because I had met Michael in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1973, when I was still in high school. My father was then teaching at the University of Zambia; he had invited Michael (then a graduate student at Chicago) over for supper, and he suggested that my twin sister and I read Michael's report on the labor process in the copper mines before he came over. As Michael himself acknowledged repeatedly, that project shaped his view of what shapes labor processes, from labor exploitation and racial hierarchies, to state intervention and union pressures.

It also shaped how I understood the discipline: *The Color of Class on Zambia's Copper Mines* was the first sociological work I ever read, and I was excited that I was going to be able to work with him. So when I arrived in Berkeley, I figured I needed to tell him the truth, even though I knew Michael wasn't expecting my answer: I had absolutely no intention of becoming an academic. I saw graduate school as a temporary haven, which would give me funding while I figured out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.

But Michael's response was perhaps more surprising: he cheered me on, telling me that he was relieved to hear this, because the academic job market was so bad at that point that there were no guarantees that people of my cohort could ever find a tenure-track position.

Which, as I have told every advisee I've had since then, was the best response a new graduate student could hope for. Michael opened the door to a world shaped by intellectual curiosity and interest, suggesting I could pursue whatever questions interested me. If the job market was that grim, why worry about what might impress a hiring committee? As Michael himself demonstrated throughout his remarkable career—a career shaped as much by his experiences in Southern Africa and Eastern Europe as by his observations in Britain, Chicago and California, and by his deep dives into a range of theoretical perspectives, from Marx to Polanyi to WEB DuBois—there is a world out there, waiting to be explored, and engaged.

Of course, as I wandered through the tangled forest of dissertation writing, I got more and more engaged and ended up staying in academia for the rest of my career. Michael's answer that day opened the door for me—but more importantly, I think it reflected a crucial element of his approach to advising graduate students: he treated all of us as autonomous intellectuals, letting us shape our own intellectual agendas. His role, as he saw it, was never to tell students what to do; instead, he supported students as they wrestled with what questions they chose, and helped them collect empirical material that might help their analyses.

Michael's own intellectual priorities may have influenced the suggestions he offered, but he rarely insisted that his students had to follow his advice. In fact, I initially rejected his suggestion that I compare South Africa and Brazil, and he was fine with that. It was only after Michael went off to the University of Wisconsin because it granted him tenure before Berkeley did that I gave in, promising that if he came back to Berkeley, I would learn Portuguese and attempt to compare what another of his colleagues termed 'apples and oranges.' I'm pretty sure that my offer to comply played no role in Michael's decision, but I will always be grateful to him because he did, in fact, return to Berkeley and serve as my advisor. Perhaps even more, I will always be grateful that I followed his brilliant advice, which completely upended my understanding of the histories of both countries and the dynamics of militant labor movements.

But what I learned from Michael was never limited just to academic suggestions, however brilliant. As any of his advisees will tell you, Michael's engagement with his students went well beyond comments on their papers and writing endless letters of recommendation—and I have to admit, now that I realize how thankless those tasks can be, I appreciate even more how reliably and promptly he took care of them, especially given how many students he was advising, even early in his career.

Michael's generosity, his humor, and his warmth are, of course, legendary; while he always respected students' independence and privacy, he provided endless support for his students, in many different ways—including supporting students whose academic interests were linked to activism. Indeed, as he describes more explicitly in his intellectual autobiography, *Public Sociology*, that concern for his students and junior colleagues' careers was part of what prompted him to defend 'the extended case method' and 'public sociology'—two concepts that he came up with as a way to justify his insistence that engagement with the real world often strengthens sociological research, rather than undermining objectivity.

Long after I graduated from Berkeley, I continued to learn from Michael, always stunned by his insights, by his contributions to the university and academic organizations, and by his energetic efforts to expand sociology's acceptance of public sociology and voices from outside the global north.

And, in the last decade or so, while working with him on *Global Dialog* and then co-editing a volume honoring our mutual friend and colleague Erik Olin Wright, I observed another side of Michael. To be honest, I never quite understood how someone who was so reserved about his private life, and so solitary, could be such a successful cat-herder. But as anyone who has worked with him could tell you, Michael could always pull people together into discussions and projects that were both challenging and constructive—an academic version of what Erik might have labelled a 'real utopia', marked by inclusion and social engagement, rather than by exclusion or hierarchy.

I know that many of Michael's collaborators and friends around the world, like me, are also still trying to process what we have lost; almost every day since Michael died, I have thought of asking him about something, and then been forced once again to reckon with reality. But as I read the dozens of comments from his former students, his colleagues, and his old friends, sharing countless stories of what they learned from Michael or how he affected their lives, I am constantly reminded of his impact and his lasting legacy. I am glad that his contributions were so widely recognized while he was still with us; he knew that his work mattered, and I hope he knew that he was beloved, as well as respected. Since his death, I have thought over and over of the old saying—one that I had often heard, but never understood as clearly as I do now: May his memory be a blessing. I feel so lucky that he was part of my life for so long, and I will always carry his memory with me, always.

TYRANNY OF THE 2X2 TABLE

by CINZIA SOLARI

When Berkeley graduate students reached out to ask if I would write a reflection about Michael Burawoy for the Berkeley Journal of Sociology, I immediately agreed. I have not yet contributed to the outpouring of remembrances because it is simply too painful. I thought the responsibility I feel to the BJS, where I spent many years happily arguing with my peers on the editorial collective—my first experience with the long, joyful process of collective decision-making—would force me to put some of the love and gratitude I feel for Michael in writing. I know Michael will forgive me for not being able to bear it just yet. Instead, I offer below the short reflection I shared with Michael and with the dynamic and beautiful community of scholars he created at his retirement celebration. Apparently, nothing says celebrate to Michael like a two-day conference titled "Conversations with Burawoy: Pedagogy, Power and Practice." The prompt he gave us was: "I'd like you to tell us what you have been up to since you left Berkeley - this doesn't have to be strictly scholarly accomplishments, it can be some form of public engagement or support for NGOs or teaching or sitting on the beach - whichever way you have taken your sociology." Michael noted. "This arrangement is not just for my edification but for everyone's edification, especially any demoralized graduate students who may be attending. But it would also be a way of introducing yourselves to one another across cohorts. That's how I see this event - a way in which you can all learn about each other's existence and accomplishments." It was no surprise to me that Michael felt the best way to celebrate was to continue to connect his students to each other. Michael has given me personally and us collectively many gifts. I have always thought that his greatest gift was to give us each other.

power	Practice 1: Russia's War on Ukraine and the Gender Order of Neoliberalism
pedagogy	Practice 2: Teaching my local public elementary school about gender

In grappling with what to say about someone who so profoundly shaped the trajectory of the discipline and my life, a number of us thought about Michael doggedly asking us to organize our thoughts in 2x2 tables. Reactions from my fellow panelists ranged from "I never figured out how to do that" to feelings of profound comfort as order is imposed on a large data set of Michael anecdotes.

I fall into the latter category. I am going to take seriously Michael's conference title—Conversations with Burawoy: Power, Pedagogy and Practice—and try to organize a small fraction of the many conversations I have had both in person and in my head with Michael over 23 years into a 2x2. Imagine a 2x2 table and put power and practice 1 in the top two quadrants and pedagogy and practice 2 in the bottom two. I am going to use this 2x2 table to talk about how Michael's obsession with analyzing power and his dedication to pedagogy have influenced two practices in my professional and personal life. Practice 1 is about power and my approach to public talks on Russia's war on Ukraine also connected to a book project with my fellow Berkeley cohort member Smitha Radhakrishnan and Practice 2 involves applying lessons from Michael about pedagogy to teaching my local public elementary school about gender identity in the hopes that they more fully include my nonbinary 9-year-old and other gender nonconforming kids.

Power and Practice 1, the top two quadrants of the 2x2. Although Michael is not himself a feminist theorist, I do not think it strange that many of his students are because Michael so relentlessly analyzes power, urging ethnographers to map the "terrain of contestation" along various vectors of power. This is also unsurprising because Michael has invited a diverse group of thinkers to his intellectual table. My invitation was out of pity, I am pretty sure. I am an immigrant daughter, the first in my family to graduate from middle school. Although I felt I had found my people when I got to college, I knew I had bitten off more than I could chew when I arrived at Berkeley. I must have looked that lost wandering Barrows Hall in my first semester because Michael walked up to me in the hallway and said, "You. Put your name on my door once a week." And so I did... most weeks for a decade! In Michael's office hours, I found my footing. Out of those conversations came a book about how migrant grandmothers were building post-Soviet Ukraine transnationally and carrying that new nation on their shoulders. Just as I decided no one inside or out of the academy cared about Ukraine or the entire former Soviet Union, for that matter, besides me and Michael, Russia invaded Ukraine. Suddenly, everyone was searching for folks who knew anything about Ukraine, and they were sure that gender does not matter when the bombs are dropping. But I'm a Burawoy student. We think about power. Gender is a vector of power that helps us understand the "terrain of contestation" and what is at stake in this war. In fact, Smitha and I have a book coming out in August, modestly titled The Gender Order of Neoliberalism, that thinks of Russia's war as one consequence of neoliberalism's gender order. It is a truly Berkeley sociology-Michael-and-Raka project, a result of being asked to learn a region well and then link it to other regions by tracing intersecting vectors of power.

The bottom two quadrants of the 2x2 are pedagogy and practice 2. I must preface this by saying I was never able to take a graduate course with Michael. He wasn't

teaching graduate courses at the time, but I was experiencing Michael's pedagogy in (weekly!) office hours and dissertation group meetings. Michael is an intellectually intimate mentor. I remember walking into my grad student office after a meeting with Michael, and one of my officemates, perhaps projecting onto me her own feeling after a meeting with her chair, looked at me with concern, reached for a box of Kleenex, and whispered, "How did your meeting with Michael go?" I cheerily recounted the details of our meeting, and my officemate said, "Cinzia, why are you in such a good mood? You realize he basically told you your paper was crap and you have to start over!" She held out the Kleenex box. "True," I replied, "but that is not what I heard. I heard he thinks the project is worth the work." I never once left Michael's office feeling defensive or defeated. I left feeling energized and convinced that gathering new data or writing a new draft was worth it. Yes, I was starting again, but Michael always made me feel: I could do it; the project was worth my time; I was worth his time. When my child came into their identity as nonbinary just before starting 1st grade and the elementary school teachers and administrators gave me a "deer-in-the-headlights look" when we asked for they/them pronouns and gender-neutral language, I opened a conversation with Michael, not about content but pedagogy. How do I offer feedback that the school could hear? Feedback that left them feeling not defensive but energized? Feeling that they could do it, that creating a gender-inclusive classroom was a project worth their time, and for the 1st grade teacher asking me for lesson plans, that she was worth my time. I am now conducting interviews with trans and nonbinary high school students, working with a team of teenagers to write a report to our school committee with data-driven suggestions for creating a more inclusive school climate. That's my 2x2!

I wanted to end by saying a heartfelt thank you to Michael for the gift of his time and care, for the 2x2 table, for so effectively modeling how to analyze power and speak to different publics, and especially for the gift of each other—a network of scholars who proudly call themselves Burawoy students connected through Michael's generosity of spirit.

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In 2000, my first year at Berkeley, Michael invited my cohort to his apartment in Oakland. When we got there, Arlene Daniels, one of the first women to earn her PhD in Sociology from Berkeley, was sitting in his living room. She had a larger-than-life presence, and, in her colorful way, she offered us advice for graduate school and beyond. She warned us to choose our dissertation chairs wisely because they would be "significant others" in our lives. She told us that as graduate students and perhaps even beyond, in our academic lives, most of our pain and all of our joy would come from that relationship. I believe I chose wisely. I love you, Michael.

FOR MICHAEL

by DANA Y. TAKAGI

I worked with Michael during his pre-paradigm days, meaning prior to the publication of *Ethnography Unbound* (with et al. 1992) and *Public Sociology: Between Utopia and Anti-Utopia* (2021). When I started at Berkeley, he was finishing *Manufacturing Consent* (1979) and spending a lot of time in Budapest. That was okay with me. I revered him and avoided him in equal measure. I was afraid that if I ran into him, he'd say, "Where's that paper?" From 1979 until I graduated, we communicated more through written correspondence than in-person meetings. We were never personally close, even after I became a professor, but my regard for him has never wavered. I may not be the best exemplar of furthering his paradigmatic contributions to Sociology and the Social Sciences. But his influence on me is immeasurable.

Michael was annoyingly emphatic about having a well-defined research question. Underlying his routine rejections of my research questions was his then-inchoate belief about how method embodies theory, and vice versa. Ours was a weekly intellectual scrum about why this or that question was not a well-defined research question. Factual questions *might* be the start, but in general, such questions lead to desultory wandering in the normative fields of Sociology. Our conversations led me to rethink how methods are taught, how theory is taught, and how disciplinary norms are embedded in both theory and method.

I took undergraduate classical theory with Michael (because I missed the graduate offering due to entering off-cycle). Classical sociology meant Karl Marx and Adam Smith. We did a drive-by of Weber and Durkheim. Reading Marx against Smith was the illumination of concepts, arguments, and paradigms. The point was not to learn rote texts and interpretations but how to read, glean critical analysis (not critique), and be curious about meanings. He would hate to hear me say this, but in a way, it was not unlike some discussions in a corner of symbolic interactionism applied to theory. I hear him groaning in disagreement. His lectures were mesmerizing. His nerdiness was fabulous. He was brash, his hair stood up in curled coils, and his passion was infectious. It was an intimacy of reading, writing, and engagement. Unforgettable.

Michael was my supervisor in an area called structuralism for my QE exam. Marx, Foucault, Freud, Lukacs, and Althusser among others. Sure, I wrote a field/area study, but the crux of what I had to say was in two typed pages in the form of an abstract/summary on how structuralism cognates totalities and forms. He was big on the short summary. He went bananas with excitement. He wanted to talk at length, we had coffee, and he ended our meeting with a caution: do not dwell too long in this stuff, as you will never find your way out.

For various reasons, my dissertation was never published as an essay or book. I now regret some of my decisions I made back then because the thesis is a tribute to Michael's openness to Gramsci, class cultures, and the limits of class structure paradigms. It was an incipient critique of the limits of Marxism with respect to race. If I started Berkeley as a committed Marxist/Leninist who studied quantitative methods, I graduated with a wider vision of paradigms, Marxism, and theory, due in part to my working with Michael.

After his retirement event in 2023, I wrote this private tribute—he sees a speck of dust, and having thoroughly investigated its nature, evolution, *and* having asked a productive research question about that speck of dust, Michael theorizes the totality of the social formation, the architecture of this dusty world.[1] And moving in the conceptual and dialectical reverse, from totality back to the speck of dust, he affirms the truths of both dust and totality. Transformative politics and advances in disciplinary knowledge need both kinds of truth.

1 I use the term dusty world to signify the world as-it-is, the everyday world, the world of untheorized experience.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL BURAWOY

by CRISTINA FLESHER FOMINAYA

As a former editor of the *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, which Michael Burawoy encouraged me to join, it gives me great pleasure to remember him here in these pages. Michael was a huge influence in my life, in ways that only became clear to me as I got older. Firstly, I would never have become a sociologist if it hadn't been for a serendipitous encounter in my final year of my BA in International Relations at the University of Minnesota. My advisor for my honors thesis was (and still is) a sociologist, and he invited me to give a 10-minute presentation on my ethnographic research into the Spanish Greens at a Sociology conference on campus. I showed up and gave my talk (probably my first academic talk ever), and as I was walking out, a British-sounding man came up to me and gave me his card. All I remember of what he said was, "If you have any interest in doing a PhD at Berkeley, give me a call." I later mentioned the encounter to my advisor, who told me Professor Burawoy had been the conference keynote speaker and was a very highly regarded sociologist. To be perfectly honest, at that point, I had very little idea of what a sociologist was, but I put the card away. One degree and a baby later, and with more encouragement from my advisor, I dug the card out and called the number, with some trepidation. Michael immediately remembered me (I later discovered he had a mind like a steel trap, and it wasn't *necessarily* because I was so memorable, though it would be nice to think so). He gave me a lot of helpful advice and encouraged me to apply. Eventually, with scholarships in hand, I decided to go to Berkeley, and I arrived, baby and husband in tow, immediately feeling very different from the much younger members of my cohort. From the very beginning, Michael had my back. I couldn't afford a laptop computer, so he lent me his until I could get one. When I was strapped for cash to the extent that it prevented me from taking advantage of important career opportunities, such as travelling to a conference in Europe, he would find me funding or an extra job. He understood that my childcare duties meant I couldn't attend seminar talks and many other department activities, and distanced me from my cohort. We talked about the radical "turning into a pumpkin" switch I made each day at 3 p.m., and he encouraged me to use the walk up the hill to my house to transition from "school brain" to "mothering brain." Most importantly, I felt he saw me and heard me, and understood the particular challenges I faced as a mother, an older student, and someone not raised in the US.

In an academic environment where social movement scholarship was completely dominated by the US civil rights movement, he understood that the dynamics, assumptions, and theories that drove and were derived from that foundational movement were very different from the autonomous European movements I was familiar with. Instead of trying to assimilate me to the US point of view, he set me on a two-year path of intensively reading all the works of Alain Touraine, through which I discovered the work of Alberto Melucci, who, even more than Touraine, influenced me profoundly. He encouraged me to find my own voice, to trust my own analysis, but also to be aware that taking the path less travelled meant increased possibility of rejection, especially from US journals. When my first article was rejected, he chalked it up to gatekeeping and encouraged me to stick to my guns rather than try to appease editors and reviewers. Authenticity over strategy was how I would describe his mentoring—a harder row to hoe, but ultimately more rewarding. Michael's support over the years has been unfailing. I rarely troubled him, but if I needed him, he was always there, a pattern that began in grad school and never stopped, even 25 years later! I know that he had many other students and colleagues who undoubtedly feel the same.

I learned an enormous amount from Michael. During grad school, I was fortunate to be taken on as one of the GSIs for his famous year-long Sociological Theory class. As someone who had taken exactly one sociology class as an undergraduate (Environmental Sociology), I was learning along with the students from his brilliant lectures, but mostly from Michael-led intensive weekly theory sessions with the other GSIs, followed by dinner at a different local Bay Area restaurant each week (Michael's treat). Best of all, though, were my one-on-one theory sessions with Michael. Those sessions, where we would lose ourselves in different paragraphs of Marx and Gramsci, are my most treasured memories with Michael.

(Speaking of Gramsci: Michael also had a formidable character. The twinkly, gentle professor that so many will recall was not the only side of him. I once had to miss his first Gramsci seminar of the semester (for a very good reason, I swear), and he was *absolutely furious* with me! He soon got over it, thankfully. It took me a bit longer. He was slightly unreasonable when it came to Gramsci, but we all have our quirks).

When I was in the field for my dissertation research, we only communicated by email, but his feedback and advice was always forthright. His support for participatory ethnography was absolute—and that support freed me to focus on the analysis and the insights coming from the fieldwork without second guessing myself or adopting any defensive postures about method. I later realized how rare that is in the academy, how right I was to choose Berkeley, and how blessed I was to have Michael as a mentor.

Because of the time difference, I might send him emails at 2 a.m. his time, and I was always startled when he would shoot an email right back. This was when I realized that he never seemed to sleep, and that he lived and breathed sociology 24/7. In his commitment and passion for sociology, I could never match him, nor have I ever tried. Some things are unattainable for mere mortals. But in his approach to theory and to lecturing, I hope that I have absorbed something. Michael understood (like many great teachers) that lecturing is a performance, and that engaging and stimulating the audience is the key to success. He was an absolute master at that. So much so that when my brother (an ecologist) came to visit, I took him along to one of Michael's lectures. I am sure I am not the only person who did that. "Bloody brilliant!" and "Bob's your uncle!" are two phrases none of his students will ever forget. Whether they admitted it or not, I am willing to bet not a single one didn't secretly hope to be graced with a "bloody brilliant!" His parlor trick of learning all the students' names was another of his strategies, and he roped the GSIs in to help him during our weekly sessions: "The young woman with the brown hair who sits next to the guy named Brian in the front row—what's her name again?" He would eventually be able to call on all the students by name (these were classes of some 200 students). I learned so much about theory and teaching during that year that, as the joke goes, I should have been paying him, not the other way around.

Michael's commitment to public sociology became clear to me after I left Berkeley. When I co-founded *Interface Journal*, he asked me to write a piece about it for Global Dialogue, and he was genuinely interested in the mission and approach of the journal,[1] especially as he had a similar set of aspirations for sociological exchanges and interventions. He understood that sociology is useless if it doesn't try to change the world for the better—otherwise, what is the point? His love of Gramsci wasn't just academic! As President of the ASA (American Sociological Association) and the

1 A multi-lingual genuinely open-access independent social movement journal with an activist/academic reviewer and author model.

ISA (International Sociological Association) he continued to spread the message that sociology can matter, but only if it manages to break free of the academic silo. There are those who will try to put sociology back in its academic box (especially when it is politically expedient to do so), but in a world where sociology departments are disappearing or under attack, I am convinced that its continued relevance depends on the opposite: continual engagement with and intervention in the world, putting academic excellence and critical insights at the service of society and (emancipatory and democratic) politics.

In the past year, Michael was vocal in his support for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, just as he supported workers and students, and many oppressed groups over the course of his lifetime. Teaching on the picket line was his solution to meeting students' needs and supporting strikers. Michael was instrumental in mobilizing for the resolution that was ultimately passed by the ASA to take a public stand for academic freedom and for justice in Palestine, for which I am profoundly grateful. In his statement of support for the resolution he called for sociologists to "stand up for the moral principles that brought so many of us to sociology" and his final posthumous publication develops that reflection further-a fitting final word from someone who was on the right side of history. Michael argued in relation to the Israel/Palestine conflict that "21st century sociology does what it has to do—offer a sense of possibilities out of a bleak situation." He argued that the "attack on the university—and you can be sure sociology if it is doing its job will be an early target—should be a reason itself to defend peaceful protest." How right he was.

I miss knowing Michael is there, and will always be so grateful for our chance meeting and his support over the past 25+ years, but mostly I feel his loss for the wider world: as academic freedom is being demolished across Europe and the US, and as fundamental democratic institutions and freedoms are being dismantled by the Trump administration, the stakes have never been higher. Michael's voice, commitment, and leadership will be hugely missed.

MICHAEL BURAWOY: A MENTOR IN LIFE, DEATH, AND BEYOND

by BILL HAYES

In the cramped and warm confines of his Oakland apartment, our research group would gather in early evenings, huddled over stacks of notes and well-worn books. The apartment itself was modest, almost sparse, save for the intellectual energy engulfing the space. His refrigerator was often empty, save for a jar of peanut butter and jelly or a fruit tart he had picked up along his homeward bicycle trip from Berkeley. A fitting metaphor for Michael: conjuring ideas, funding students, and sustaining a relentless pursuit of knowledge on the barest of material needs. What he lacked in groceries, he more than made up for with intellectual feasts and fanfare. He did not merely teach; he provoked, he challenged, he made us think—often well past the point of comfort.

For me, Michael's intellectual legacy is inextricably tied to Gramsci. It was he who first introduced me to the Italian Marxist, whose writings became foundational to my life and work. Like so many others, I engaged with Michael on the concept of the public intellectual—a bridging of the traditional and organic intellectual. This was not just something Michael taught; it was something he embodied, breathed, and bled. Yes, he was a scholar in the academy but always reaching beyond it, engaging with workers, activists, and professionals with an urgency that made the historical dialogue between Marxism and sociology feel alive; a praxis embodied in nervous pacing and thumbnail biting.

He was also, at times, relentless. I learned that the hard way, the day I made the mistake of asking him for a letter of recommendation on the day it was due. His response was swift and unforgiving. He scolded me in a way that cut straight to my core, a rare moment where the ever-charismatic mentor became something else—a disciplinarian who would not indulge irresponsibility. I left in tears. But Michael, ever the dialectician, did not leave things there. A few days later, in his Barrows office, he would share a shot of Russian vodka and, with a wry smile, let me know that the lesson had been learned. And once, he grabbed my hand and pulled me into a jig, turning my sour mood into uncontrollable laughter. With Michael, there was always the critique, but always, too, the care.

Michael died that day in February, but he continues to live on. I hear him in the classroom, I hear him during office hours, I hear him cursing, as I watch my Gunners draw with Man U at Old Trafford. While my days of exclaiming "bloody brilliant" are behind me, I still discipline students to embody theory à la Burawoy. For over twenty years, his infamous final theory exam—once a solo poster exercise—evolved into a two-hour, food-fueled debate among groups of four and five in Spokane eateries. A new generation now lives through the stress and strain, learning to embody Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Gramsci, Fanon, Foucault, McKinnon, Collins, Bourdieu, and beyond. And, like Michael, I continue to insist that theory must be lived and debated, struggled over, and fought for in the public arena. In small ways and grand ones, we continue to carry Michael with us. His journey is not over, and neither is ours. Avanti!

A MENTOR AND A MENSCH

by PIERRETTE HONDAGNEU-SOTELO

I got the shocking news about Michael's untimely, tragic death with a phone call the following day, compassionately delivered by Stephanie Canizales, a former USC graduate student who is now an assistant professor in Berkeley's sociology department. I was numbed by the news, but I also happened to be in the middle of writing an email to Vicki Smith, who is now retired from UC Davis. She had been one of Michael's PhD students with me back in the late 1980s, so I typed the news to her. I am not a particularly well-networked sociologist, but it is a revelation to me that I remain connected to Canizales and Smith through the influence of Michael's extraordinary mentorship and his model of how to be a publicly engaged sociologist.

Michael Burawoy was many things: a brilliant teacher, an innovator and leader in sociology, and a publicly engaged intellectual. But here I want to focus on his mentoring practices.

We had already reflected on his uniquely dedicated mentorship in April of 2023, when we gathered for his epic retirement celebration. I was proud of him for retiring—many senior professors don't know when or how to do this—and delighted that he got to see and hear testimonials of love and appreciation from the 80 former students he had chaired. He had to sit back and just take it. On that day, we learned so much more about him, and I got a sense of how his mentorship had evolved over time. Back in our day, most of us knew very little about him. Some of us (including me) felt a little scared and intimidated by him, by the tough questions he would ask about the drafts of our papers, proposals, and chapters. I remember him asking these questions in his office, often with a big Cheshire cat grin. There was no pressure to answer on the spot, but still, his sheer theoretical intellect filled the room and added some weight to the whole graduate student experience at Berkeley. The stories that more recent graduate students mentees told at his retirement celebration suggested that he remained as rigorous as ever, but had loosened up over time, perhaps becoming more relational and jovial. Even fun.

As I have written elsewhere, my experience of graduate school days at Berkeley Sociology in the 1980s was alienating. While the classes and invited colloquia speakers exposed me to big ideas and books, the seminars were large and uneven. Many of the professors seemed disengaged, possibly depressed. All of the office doors on the 4th floor of what was then called Barrows Hall were usually closed, and you could never tell if a human being was in there. In this sea of benign neglect, Michael was an exception. He was the first professor to show enthusiasm and substantive interest in helping me advance my research and writing. Having him as my mentor allowed me to write a dissertation about gender and migration, and he made all my work that followed possible. He shaped my subsequent research and writing, and the way in which I mentored graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.

At USC, where I worked for thirty years, I gave a lot of energy to the mentoring aspects of my job, both in graduate seminars and in guiding theses. It's a very special thing to advise students and young scholars as they develop a project through a set of questions and a way to answer them, and I recognize how much of my mentoring practices came directly from my experiences as one of Michael's PhD students. The core practices I have used with my mentees are ones I learned from him: writing a two to three-page letter to offer comments on drafts of chapters, papers and proposals, and delivering that letter and explaining these in a face to face meeting—and doing that many times over the course of one thesis. It's quite a commitment. I also developed a dissertation group where it became an obligation for each graduate student participant to circulate work in progress, and comment on the papers of other PhD students currently under supervision (something very familiar to all of Michael's former graduate students). And I consciously tried to develop the work of my mentees by mixing intellectual rigor with hard questions, kindness, encouragement, and patience, as Michael did.

Most, but not all, of my mentees were Latinx first-generation college students, many of whom had been overlooked by other professors and instructors. They are now thriving as sociology practitioners, and together with three of them (Emir Estrada, Veronica Montes, and Fatima Suarez), we're writing a book about mentorship. As part of this project, they reached out to Michael Burawoy a couple of years ago and asked him to write a letter about his ideas on mentorship and his recollections of mentoring me. He responded with a beautiful, carefully thought-out letter. It is six pages long, single-spaced and cannot be reproduced here, and it is stunning for his attention to detail (making me feel special forty years later by actually remembering when and where he was when he read my first paper) and for the broad overview of how he himself changed his mentoring practice over the years. It was very moving to read this letter then, and more so now.

Michael's love of sociology is legendary, but his love of connecting to people and the world through sociology projects is really the heart of the matter. As he wrote in this letter:

"...deep relations span our lives, among those between mentor and mentee. We are, after all, members of a privileged community born in graduate school, with sociology as our life-long vocation."

Michael no longer walks this earth, but his presence reverberates in the way we practice a sociology dedicated to social change, humanity, and our students.

ON MICHAEL BURAWOY

by SIRI COLOM

When I was applying to graduate school, I had no family experience or professional networks, I didn't understand what a PhD meant other than spending a very long time on a very specific project. I had recently told someone I'd never do a doctorate, for how could anyone want to study just one thing for the rest of their lives! I was an English undergrad, so my idea of this was narrow. But between that dismissive comment and finding myself looking through the printed book of sociology graduate programs, I had found myself sitting in an undergraduate theory course that was heavy on Marx—I was in a terminal Master's program that did not offer theory, and I really wanted to understand the foundation. I was enraptured. I was transformed. This explained so much!

And that was that. Suddenly, I wanted a doctorate so I could make sense of this world I found myself in, and by understanding the world maybe change it. I sat on my apartment floor with the borrowed book of graduate programs with yellow sticky notes and selected five programs (that was all I could afford) that had some combination of "Latin American" and "Marxist" sociology as a specialty.

I'd heard people say to really have a chance, you needed to "follow" someone important in a department so they could vouch for you. So, as I was gathering my schools, I thought, I guess it's time to follow someone. Folks, this is pre-social media days, so essentially it meant reading work you could find, talking to people who might have connections, and showing up at a conference, which also implied you already had these networks. I had none. I called Berkeley's sociology department, and they gave me Michael Burawoy's home phone number—he was the director of the graduate program at the time. So I called and he picked up. I have NO memory of what I said, but I can guarantee you that I sounded exceptionally green. He was gracious. At the end of the conversation, I apologized for calling him at home and told him that I thought I had to know someone personally before I could apply, which is why I had called. He then laughed loudly and said, "Oh, no, no, no. Can you imagine if everyone called me?!" Which I thought was a good point. Here is the thing: he picked up the phone and stayed on it to talk to someone who had no idea who he was.

During my tenure at Berkeley, Michael was my teacher, my boss, and my dissertation chair. He was a brilliant, brilliant, brilliant teacher. He built a class and allowed the work to unfold in such a manner that gave students the joy of discovery. I often tried, unsuccessfully, to organize my thoughts in a Burawoy-esque way. A couple of highlights are: the 8x20 table that had something to do with Cuba and Gramsci. Or the flowchart I made of the first part of the German Ideology. I showed him both, and I can only describe his look as a combination of worry and terror. (Note: I still love my flowchart.)

As a chair, he could be frustrating. There was a constant push and pull as I sought to develop my own center, and he pulled me back—maybe it was dialectical? But, he didn't give up, even though I spent years expecting that an email would come disinviting me from the department. Years. I would get angry at him sometimes and let him know. One time, he sent me a dismissive email, and I stayed up for hours crafting the very strong response I sent about how the difference in power between us meant he couldn't send something like that without recognizing its effect. I came to his office the next day, and when he saw me waiting, he came right out, pointed animatedly to the chair next to his desk, closed the door, and said emotionally, "I meant..." It was an email misunderstanding. His use of "periods" was erratic and sometimes hard to read. Another time during the last six months of my dissertation writing, I sent him a long letter about needing more from him. I remember one thing I wrote was, "I know I'm not that brilliant student of theory, but I still need you to show up for me." It was a letter that was as much about my own fear as it was about our relationship. We sat together and had a long conversation about doing things differently. We both did better.

After leaving grad school and applying to numerous jobs, I had an offer at a large university, the only one at that time. It was a job that, deep in my gut, I knew would not bring me joy. I turned it down and sent him an email, a bit worried about his response. He wrote: "I know you'll be fine, you always land on your feet." And something about that and the trust it implied meant everything.

A number of years later, I was in my current sociological home, where I'd always imagined myself: an underfunded, urban state university. He was nearby, a guest of an elite university, and we were all back in person for the first time since the start of Covid. I invited him to talk and said, "We have no funds," but could take him to lunch. He said, "I'd love to." It was dynamic, it was so very Michael. The faculty said they felt like they were back in grad school, and students found him charmingly charismatic. After our lunch, as I dropped him off at the train station, he said, "You have the most extraordinary department." He meant it, and I think he was letting me know I'd landed on my feet in a place I belonged.

Here's the thing: if you were going to stumble through graduate school and wonder the whole time if you belonged, there was no better person to have on your side than Michael. Because at his core, he believed the future of the discipline and maybe the world, depended on a new generation of organic intellectuals who didn't come from elite spaces, but who developed their critical sociological understanding honed by their experience and despite those centers of power.

Michael lived a truly ethical life centered on redistribution and collective power. He was driven by an optimistic force of will that change would happen. I hope it does.

MICHAEL by MONA YOUNIS

I was living in Jordan when I applied to Berkeley's graduate program. I had been living in Lebanon and Jordan for six years and hadn't managed to keep up with what was happening in my field. Once accepted into the program, I turned to friends in Chicago and San Francisco to get a sense of what I had missed. Both were sociologists, and both encouraged me to work with Michael. This was well before ordinary mortals had access to the internet, so learning about Michael's work awaited my return to the US and a visit to Ann Arbor. As I made my way through his scholarship, I had two thoughts. The first was not the kind of sociology I wanted to do. The second, that he was the kind of sociologist I wanted to be. That confirmed for me that choosing Berkeley was the right decision.

Halfway through the program, however, I decided that I did not want to pursue an academic career. I shared that in passing in a conversation with a fellow graduate student, who promptly advised that I withhold that information from my advisor. But why, I asked. I would think it would be important for an advisor to know. My colleague replied simply that Michael might stop taking me and my work seriously. Of course, for me, this made informing Michael a matter of principle and great urgency, if only to confirm that he was indeed the kind of sociologist I sought to emulate. The reader will not be surprised to learn that he didn't even blink, as they say. His reaction was essentially, okay, now we know.

That was Michael. That's the public sociology that I learned about much later. It was likely his immersion in the work of his students that enabled him to see all kinds of possibilities and potentials–a fearless openness and readiness to engage with whatever a student brought to him. It takes an enormous amount of dedication to students and selflessness to go there. Michael was both incarnate.

Although I was clear that I wanted to take my training elsewhere, and more specifically to human rights, I stayed in the program. I did so because I loved my thesis and the search for the answer to why the Palestinian movement had failed. At some point, Michael said he feared I was becoming depressed working on this question, and that what I needed was "to go to South Africa." Oh, how right he was.

Through the many years of working on my dissertation, Michael's support was a constant. Whether from campus or from afar during a sabbatical or travels, he was always ready to provide incisive and thoughtful comments. I recall with great

affection his tremendous generosity, in the time he gave, the number of drafts he was prepared to read, in bringing graduate students together to hear and learn from each other, and much, much more.

Eventually, I finished my thesis and headed out into the world without a job. Every now and then, Michael would check in and ask if I was sure I didn't want to apply for a teaching position. I would thank him for his concern and repeat my desire to work on human rights. A year later, I found a human rights role. In the meantime, though, I began receiving letters from publishers expressing interest in my book. I was utterly perplexed when the first letter arrived. How did they get the manuscript? I certainly hadn't sent it. I called Michael and learned that he had submitted it for consideration to several publishers, because he "doubted" that I would do it. He was probably right.

Several years later, I returned to Berkeley at Michael's invitation for a panel of three sociologists who took sociology out into the world. He organized the event for the sake of graduate students to hear about real-life options for a variety of careers. I spoke about my journey into human rights, a field that had been dominated by lawyers and legal experts since its inception, and which seemed to see limited use for other expertise. That has since been changing with growing recognition of vital contributions from every field and walk of life if fully rights-respecting governments are ever to be realized. At some point during that event, I turned to Michael and said something along the lines of "If Gramsci were alive today, he, too, would be a human rights advocate." To this, Michael mischievously scoffed and added that he doubted that. Now, I understood what he meant. For Gramsci, the persistent centrality of the state in the human rights framework would remain a problem. However, human rights can serve as an effective third "war" to conquer state hegemony, so I decided I would try to convince Michael that Gramsci would have joined us. But that had to wait until I had more free time.

That time was finally coming into view in 2024 as I prepared to wind down to retirement. Michael had been in touch about his work on "Palestine/Israel," and I couldn't have been more delighted. I shared some preliminary thoughts on Gramsci and human rights. We agreed that we would get together the next time he was anywhere near DC on the East Coast.

Despite the invaluable role he played in my work and life, I hadn't seen Michael in person since that event at Berkeley. But I nevertheless feel the terrible loss. I am so profoundly grateful for all he did to encourage and support my scholarship, and all I learned from him. Those things and Michael will remain with me forever.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL BURAWOY

by JONATHAN VAN ANTWERPEN

As Raka Ray says in her remembrance, Michael Burawoy's greatest legacy "was in the people whose lives he changed. He was an extraordinary teacher who mentored and inspired thousands of students, changing their lives with his fierce intellect and kindness."

I was one of those students.

I first encountered Michael roughly halfway through his time at Berkeley. He had come to the department of sociology in the mid-1970s, as part of a contentious battle to change the discipline. By the time I met him in the late 1990s, he was the department chair.

We shared an interest in the history of sociology at Berkeley, and Michael invited me to delve into that history with him. Together, we crafted an incomplete account of Berkeley Sociology's past, present, and future—one of Burawoy's first forays into framing a vision for public sociology—and compiled a collection intended to demonstrate how Berkeley Sociology faculty were already engaged in the work of producing public sociology.

When Michael became president of the American Sociological Association, making public sociology the annual meeting theme, I was off doing dissertation fieldwork in Cape Town, South Africa. Michael agreed to serve as my dissertation chair, and along the way, I would learn a few things about that "fierce intellect" Raka describes.

Yet I also had the very good fortune, while at Berkeley, of being part of a team of teaching assistants for Michael's legendary year-long undergraduate course on sociological theory. It was here, more than anywhere else, that I came to know and appreciate Michael's warmth and humor, his generosity and care, his love of teaching and sociology, and his commitment to universities as spaces of intellectual curiosity, rigor, and learning.

I am grateful for the opportunity to join a chorus of voices remembering Michael and his singular gifts. He will be missed.

WHAT I CARRY FORWARD

by RACHEL SHERMAN

Although I formally stopped being Michael's student more than two decades ago, I remember it vividly—almost viscerally. The nervous anticipation of waiting outside his door for the student before me to leave his office hours; the click of the doorknob signaling it was almost my turn. The relief and gratification when he thought I was on the right track; or, when he pushed me too hard, the terrifying sensation that I might cry—terrifying to him too, when he saw it on my face. The joy of receiving his generous, detailed, single-spaced, Courier-font feedback on writing I had shared, usually less than a day or two after I had sent it. The awe of watching him lecture, pacing, to an undergraduate class, calling the students by name and cracking them up with his professorial schtick. The bustle of potlucks in his apartment with our dissertation group, joking about how his fridge held only a sad head of iceberg lettuce, before getting down to business (and occasionally watching him doze off). The surrealism of standing in my Oakland living room, practicing my job talk with him over the phone, when he was on sabbatical at Russell Sage. I suspect most of us who worked with him felt these emotions, and doubtless many others.

Michael and I stayed in touch after I left Berkeley, and he always expressed interest in what I was working on. He very occasionally shared his own work. But it was only in the last couple of years (again, twenty years later) that I had finally started to feel more comfortable around him. A little less anxious to please, a little more like a grownup colleague, maybe friend. Now, much too soon, I am considering his legacy.

Michael's sudden disappearance from the earth has made me feel the loss of a pillar I didn't entirely realize I was resting on. At his retirement event, I reflected on how Michael approached his students, his work, and the discipline in ways that marked me—and I think most of us—very deeply. I took these approaches for granted at the time, but as my own career has unfolded I have seen how uncommon they were. I am now reflecting further about how his practices have created a model for me.

His teaching and advising, of course, were unusually engaged. I don't think he ever saw undergraduate or graduate students as lower priority than his own work, as many faculty do, especially as they become more senior. In particular, I remember very clearly learning from how he tried to guide me and others step by step—opening the next door, rather than signaling ahead to the end of the road, which would seem

overwhelming and impossible. He didn't always do this perfectly (hence the crying), and I certainly don't either, but it's a goal I strive toward with my own students.

I was also deeply impressed by Michael's continued openness to new ideas over time. As I've aged, I've come to understand much better than I had when I was in grad school how challenging it can be to engage with unfamiliar approaches, whether they come from the present or the past. Partly it's a question of time and energy; for some it's a question of ego. Michael tried to recognize and confront what he didn't know, from feminist theory to Bourdieu and then DuBois. As I see my students get younger and younger (right?), and shaped by intellectual currents that are beyond my experience, I hope that I have the wherewithal to keep this open and active mind.

Finally, also more unusual than I knew, was Michael's core understanding that our teaching and research are and must be political. His political commitment unfolded in so many ways. The analytical and empirical links he made and theorized between lived experience and structural relationships. His dedication to putting public sociology on the disciplinary agenda. His commitment to research and scholarly communities around the globe, especially in the Global South. His participation in the politics of the university, broadly understood, and increasingly beyond. In a way I am glad he was spared living through this moment, when so many principles and communities he cared about are under authoritarian attack; but I also so wish he were here to lend his voice to the resistance.

So, the pillar is gone. It's sobering and a little scary to think that now it is up to us to carry these commitments forward. But if he taught us anything, it's that we have a responsibility to do so.

CONTINENTAL BURAWOY

by MICHAEL WATTS

I suspect Michael Burawoy is rarely thought of as an Africanist. Rather the words that come to mind might be: a theoretician of work and the labor process, the advocate of public sociology, a leading figure in Marxist theory, global ethnography, studies of socialism and post socialism, race and class, a voice to reclaim the very idea of the public university and so on. The breadth and the capaciousness of his interests are both legendary and breathtaking. But personally, politically and intellectually the continent of Africa was foundational to his entire research project and a constant presence across the span of his life. Of course, he began that engagement with his time in Zambia and southern Africa generally, but it is striking how frequently in his writing he returned to the Zambian mines and to have them speak in new ways to his enduring questions of theory, method and politics. Michael's connections to the continent and to southern Africa in particular were robust: long, deep, and unbroken. It was from his early African experience that Michael was to craft an entire research program—a program largely put on hold when he arrived at the University of Chicago as a graduate student and dove into factory work on the southside of the city—that he returned to later in his writing on Fanon, Du Bois, and his reading of the dynamics of settler colonialism in Palestine/Israel and South Africa. It was at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Northern Rhodesia (later Zambia) that Michael ran into anthropologists Jaap van Velsen and Max Gluckman (the founder of the so-called Manchester School of Anthropology), and their "extended case method" that was so central to his way of reconstructing Marxist theory and exploring the reflexivity required in linking theory to empirical analysis. It was in Zambia too that he became interested in radical student politics—the subject of his MA thesis—and communism. It was an exiled leader of the South African Communist Party—Jack Simons—and author of a book on race and class who introduced Michael to the firmament of South African Communism, and subsequently to his close and long-standing comradeship with Ann-Marie and Harold Wolpe. I do not think it too much of a stretch to say that it was southern Africa that drew Michael into the world of labor and labor politics. Africa, in other words, left an indelible mark.

Africa proved to be an important point of connection for us, though there were others too. Michael was a little older than me, but we had come through the English grammar school system, attended university, graduated, and moved to Africa to work. Each of us had come to the US, a year apart, for doctoral study, and both of us arrived at Berkeley in the 1970s (in my case, a couple of years after him). In some respects, we were generationally part of the British New Left and the cast of characters arrayed around the *New Left Review*. In part because he left England after graduation and in a sense never returned, Michael was removed from the internecine Left politics of the period, but by disposition he was I think deeply ambivalent about that cohort who smacked too much of a style of politics and public schoolboy culture that did not sit well with him. Beyond our mutual interests in Marxist analysis and the political economy of development, our research programs pointed in different directions: his urban-industrial, and mine rural-agrarian. But it was Michael's work on cheap labor in South Africa and his factory floor study (*Manufacturing Consent*) that so fundamentally shaped my work on the social reproduction and the labor processes among peasant households (how technical innovation and production under contract manufactured discontent rather than consent). I was a beneficiary in a second sense, too. Michael would quite regularly contact me with a standard refrain: "I know you are busy, but I have a brilliant student and he/she will absolutely take none of your time, but might you see fit to be on their committee/exam committee?" In this way, there was regular traffic between Barrows and McCone Hall: Ron Weitzer, Suava Salumeh, Patrick Heller, Mike Levien, Michelle Williams, Zach Levenson, Michel Paret, Gay Seidman. The supply was seemingly endless.

But if I am honest, Michael's real influence on me lay elsewhere. As I came to know him better by the 1980s (during which time incidentally there was a vibrant Marxist community of campus including Dick Walker, Ann Markusen, Michael Reich, Manuel Castells—and the (then) flourishing East Bay Socialist School to say nothing of campus mobilizations through the South African Divestment movement and the Faculty for Human Rights in El Salvador and Central America (FACHRES)), Michael represented to me a sort of aspiration. I could never match his boundless talents in and beyond the classroom, but I could hold him up as a sort of model I could try and emulate. In a way that I could not fully articulate when I arrived at Berkeley, he represented all of the reasons why I came to academia in the first place. Michael's practice pointed to what a public university can and should be, and how a dedicated and committed teacher might help realize that getting a degree could be a transformative, even an emancipatory experience. He stood for a particular vision of the public university and the public intellectual, even God-forbid what an effective departmental Chair or a good colleague might actually entail. All of this entailed a huge amount of collective labor and in its own way was a sort of Olympian project. Michael showed the way even if I didn't stand a flying fuck's chance of achieving these lofty goals. I was just dragged along in the slipstream of his refulgence. Michael Burawoy was in a league of his own, and despite his awful taste in English soccer

clubs, the fact is he was my academic North Star. If teaching wasn't going well, or if there was some academic challenge to be navigated, he was my first port of call.

Naturally, everyone touched by Michael's brilliance—and there are quite literally thousands—have their own Michael, their own special relationship (at least as we constructed it), and their own precious moments now stored in that disorganized museum otherwise known as our memory. For me it is his mad biking habits, his questionable taste in headgear, a totally irrational commitment to an English football club (Manchester United), the mind-bending 'Dada-Weimar-neo-Soviet' apartment décor, long and raucous dinners at my San Francisco house (Michael loved to eat and loved to eat anything that my wife prepared), the presents he always brought for my children, and the fruitless efforts to have him disclose much (anything?) about his private life (though I gather that some of his doctoral students managed to draw him out a little through their Gramscian theory of dating!). I once took Michael and Erik Wright to a performance of Japanese butoh dance/theatre in which the dancers, heads shaven, their bodies covered in bright-white zinc oxide, explore dark and challenging themes like death, decay, and the human condition. You can imagine how that went over.

Michael Burawoy was one of a kind, one of those individuals who, like a supernova, burst into our lives. It is a measure of his force of character that he also leaves us with a profound sense of regret. A sadness that we did not—could not—spend more time with him, that we did not know him better, and that there was so much more to learn from him. But this is simply selfishness, of course, because we all carry Michael with us, constantly.

FAREWELL TO MICHAEL BURAWOY, A TEACHER AND HUMAN LIKE NO OTHER

by MICHELLE WILLIAMS

Michael Burawoy had an enormous impact on the people he met and the world he inhabited. I am one of the many, many people who felt a special bond with Michael. He was a mentor, collaborator, friend, supervisor, and fellow traveller to hundreds, perhaps thousands of people. His ability to make people feel a special connection with him was one of his endearing superpowers. Even four months after his death, the pain continues to cut deeply. It's hard to imagine that I'll never have another conversation with him, never be able to get his advice, hear his views, share stories, tell jokes, and enjoy a good meal together. He left us with so much life still in him, and at a time when we need his strong voice for social justice.

Many tributes have focused on his enormous intellectual contribution including to Marxism, labour studies, and methods, his influencing (and changing!) the discipline of sociology through public sociology, his legendary supervision of over 80 PhD students, his extraordinary teaching abilities, his charismatic lectures, and his mentoring of friends, colleagues, and students around the world. I too experienced Michael in these ways, but I want to focus my short piece on my personal relationship with him as he was first and foremost deeply humanist, a loyal and dear friend and confidant, had a quirky sense of humour, and enduring commitment to making the world a better place.

While I got to know Michael well as his supervisee at Berkeley from 1995 to 2005, it was in South Africa that my relationship with Michael became deeply personal. Michael visited South Africa regularly since the early 1990s, but for me it was after I moved permanently to South Africa in 2005 that I got to know him on another level. Over the last twenty years he visited nearly every year (except for the Covid years) and stayed with me and my partner, Vishwas Satgar.

For me, 'Michael in South Africa' was very different to 'Michael in Berkeley.' Up until this time, I had known him as my demanding and never-quite-satisfied but always caring and dedicated supervisor. Meetings with Michael (including our monthly dissertation group evenings at his flat) were always loaded with expectation.

We were in the torturous process of dissertation writing and his (dis)approving feedback could affect us for weeks. Don't get me wrong, he was an amazing and caring supervisor. The supervisee experience is as much about us, the students, as it is about him, the supervisor. He also worried about his students, which he expressed in various ways. I remember one time before I started a year of fieldwork in Kerala, he was concerned something would happen to me. In typical Michael fashion, he showed it through cranky frustration. At the same time, he made clear that he was there for me. He was deeply bonded to his students, but the relationship was a one-way street—he knew everything about us, but we knew very little about him. He rarely shared personal information about himself, and when we found out anything the information spread quickly among the students as we pieced together his personal life through trickles of information. When I graduated and moved to South Africa, I got to experience a much more personal side to him, and also came to appreciate why he was so connected to the country.

It was during Michael's formative years in his early 20s that southern Africa shaped Michael. He became a sociologist, a Marxist, and an ethnographer through his years in South Africa and Zambia between 1968 and 1972. His love affair with Africa started in the summer of 1966 when he hitchhiked across the continent and spent nearly two months in Johannesburg. He was studying maths at Cambridge, but it was this time in Johannesburg that he became interested in education as a means of social transformation. After finishing his maths degree in 1968, he returned to Johannesburg for six months working as a journalist, and then moved to the newly independent Zambia, and after a few months he registered to do his MA in Sociology and worked on the copper mines in the personnel department. It was this time in the postcolony that shaped him into becoming a sociologist, introduced him to Marxism with a strong African inflection and made him deeply committed to sociology globally, and it's where he began ethnography of the workplace and the social relations of production. It is also when he made lifelong friendships.

While he didn't return to South Africa for 23 years due to the anti-apartheid boycotts, he remained tied to the continent and to South Africa throughout and returned in 1991, after the end of apartheid. In these years, he gave many lecture series on the tree of Marxism, Polanyi, public sociology, Bourdieu, W.E.B. Du Bois, Palestine and South Africa. Through these lecture series he engaged in critical conversations about post-apartheid South Africa. He was in dialogue with a new generation of scholars and scholar-activists committed to the defence and reconstruction of Marxism; these conversations often went late into the night at our home. He mentored dozens of graduate students, gave innumerable keynote lectures across the country,

accompanied colleagues for fieldwork, visited workplaces and gave seminars to workers and unions. He was busy, but also always made time to meet friends and colleagues.

Over the last 20 years Vish and I had the good fortune of spending many intimate times with Michael as our home was his base in South Africa. In this more personal space, we got to see the deeply sensitive and caring side of Michael. Michael loved people! We wanted to take him to the Kruger national park one year, and he responded that he went on safari in 1969 and doesn't need to do it again. But he would visit Soweto almost every year with Sarah Mosoetsa and Mandla Radebe, or would go to factories and mines whenever the opportunity arose.

He was also the perfect guest. As long as he had a desk and Wi-Fi, he would keep himself busy during the early hours of the morning (he never seemed to sleep more than four or five hours!), happily ate anything prepared, was easy-going, and would help host dinner parties making sure guests had drinks or whatever they needed. He liked to help in the kitchen, whether in preparing meals or cleaning up—though he didn't know much about food preparation! He loved watching football and would do everything he could to ensure he watched Manchester United matches. He listened intently to stories and shared his own stories about travels, people he met, intellectual engagements, and family in London. Though, I must say he always got more information from others than he was ever willing to give up about himself. Michael was the indefatigable ethnographer and masterfully able to evade revealing anything personal. He laughed heartily and had a wry sense of humour. He loved walking in the neighbourhood. He had a fetish for black jackets—I can't remember how many he bought on his visits. He appreciated important moments in peoples lives, and even made a special effort to come to our small marriage ceremony. He never gave up his love of maths and cosmology, and was always interested in hearing the latest developments in the field. He was generous and would come bearing the most special and thoughtful gifts. I know the thought he put into gifts because on every visit I took him shopping to buy a gift for someone (usually for the next place he was going). Though he was always cagey about who the gift was for. I always tried to pry information from him—is the gift for a man or a woman? Are they in London, the US, or somewhere else? An Academic?—but rarely got straightforward answers. It was like a choreographed dance that always ended the same.

It is all these moments in the in-between spaces of life that marked our friendship with Michael. He was authentic and loving, cared deeply about the people in his life, and genuinely interested in others and the world. He dedicated much of his life to

making the world a better place through teaching, supervising, scholarship, friendship, and building a global sociology community. He was one of the most important Marxist scholars and sociologists of our times and has left an enormous legacy. I am grateful for all that he taught me, for the friendship he offered, and for always being an ethical loadstar in dark times. I am especially grateful that I got to spend so much time with him over the years.

Love and solidarity, Hambe Kahle Michael!

THE REAL UTOPIA AT 320 LEE

by TYLER LEEDS

The first time I saw Michael Burawoy, he sped into my line of sight on a bike, three white stripes tracing down his arms and legs. We were meeting at Espresso Roma on College Avenue to begin a small, funded research project the summer before I began graduate school, something the department had set up as an enticement to enroll. I had wavered over whether to attend Berkeley, or at least I had been advised to act as if I was wavering. I had no idea who Michael was; his official online profile with the department listed his research interests as "CAPITALISM ON EARTH." I made the mistake of interpreting the capital letters as signaling a lack of seriousness, the exact opposite of their true meaning. We were paired because I had applied with the intention of studying rural community colleges and Michael was interested in what he called the neoliberal university. As we spoke over coffee, he scribbled onto a napkin the outlines of the extractive higher education system that had been his life and which he hoped would become mine. For the next nine years, I wished the blur of any passing bike on College Avenue was Michael, and often it was.

The last time I saw Michael—though far from the last time I heard from him—was by accident. My partner and I were walking to a bar in downtown Oakland, and there he was, the most familiar person in an unexpected intersection. He was entering the crosswalk, dressed all in black with a suitcase coming home from BART and a flight before that. He had to fumble with his phone to pause the podcast playing on his hearing aid, though I couldn't see what it was. "I'm always listening," he said, before ignoring me and peppering Meghan with questions about her thoughts on my upcoming move. I patted his shoulder and suggested we relocate back onto the curb. He was killed 17 days later a short walk north and east along the lake from where we saw him, also in a crosswalk.

I could never write words that would fairly portray how steady his guidance and friendship were in the almost nine years between those two meetings, years in which Trump was twice elected, my body failed to behave, the sky turned a deep orange, and we were told to stay six feet away from one another. For five of those years we authored a newsletter on the state of Berkeley and the UC system, a partnership that grew out of our first conversation; he was my instructor in two theory seminars; we taught a class on pedagogy until a strike, to his delight, got in the way; he administered my master's paper and my theory qualifying exam; and he guided

me through a dissertation that by November of 2024 he declared, "in principle, complete." It was his steady presence across those unsettled years that feels most important to convey, but hard to describe. He kept everything going, his advice and guidance appearing with a rhythmic regularity. Having Michael as a mentor was like living with a second heartbeat. He made every challenge easier, even if I didn't always need him. And when I did need it, he was a lifesaver.

That gift of a second heartbeat is what I most want to share, but there are also moments that stand out. Something that can get lost in the assessments of his influence on intellectual matters was that he never acted like he was a big deal. He was once a few minutes late to a meeting early on in my time at Berkeley, before I was even officially "his" student. I was standing outside his locked office door not at all surprised to find a professor not where they promised to be when I saw him down the long hallway running my way—it was more than a jog, not reckless, but certainly too effortful to be for show. He wanted to talk to me and felt awful about being late and would use everything he had to shave a few seconds off that lateness. This was Michael, alive in his body to its greatest capabilities, using all his force for others. As an aside, Michael and I were once on a walk and somehow his middling athletic career came up. He did proudly share that he once won a big school race, and I immediately asked him if it was the 400 meters. I had never seen him so surprised and he asked how I knew—I told him I knew because it is the hardest race.

I only ever saw Michael tired twice. Once was my first year of graduate school. He was teaching my cohort's classical theory seminar, and he showed up bruised and bleeding with his two front teeth missing. On his way to campus, he had been doored by a car and thrown from his bike, which he said happens about every five years. His teeth were back the next week. "The dentist found them bent backward and—POP—got them right back," he recounted, his smile wide and oddly unremarkable. The second time was in May 2024, at his famed cake party, a celebration for his newly minted PhDs held in his tenth floor apartment near Lake Merritt. Less than 48 hours before, Michael had emergency gallbladder surgery ("a person only needs one bladder," he told me, delighted by his joke). Anesthesia and doctor's orders notwithstanding, in the morning, he had hooded his students and even secured cookies for the children who accompanied them across the stage. Of course the party would go on—that night he toasted and adored and held everyone, but eventually he sat and was still as the party swirled around him. It was the most obvious thing for someone in his condition to do, but I just couldn't believe it, his superhuman energy had become so expected. I can still see, in my memories, his genuine smile fighting and refusing his exhaustion. His mind was too big for one body, his energy hot enough to melt steel, but it is the ends he put both toward that made him Michael.

I came to Michael the furnaceman long after he had retired from the factory. The research I know best and which he had me copyedit (as an excuse to pay me?) were his volume on Bourdieu, the fruits, he would joke, of a lost decade; his incredible memoir of his adventurous life, which he never promoted; and his work on Du Bois. Here is a small example of his generosity—he always credited his interest in Du Bois to a graduate student's presentation. This interest in Du Bois was really a passion, and on the final day of the final seminar he taught at Berkeley, we staged his wedding to Du Bois. And he really did take Du Bois "for better or worse," cherishing his hero's example but not worshipping him or ignoring his many faults. This was the result of Michael's central intellectual trait, which was so unusual it often came off as comical—he took people's ideas very seriously. He would not allow the gloss of an ambiguous phrase to appear in one light here and another light there. He wanted clarity and precision, not to best people but to get the best out of them. I can hear his voice articulating so many words—"cap-eh-tull-lis-emmmm". "Soo-see-all-O-geeeee." But in his academic labor, the words I will most associate with him are "specificity" and "particularity." This precision is good science, but it also explains his ability to cultivate 80 dissertations. On my first project, an ethnography of rural activism, he once yelled that I was not taking my concepts seriously enough. He was taking them very seriously.

Serious, yes. But also quite funny. And mischievous. Michael mined the legacies of his Englishness that 50 years in California couldn't erode to amuse his undergraduates. "Bloody brilliant," of course. My favorite was "Bob's your uncle," a phrase he employed to explain Marx's understanding of the transition from revolution to communism. As he'd often say, great theories have great contradictions. But only he could make those contradictions so reliably funny. Michael never committed the familiar error of believing his analysis could unravel this particular enigma. But in his own way, he forced an answer through. "From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs!" (from page 531 of Tucker, as Michael would know off the top of his head). Michael had few needs—a bicycle, an afternoon coffee from Milano, a way to watch ManU. But he had endless abilities—endless brilliance, bravery, and love. And he gave it all away. To be in Michael's care—which so many were—was to be in a real utopia.


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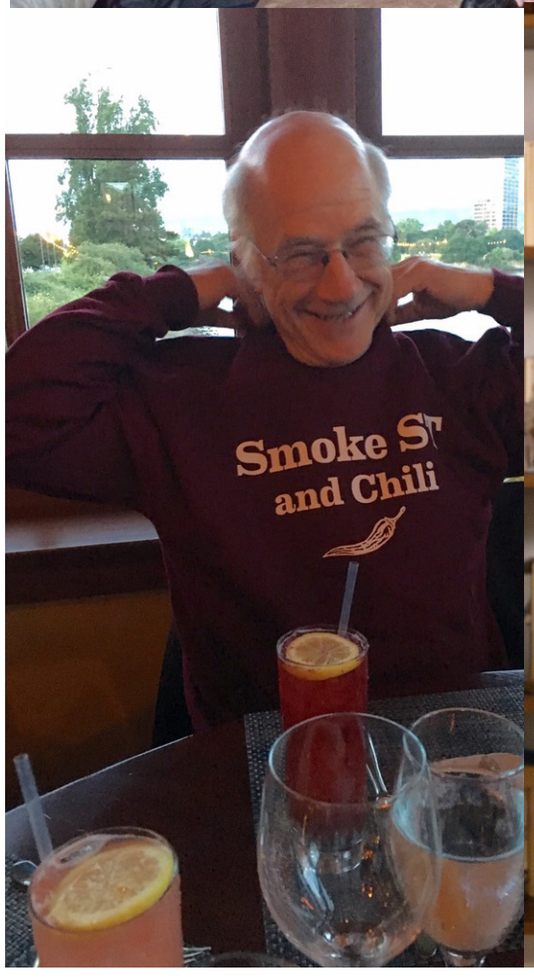
MARY KELSEY
SOCIALIZEM


Decolonizing the Canon: The Significance of W.E.B. Du Bois
Michael Hanchard
York University
January 27, 2023


TPN (1899)
SES
Race & Status
SOBF (1903)
DARKWATER (1920)
Imperialism (Accumulation)
SOWT
Racialized Capitalism
II. Color & Democracy (1945)
(I)World & Africa (1947)
Dusk of Dawn (1940)
Depth of Racism
Segregation
Coop. Economy
Capitalist Racialization (In Battle for Peace, 1952)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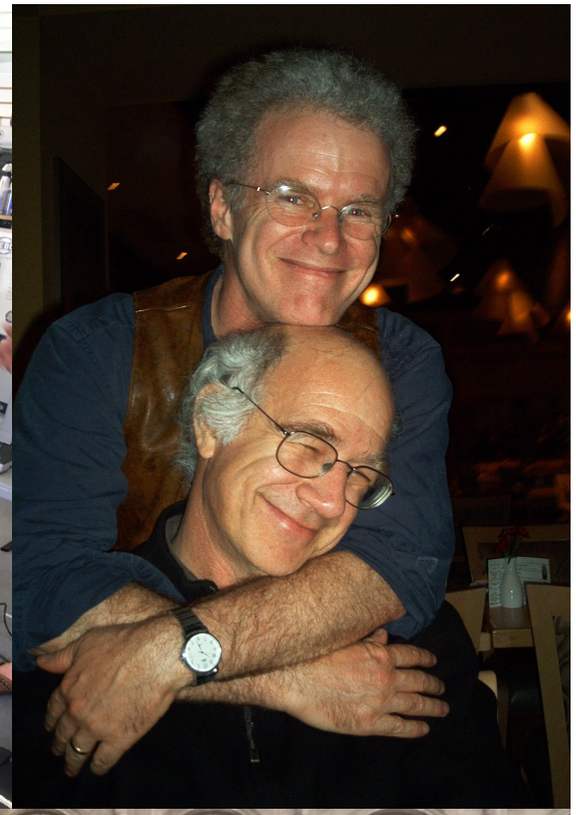

PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

BEND IT LIKE BURAWOY

by RUTH MILKMAN

Reprinted from Jacobin, "Michael Burawoy Never Wavered" (February 14, 2025)

Michael Burawoy had three lifelong passions. The first was English football, specifically Manchester United, the team he supported from childhood and to which he remained loyal for the rest of his life. The other two were Marxism and sociology, into which he poured his prodigious energies for over half a century. I don't know anything about football, but I was privileged to have firsthand exposure to Michael's other two obsessions over five decades.

I can still remember when I was a naive, newly radicalized undergraduate floundering in search of a political and intellectual home and attended a meeting billed as "Marxism Without Dogma." I was deeply disappointed to discover that this was merely false advertising for some left sectarian group. But a few years later, I stumbled onto the real thing in Michael, who soon became my dissertation advisor and later a beloved friend.

I had entered graduate school ambivalently, with a limited understanding of sociology and an even more limited self-confidence. At the time, I was deeply committed to Marxist feminism and to women's labor history, which I thought, at least at the University of California, Berkeley, I might somehow be able to pursue within the discipline. That proved far more challenging than I'd expected, and I likely would have dropped out entirely if not for Michael. He arrived in the department a year after I did, and I was drawn to him immediately. I later came to believe this was partly because we both came from Russian-Jewish immigrant families from which we inherited a passion for social justice, but there were other affinities as well.

Mine was the very first dissertation Michael agreed to chair. He had not yet developed the legendary approach to mentorship that so many of his later students experienced. But he gave me everything I needed at the time: engaged and respectful critique of my ideas and writing and unwavering support. He once told me I was a "natural sociologist," which was his generous and diplomatic way of prodding me to pursue my own peculiar intellectual agenda and at the same time to engage seriously with the discipline. His unflagging nurturance of the former was vital for my survival; I never fully embraced the latter, but over the years, I gradually came to appreciate why he thought it mattered.

Michael's own dissertation, which became the iconic 1979 book Manufacturing Consent, inspired me and many others with an interest in work and labor. It was an instant sociological classic, as well as a signal intervention in Marxist theory. Like many other late-twentieth-century Marxists, Michael was wrestling with the failure of Karl Marx's vision of socialist transformation to materialize and the stubborn ability of capitalism to endlessly reproduce itself. Unlike those who sought answers to that puzzle in the ideological sphere, Manufacturing Consent located it at the heart of the capitalist labor process. He would go on to explore the failures of "actually existing socialism" in Hungary and then Russia, once again through participant observation in factories.

Michael's subsequent rise to prominence in the sociological profession, among other things as president of the American Sociological Association (ASA) and then of the International Sociological Association, may have obliterated from memory his early struggles to win a place in the academy. I vividly remember how a slew of his Berkeley colleagues pushed to deny him tenure — some of whom had also been opposed to hiring him in the first place. It didn't help that he had been one of very few faculty to support a student campaign against sexual harassment in a case involving one of his colleagues shortly beforehand.

But the roots of opposition to granting him tenure were much deeper: his adversaries were professional gatekeepers for whom his commitments to Marxism, ethnography, and to what he later called "public sociology" were anathema. Ultimately, with the overwhelming support of his students along with colleagues at Berkeley and beyond, he did secure tenure.

Over the years that followed, Michael nurtured dozens of Berkeley graduate students, both individually as a dissertation advisor and in a series of collective projects, including the books Ethnography Unbound (1991) and Global Ethnography (2000). He had an uncanny talent for bringing out the best in all of us, with unstinting empathy and yet holding us to the most rigorous intellectual standard. Perhaps reflecting his early training in mathematics, he helped us shape our most fragile, embryonic insights into serious (socio)logical analysis.

He could be combative if he thought any of us was pursuing the wrong path, yet his critiques — even if they stung — were always aimed at supporting and improving our efforts. He was a treasured mentor not only to his own graduate students and colleagues at Berkeley, but also to many others around the globe. And his legendary undergraduate theory course inspired thousands. Some of them went on to pursue academic careers, but most brought what they learned from Michael into other arenas, including a rich variety of progressive political projects.

Over the years, Michael continued to engender opposition from conservative sectors of the profession, but he remained intrepid, never wavering in his intellectual and political commitments. He understood that many of those attracted to graduate study in sociology wanted not only to gain academic credentials and jobs, but first and foremost to understand and change the world. He created space in the discipline for us, and helped legitimate our work, against the dominant currents in the field. Although I can't evaluate his abilities as a footballer, on the sociological field Michael could curve his shots just as deftly as David Beckham (or Jess in Bend it like Beckham).

Yet he also valued the contributions of the mainstream sociologists who would never reciprocate his appreciation, as his ASA presidential address underscored in pointing to the productive synergies among four types of sociology, prominent among which was what he dubbed "professional sociology." His trademark "extended case method" involved careful empirical case studies designed to systematically engage with and improve existing social theory — especially but not exclusively Marxism. The body of work that approach has generated is relevant far beyond the academy.

At the same time, Michael maintained an unwavering commitment to the pursuit of social justice both inside and outside the discipline. After October 2023, he helped lead the "Sociologists for Palestine" campaign within the ASA that won support from the majority of its members, once again meeting fierce resistance not only from committed Zionists but also those who thought academics and scholarly societies should not engage directly in politics.

When his life was tragically cut short as he was struck by a car and killed in a hit-and-run accident in Oakland on February 3, he was at work on a comparative analysis of the Palestinian and South African liberation movements, while also continuing his long-standing engagement with the work of W. E. B. Du Bois. He left behind not only a formidable body of scholarship, but also a model of how to pursue a distinctive form of sociology, one both informed by and informing efforts for social change. Marxism without dogma. Ethnography — and sociology — unbound. Bend it like Burawoy!

FOR DIALOGUE: FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MICHAEL BURAWOY'S PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY

by ABIGAIL ANDREWS

Excerpt from Keynote Speech at UC Merced Symposium,
"A World in Crisis - Dialogues and Decisions: On the Legacy of Michael Burawoy"
April 24, 2025

We live in a time of pain. Israeli bombs, supplied by the United States, continue to obliterate the people of Gaza. The President of the United States is sending migrants – men who survived horrors to seek refuge in the United States – to a prison camp outside the country, where there is scarce space to breathe. Quite explicitly, the only way out is a coffin.

For almost two decades, I have worked with undocumented immigrants, recent deportees, and asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border, studying the nature and implications of the US detention and deportation machine. This is not a fluke. US immigration enforcement is made to banish people. Especially brown people. Especially men. Its endpoint is their social death. Yet, even as a so-called expert, I did not foresee how Trump would turn this system of torture into his central tool of repression: ICE as the US Gestapo.[1]

Scholars can no longer pretend that immigration enforcement is "outside" academia. Inspiring students – Mahmoud Khalil, Rumeysa Ozturk, and others whom people in this room may know – have been sent to detention camps, without having been charged of a crime. This spring, my advisee, in her fifth year of the PhD, had her student visa revoked. She spent nearly ten days in hiding, away from her home. Then she gave up. She texted me when she arrived back in Mexico: "I wanted to let you know that now I am safe."

With this and other tactics, the administration assails the university as we know it. Just last week, I learned that the US Department of "Justice" demanded the names of any UC faculty who had signed a petition against the continued assault on Gaza. The

1. The Gestapo was Nazi Germany's infamous political police force, used to suppress dissent and notorious for its atrocities.

UC complied. As Michael Burawoy (2025) put it last year, "The war has broken into our fortress... Academic freedom is... evaporating before our very eyes" (251).

Michael's Legacy: A Compass and A Roadmap

Michael was a brilliant sociologist, a mentor to me and thousands of others, and a model of integrity in a messed-up world. My first thought, when I heard of his death, was "How will we face this cruelty without his leadership?" I realize now that sociologists of conscience will do it - we must do it - by living into the words he wrote, the example he set, and the communities he created.

Michael underscored that the assault on pro-Palestinian protest was "the thin edge of the broader war against universities... We can hide behind the claim of 'neutrality', but even so we will be mowed down. If we don't take a stand for university autonomy, we are likely to end up with no place to stand" (Burawoy 2025, 251). If sociology is doing its job, he predicted, it would be an early target - reason itself to be at the vanguard of the resistance. As scholars, he made clear: "We can defend ourselves and retreat, or we can advance" (Burawoy and Benson 2025). We can make concessions, or we can fight for a university - especially a public university - under siege.

But if sociologists do speak out, "What should our contribution be?" (Burawoy 2025, 249). "What makes sociology special, not just as a science, but as a force for the public good?"

Michael's writing and public speaking give us three points on a compass. In writing, Michael argued that sociology had three key tools for fighting despotism and defending the oppressed:

1) Through comparison, sociology gives us a sense of possibilities.
2) Sociology takes the standpoint of civil society, defending humanity against state despotism and market fundamentalism (Burawoy 2005, 24).
3) Doing sociology requires dialogue. While Michael approached all of his work as dialogue, it is especially crucial to public sociology.

Michael often said—modestly—that he was more of an evangelist for public sociology than a practitioner. He urged students to work with movements, workers, migrants, and the dispossessed. At Berkeley, he was the fulcrum of a community of scholars embedded in union organizing, anti-capitalism, anti-carceral work, and social justice of every stripe. If we assume publics live outside academia, then Michael spent less time doing such work himself (leaving aside his forays in Zambia in the 1960s and the picket lines at Berkeley before he retired).

But if we look at *how Michael lived* - and I think he would have liked to call this "Living Sociology," a title he preferred for his final book - there are three additional lessons, which he did not always put down in writing.

Looking back at *The Sociological Imagination* last week, I was struck by how aptly Michael embodied its principles. C Wright Mills - whom Michael taught as the first book of first-year graduate theory - argued that the sociologist's public role was 1) "to turn personal troubles and concerns into social issues and problems open to reason" and 2) "to help build and to strengthen self-cultivating publics" and "combat all those forces which are destroying genuine publics" (Mills 1959, 186).

Michael's practice embodied three *additional* elements of public sociology: a roadmap.

1) Teaching. Michael emphasized that students were our first publics. He made students into a sociological public by helping them locate themselves in structural contexts - listening deeply, then linking their struggles to social problems.

2) Building publics. Michael connected people relentlessly, bringing together students, scholars, workers, staff, and anyone in his orbit. He wove webs of responsibility, reminding us we were accountable to one another. In short, he built publics.

3) Defending the university. Finally, Michael spoke out for the public university and its workers, fighting the forces harming the UCs' mission, and defending the university's role in civil society.

He theorized a more just society (his compass), and he also acted to build it (his roadmap), starting with the University of California.

From Berkeley to San Diego

During the introductions to students' practice job talks, Michael sometimes yelled out, "Who are you!?" He wanted us to locate ourselves. So let me do that before I recount my attempts to build on his legacy.

I began my PhD at UC Berkeley in 2006, shortly after Michael's 2004 ASA Presidential Address, "For Public Sociology." Like many Berkeley students, I wanted to change the world. I had spent several years in Latin America, following the Zapatista Movement and the tradition of participatory action research. I was skeptical about sociology. But I was drawn to *public* sociology, and thus, to Berkeley. I soon found Michael, became a teaching assistant in his storied year-long theory course, then a research assistant for his project for a Global Sociology, and finally a mentee.

Michael taught me to do sociology as dialogue. *Theory* was a dialogue between scholars.[2] Research - especially participant observation - was a dialogue between ethnographers and the people we met in "the field" (Burawoy 1998). *Teaching* was many dialogues: first, between teachers and students; then, among students themselves; and finally, between students and the wider world. And of course, *public sociology* meant dialogue among sociologists and the people they wanted to learn from – or, optimistically, collaborate with. In a discipline patterned on extracting information and delivering it to audiences that rarely included the people the data came from, this was a radical theme.

As a sociologist, I have carried such dialogues with me. In 2014, I got a job at the University of California, San Diego. At the US-Mexico border, I have partnered with more than a dozen immigrants' rights organizations to produce data for impact litigation, human rights advocacy, organizing, and to support the direction and re-direction of resources to desperate migrants. I do not work alone. Each year, 30 undergraduates and several graduate students join a research team that designs and carries out projects together. I sometimes tell friends that I am finally "living the dream" of public sociology. Under the surface, of course, the work is always more complex, riddled with failures, burnout, bureaucratic nightmares, dead-ends, and trauma. I always feel like I'm insufficient and could have done more. Yet as Michael showed me, the process is the point: if I am *really* listening to students, migrants, and partner organizations, there is always a direction to move in.

Following Michael's Footsteps: Public Sociology in Tough Times

Michael *argued* - vociferously and prolifically - that the tools of sociology lead to hope, a stand (for the dispossessed), and conversations with publics. In *practice*, he embodied three more tools: teaching as public sociology, building communities, and defending the university. These practices were his resistance "against the pressures that devalue our connections with one another and the world" (Burawoy and Benson 2025). By developing our rich and varied abilities in community with others, he argued (echoing Marx's brief vision of communism, known as the "realm of freedom" (Tucker 1978, 441)), humans come to self-realization.

2. For instance, during my qualifying examinations in sociological theory, Michael insisted that Dipesh Chakrabarty must be understood not on his own but in conversation with Karl Marx, Partha Chatterjee against Antonio Gramsci, and Raewyn Connell via the sociological cannon that she disputed.

Many scholars define public sociology narrowly as publicizing sociological findings to a larger audience. Yet, it also has many forms: it can entail co-designing research with grassroots activists or communities, producing data to *inform* social struggles, using sociological lenses to fuel the demand for justice, and many other versions of interplay between theory, data, and activism. For some, public sociology occurs "after hours" – a "third shift" of fighting against the reduction of the university to a business, or for students, comrades, friends, and families who face threats of deportation. For many, the most important public sociology is our work with students.

This. Is. Hard. Academic reviews and hiring tend to prize top-down, individual work that ends in scholarly publishing. Universities are now defending their funding at the cost of this kind of work - just this month, UC Davis shut down its center for public engagement. A lot of people - sometimes including me - sidestep these contradictions by doing activism *on top of* scholarship. As Heba Gowayed posted recently on social media, "Today I 1) met with students about status, 2) met with colleagues about protecting students, 3) am at a know your rights meeting about traveling safely. I didn't write. I didn't read. The hidden cost is the tremendous expenditure of heart and time we'll never get back." I am sure I am not the only one in this room who has sacrificed sleep, food, or wellbeing - and "professional" scholarly writing to organize community care. It's hard to get up these days to begin with.

Yet, it has never been more important for scholars to *listen* to civil society or speak as publics ourselves. Michael showed that each class, each student, and each community is a possible public. Trump's agenda - his very electability - hinges on people's isolation and entrapment in online echo chambers rife with "alternative facts." Such conditions also fuel US citizens' fears of immigrants and the belief that academics are out-of-touch elitists divorced from the struggles of everyday people. Trump has convinced many people that scholars are not listening to them, but are locked in our ivory tower, debating amongst ourselves. And, he has punished academics with defunding, detention, or deportation if they risk speaking up.

Public sociologists must be incredibly brave! Michael reminded his students to stand up to those in power who might shoot them down. On his wall, for instance. he posted the sabotage letter sent to Berkeley by a "mentor" (Edward Shils) who did not like his brand of sociology.[3] He also enCOURAGEd us - made us feel brave - by delighting in anything students did that he found "subversive" and by connecting us with each other.

3. He recounts this story in his last book, Public Sociology (2021), on page 123.

As Burawoy (2024) wrote of Palestine: "Now is the time to stand up for the moral principles that brought so many of us to sociology: the commitment to egalitarianism and freedom that drove Marx; the commitment to solidarity and equality of opportunity that drove Durkheim; the commitment to liberal democracy and individual autonomy that drove Weber; the commitment to racial justice and socialism that drove Du Bois; the commitment to gender justice and reproductive rights that drove feminism and so on" (1012).

To Michael, I hope that you are having dialogues with all those theorists now, and beaming "BB's" down on us, from your own realm of freedom.

Michael said at his retirement that public sociology meant having a theory of change about one's own work and inhabiting it. He gave us both theory *and* practice. It is humbling to think we can follow in – or even improve on - his footsteps. But he would insist that we try.

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FOR AN ORGANIC PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY

by MARCEL PARET

Michael Burawoy was an unabashed Marxist. One could argue, in fact, that his foremost life project was to advance a Marxist sociology. This was not a project of defending Marx and extolling his benefits. As he put it in 1977, "The man [Marx] was human. He is now dead. He doesn't have to be saved. So long as we are true to a Marxist problematique, we can be more humble and less defensive about his achievements." Thus, one of Burawoy's signal contributions was to develop Marxism as a tradition of social science (see Burawoy 1989, 1990). And along with that, to further what he referred to as "Sociological Marxism" (Burawoy 2003; Burawoy and Wright 2003), which sought to understand society as the basis for both the reproduction of capitalism and its overthrow.

As a Marxist sociologist, Burawoy gave us numerous scholarly gems. He developed a sophisticated analysis of the articulations of race and class in southern Africa (Burawoy 1972, 1974, 1976a, 1981). He conducted groundbreaking studies of the labor process under both advanced capitalism and state socialism, which would have a profound impact on the field of labor studies (Burawoy 1979, 1985). He examined the collapse of state socialism and the transition to capitalism in Hungary and the Soviet Union (Burawoy 1994, 1996, 1997; Burawoy and Krotov 1992; Burawoy, Krotov, and Lytkina 2000; Burawoy and Lukacs 1992). He developed a methodological approach, known as the extended case method, which revolved around the dialectic between ethnographic observation and theoretical reconstruction (Burawoy 1998, 2009). And he developed Marxist theory through engagements with scholars such as Bourdieu (Burawoy 2012, 2019), Polanyi (Burawoy 2015), and Du Bois (Burawoy 2021a, 2022, 2023, 2024a; Meghji et al. 2024).

Amid all of these contributions, many will remember Burawoy for the idea that he promoted when he was president of the American Sociological Association: public sociology. I remember attending his 2004 presidential address on the topic in San Francisco (Burawoy 2005). I had just finished my first year of graduate school at Berkeley. I was primarily interested in quantitative studies of educational inequality at the time, and thus had not had much contact with Burawoy at that point. I was totally unaware of his many contributions, but the address was electrifying. Burawoy captivated a packed audience, scribbling on a whiteboard to convince his fellow sociologists that there was another way to do sociology—an approach that deviated from the conventional way of doing things, what he called professional sociology. For Burawoy, advancing Marxism within sociology was a crucial project that was simultaneously scholarly and political. And public sociology represented this convergence.

Much ink has been spilled on the topic of public sociology, and indeed, Burawoy and others have engaged in many debates about it (e.g., Clawson et al. 2007). In this short piece, I want to contribute to the memory and recognition of Michael Burawoy by calling attention to a specific kind of public sociology, what he called "organic public sociology." This form of sociology is best understood, I argue, as a struggle on the terrain of sociology. And that struggle was a, if not the, defining feature of Michael's life. In making this case, I will begin by elaborating what Burawoy meant by organic public sociology, and then turn to a few of the ways in which Burawoy, himself, carried it out. I conclude by arguing that organic public sociology represents collective struggles on the terrain of sociology.

What is Public Sociology, and When Is It Organic?

Public sociology is a sociology that engages the publics and debates taking place beyond the academy. As Burawoy (2005: 7) puts it, "Public sociology brings sociology into a conversation with publics, understood as people who are themselves involved in conversation." This can take different forms, as I will come to shortly. But the point of departure is that public sociology is concerned with a world that is much bigger than the academy. It does not allow itself to be trapped within narrow academic debates.

As Burawoy was at pains to demonstrate to us throughout his career, sociologists must be careful not to view themselves as separate from the society that they study—they do so at their own peril. The politics of the day penetrate the walls of the university, shaping the conditions of our existence and the trajectories of our research and teaching. The idea of public sociology stems from the recognition of this fact, and thus the understanding that our own actions as sociologists are entangled with the broader society. Indeed, in his 2004 presidential address, Burawoy understood the aspiration for public sociology as a reaction to trends of privatization and marketization, which threatened to dismantle public education along with other public goods (Burawoy 2005: 7). Two decades later, the threats appeared even greater:

> This adds up to one thing: sociologists are actors in the society we study. We can no longer—if we ever could—retreat to a dispassionate objectivity within the walls of academia. If politicians can set in motion forces that remove leaders of major universities; if they can remove sociology as a basic education requirement within the university; if they can ban the books we teach and abolish Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs; then merely proclaiming our credentials as a science will not protect us. Retreat is no defense against the political encroachment on university autonomy and, more broadly, civil society (Burawoy 2024: 1012).

And so, public sociology is about recognizing and responding to such threats. It is about a struggle by, for, and within sociology. What does this look like?

Burawoy provides us with two ideal types: traditional public sociology and organic public sociology. I tend to think of these as types of public sociology that run in opposite directions. If the former refers to the extension of the academy into the public sphere, the latter is about bringing extra-academic communities into the academy. The former, traditional public sociology, is best known. It includes writing opinion pieces in news outlets, publishing books aimed at non-academic audiences on popular presses, disseminating knowledge via journalists, and other modes of taking our research out into the world. Here, the reach of the sociologist is potentially large, but their actual engagement with, and participation in, society is rather limited. As Burawoy (2005: 7) explains, "With traditional public sociology, the publics being addressed are generally invisible in that they cannot be seen, thin in that they do not generate much internal interaction, passive in that they do not constitute a movement or organization, and they are usually mainstream."

An organic public sociology adopts a very different orientation. It focuses less on disseminating knowledge and more on participation, engaging with communities beyond the academy, and joining their conversations. As Burawoy (2005: 8) puts it, "Between the organic public sociologist and a public is a dialogue, a process of mutual education." It is no wonder that Burawoy's (2009) famous methodology, the extended case method, prioritized participant observation. This method is about engaging in dialogue with extra-academic communities, and then bringing those dialogues back into the academy, using them to reconstruct sociological theory. It is a method that emphasizes developing organic connections with "visible, thick, active, local and often counterpublic[s]," such as labor organizations, faith-based communities, neighborhood groups, or other social movements. An organic public sociology recognizes that a vibrant civil society is the lifeblood of sociology, which depends on conversations, ideas, and critiques that emerge from the outside.

Burawoy (2005) usefully identifies public sociology by distinguishing it from three other types of sociology, which he refers to as the sociological division of labor. The most dominant is what he calls "professional sociology," which is oriented toward academic debates and follows scientific norms and standards. The vast majority of sociology fits into this box, and indeed, it is typically the kind of sociology that one must master if one wants to secure an academic job. But there are two other types that also compete for space. One is "policy sociology," which is about the provision of knowledge for a specific goal or client, such as serving as an expert witness or writing a report for a government agency. The other is "critical sociology," which debates the assumptions that underpin professional sociology while also thrusting a normative moral vision into the discipline. If policy sociology aims to take professional sociology and put it to work in solving society's problems, critical sociology inquires whether professional sociology has the correct solutions or even whether it is asking the correct questions.

Since his time as ASA president, Burawoy has been adamant about the mutual interdependence of the four different types of sociologies—professional, policy, critical, and public. They draw upon and reinvigorate each other. There are also affinities. Public sociology is similar to policy sociology in that both are oriented towards extra-academic communities. And it shares with critical sociology the prioritization of reflexive knowledge that "interrogates the value premises of society as well as our profession" (Burawoy 2005: 8). We might say that traditional public sociology leans towards the side of policy sociology, focused as it is on disseminating knowledge. Conversely, organic public sociology tends to lean in the direction of critical sociology, bringing external conversations into the discipline to question our questions and unsettle our assumptions.

Just as professional sociology depends on public sociology, and, in turn, civil society, so traditional public sociology depends on organic public sociology. As Burawoy (2021b: 20) explains, "traditional public sociology develops a compelling alternative politics if and only if it is also rooted in the lived experience of concrete communities. Such organic connections also infuse sociology with new missions, keeping its research programs in touch with reality and upholding a flourishing discipline." We can read Burawoy's own practice, as a sociologist, as rooted in a search for precisely these kinds of organic connections.

Burawoy's Organic Public Sociology

Burawoy saw himself as an advocate for public sociology, but not necessarily an example of it. In an interview just before his passing, he remarked: "I think I would describe myself as an evangelist for public sociology. There may have been times in my life when my work more closely resembled public sociology, for example, when I was working in Zambia. But since then, I think I have been more a critical and professional sociologist" (Burawoy and Benson 2025). Indeed, much of Burawoy's work is oriented toward an academic audience, which is a point that I will return to below when thinking about his field of struggle. But my contention here is that Burawoy did, indeed, practice a kind of public sociology—an organic public sociology—through his research, his teaching and mentoring, and his activism.

The roots of Burawoy's public sociology lay in his early research on workplaces across the globe. It is through these experiences and through dialogue with his students that Burawoy (1998, 2009) would develop the idea of the extended case method. According to this approach, the researcher begins with a theory, and then sets out into the world to see if it fits. Upon discovering anomalies, the researcher must then reconstruct the theory to better fit the reality that they discovered during their participant observation. In his case, Burawoy began by observing the workings of the personnel unit at the mining company Anglo American, in Zambia, where he witnessed the reorganization of the racial division of labor after independence (Burawoy 1972). He subsequently turned to ethnographies of the labor process in Chicago, Hungary, and Russia (Burawoy 2013). Fumbling his way on the shop floor, Burawoy encountered a public that was markedly different from his own middle-class positioning: blue-collar workers. It was through a dialogue with workers, whom he worked alongside in the factory, that he was able to develop his groundbreaking theories about the generation of workplace consent (Burawoy 1979) and the politics of production (Burawoy 1985).

We might say that Burawoy's labor studies represent an embryonic public sociology, an early attempt to engage with publics beyond the academy. But it was back in Berkeley, in the classroom, where Burawoy would develop perhaps his most important practice of organic public sociology. From the beginning of his evangelism about public sociology, Burawoy envisioned students as one of the most crucial publics, noting that, "As teachers we are all potentially public sociologists" (Burawoy 2005: 9). At Berkeley, where he taught for 47 years, Burawoy's course on Social Theory became legendary. He gave vibrant lectures and facilitated discussions in rooms full of hundreds of students. And it is here, in Burawoy's pedagogy, that the distinction between traditional public sociology and organic public sociology truly comes into focus. A traditional public sociologist seeks to impart knowledge to their students, treating them as empty vessels awaiting wisdom. Conversely, an organic public sociologist views their students as "carriers of a rich lived experience," and thus treats education as "a series of dialogues...between ourselves and students, between students and their own experiences, among students themselves, and finally a dialogue of students with publics beyond the university" (Burawoy 2005: 9). As he affirmed in the 2025 interview, "This requires considering the form teaching takes: engaging with students' lived experience, rather than just pouring knowledge into the students. That is how I have always tried to teach" (Burawoy and Benson 2025).

This practice extended into Burawoy's mentoring of graduate students. During his time at Berkeley, he chaired 80 dissertations and served as a committee member on many more. As one can see from his writing, Burawoy learned as much from his graduate students as they learned from him. As he transitioned from workplace ethnographer to Marxist theorist, spending more time in the office and less time on the shop floor, and subsequently serving in professional leadership positions, it was his dialogues with students that formed the basis for his own theorizing. This was especially evident in the two volumes that Burawoy produced with his students, *Ethnography Unbound* (Burawoy et al. 1991) and *Global Ethnography* (Burawoy et al. 2000). Burawoy was such a great mentor and teacher because he was also a student. So curious and eager to learn, he frequently sought new perspectives and invited critical feedback.

Finally, Burawoy demonstrated organic public sociology through his activism. The blending of activism and teaching became evident when he brought students to protests. He was a frequent supporter of student and worker struggles on campus, but he hated to cancel class, and so was known to hold his class on a picket line or at a building occupation. I don't think Burawoy thought of himself as an activist. When he was a student at the University of Zambia in the late 1960s, he joined the student movement and was arrested with fellow students (Burawoy 1976b). But protest and organizing were not central activities or sources of identity, even if he was always supportive of students for whom they were. Yet, he remained committed to social transformation and challenging injustice. He often fought these battles within academic institutions, such as through his role as co-Chair and Secretary of the Berkeley Faculty Association (BFA).

In the last year of his life, Burawoy was deeply engaged in activism in support of Palestine. This put him into dialogue with movements both within and beyond the

academy. And it saw him returning to his roots as a researcher in southern Africa, where he developed a critical analysis of racial capitalism. In one of his last articles, Burawoy (2025a) examines the similarities and differences between South African apartheid and contemporary Palestine/Israel, and on that basis calls for a global struggle against settler colonialism. He implores sociologists to take a stance and speak out on Palestine. He was an active supporter of the Sociologists for Palestine (S4P) movement within the ASA (Burawoy 2024), which pushed for the professional association to support the Palestinian cause. And at the time of his passing, he was engaged in similar efforts within the ISA. In the fashion of organic public sociology, Burawoy was working from the outside in, starting with dialogues beyond the academy and seeking to bring them into sociology.

The Point Is To Change It — A Struggle on the Terrain of Sociology

Marx famously remarked that, in addition to interpreting the world, philosophers should also seek to change it. In the first semester of his legendary Social Theory course at Berkeley, Burawoy focused on Marx, Lenin, Gramsci, and Fanon. All were deeply engaged in struggles on the ground, resembling what Gramsci called organic intellectuals. Indeed, we might say that Burawoy's distinction between traditional public sociology and organic public sociology mirrors Gramsci's distinction between traditional intellectuals and organic intellectual—the former detached from class struggles, assuming a professional role as intellectuals within society; the latter maintaining a close connection to classes and helping to articulate their lived experiences. But this raises further questions. If the organic public sociologist sustains a close connection to dialogues beyond the academy, where does their effort at social change begin? And what is the relationship between their scholarship and their activism?

Just 11 days after Burawoy left us, another great social scientist, the anthropologist James Ferguson, passed away as well. They were similar in that both Burawoy and Ferguson drew inspiration and insight from southern Africa, which led both to groundbreaking critical analysis. As I reflect upon Burawoy's own organic public sociology, I am reminded of a crucial point that Ferguson makes in his classic book, *The Anti-Politics Machine*. After spending the entire book deconstructing Western-led "development" in Lesotho, Ferguson (1994) comes in the end to the question of what progressive-minded individuals in the West should do. If promoting so-called development in the Global South does not work, as Ferguson convincingly shows, what is the alternative? He suggests that individuals in the West would do well to focus less on intervening in low-income countries, as in traditional development projects, and focus more on engaging in politics in their own countries, for example, on issues of foreign policy. The point, as I take it, is that rather than seeking to intervene and reshape others, one should focus first on transforming one's own community, with the hope that positive consequences will resonate outward.

I believe that Burawoy followed this logic in his own life. His community was the discipline of sociology, and he fought his struggles on this terrain. This, we might say, is what organic public sociology is all about: bringing outside debates into sociology, using them to reinvigorate our critical theories and, in turn, our mainstream and professional ones as well. Burawoy did not do much policy sociology. To the extent that he did, though, it was largely oriented towards the sociological profession or its base, the university. We can see this in his struggles within the BFA, the ASA, and the ISA—for example, in his struggle to get the latter two associations to adopt resolutions on Palestine.

In his last book, *Public Sociology*, Burawoy (2021c) reflects that he was naïve to think that his efforts to develop a critical, Marxist sociology would change the world. The forces of capitalism and their political corollaries were strong, and they were way too much for a sociological Marxism to counter. But one has to start somewhere. And indeed, over the past six decades, Burawoy has helped to reinvigorate sociology and push it in compelling directions. Hopefully, years from now, the residents of Earth will look back upon 21st-century sociology as a beacon of inspiration and forward movement. When they do, we will have Burawoy to thank for helping to set us on this path, not least by inspiring us to practice an organic public sociology.

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THE MEANINGS OF BURAWOY'S SIGNATURE EXHORTATION OF "BB"

by OFER SHARONE

Michael Burawoy liked to shout "BB!"—"bloody brilliant!"—when undergrads nailed an answer. But for his graduate students, there was an entirely different kind of BB—Think Big, Act Bold.

Think Big: I learned from Burawoy that even the most minute aspects of our social world potentially reveal the larger whole. Burawoy's *Manufacturing Consent* showed how closely looking at seemingly mundane factory work provides a lens for comprehending the ways capitalism harnesses consent. Before coming to Berkeley Sociology, I had been an overworked, unhappy lawyer, living the very problem I hoped to understand. I entered the PhD program determined to study the causes of overwork among U.S. professionals. Burawoy's mentorship challenged me to think bigger, not just about overwork, but the deeper structures of capitalism that shape our lives. The specifics of cases are important. But even more important is participating in the collective enterprise of theorizing—situating the case in the broader context of the social world and its often invisible institutions. I went on to explore how the structures of capitalism organize the experience of unemployment into various types of games, some of which reinforce a consciousness of self-blame and internalized stigma.

Act Bold: If thinking big meant reimagining the scope of our questions, acting boldly meant reimagining how we might answer them. Professional sociology written for other sociologists has its role, but so does engaging wider audiences and constituencies. We are trained to write for the former, but for the latter, we have no scripts and few precedents. Engaging wider audiences often requires bold and creative action. Burawoy's focus on Public Sociology encouraged a whole generation of sociologists to reimagine our roles, and for me, this included *how* to do research. For my recent book on long-term unemployment, I took BB to heart—not only in the research questions I posed but in how I pursued them. I began by recruiting career coaches and counselors as my collaborators. Together, we formed a non-profit organization that provided free, sociologically-informed support to unemployed job-seekers. This project turned the tools of sociology that help us understand the power of institutions into a form of "sociological coaching" to help push back against the tendency to self-blame and internalize stigma. The collaboration led to trainings for trainers and a broader push to change the way that support is provided to unemployed workers in a sociological direction. The same tools are also at the core of an undergraduate class I teach called "The Sociology of Aspirations: What Do You Really Want to Do When You Grow Up?" It helps students examine internalized social forces to understand past experiences in new ways and provides the space to reimagine future directions.

The untimely and devastating loss of Burawoy leaves a huge hole. But I can still hear him—leaning forward, eyebrows raised, shouting "BB!" with that unmistakable mix of provocation and joy. If he were here, he'd be urging us to think bigger, act bolder, and never stop trying to understand and change the social world.

IN MEMORIAM FOR MICHAEL BURAWOY

by ARLIE RUSSELL HOCHSCHILD

Michael Burawoy was larger than life. He was a whirlwind of energy dedicated to reshaping sociology. He articulated the many faces of public sociology and invited us to honor them all. He connected American sociology with the wider world, focusing in particular on all issues of material want, political injustice, and social indignity.

While in his mind, Michael was always in vigorous conversations with social theorists, living and dead—Marx, Durkheim, Gramsci, Du Bois, Habermas, and others, in the classroom, he engaged generations of students with them. He taught students, but he also *touched* them. And these qualities he brought into his packed classroom at UC Berkeley, year after year, for fifty years—famously remembering every name in the large hall.

The Pope of public sociology, Michael, connected sociology with itself. As the president of ASA, he connected sociologists in small colleges to those in large ones, and as president of ISA, he connected sociologists around the world to an ingrown America. He called for "global sociology" and founded *Global Dialogue*, publishing its issues in 17 languages.

He wrote factory ethnographies based on his own shop floor experiences in Chicago, Hungary, and Russia. My husband Adam and I happened to be living for half a year in a small apartment in Moscow (Adam was doing interviews for his book, *The Unquiet Ghost: Russians Remember Stalin*) in 1991 and Michael would travel into Moscow from the Arctic city of Syktyvkar, where he worked in a factory, and we would have dinner and drink vodka in our tiny kitchen.

Michael was also generous with his colleagues. When teaching at the University of Chicago, he had a colleague, the late Leo Goodman, who, during World War II, designed a way to estimate the German supply of ammunition, and who is known today as the founder of social statistics. Then the father of two young boys, Leo, suffered two devastating blows—he was diagnosed with serious cancer, and upon this bad news, his wife filed for divorce. A week after this doubly devastating news, as Leo recalled to me years later, surprise still in his voice, "I heard the doorbell ring. I opened the door. It was Michael. He had a baseball glove and ball in one hand, and a baseball bat in another, and he asked me if my boys were interested in playing some ball."

A few weeks after Michael himself was senselessly killed by a speeding driver, as he walked in an Oakland crosswalk, an anti-traffic violence rapid response group—including Michael's students—joined a vigil and protest, some holding signs, "Slow Down, Save Lives." They were carrying Michael's spirit forward. And in the students and friends who survived Michael Burawoy, there is likely to be a memory of some depressed moment when they, too, heard a knock on the door, and it was Michael with some version of a ball and a bat.

PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY & THE GLOBAL SOUTH

by FAREEN PARVEZ

From comments delivered on March 1, 2025, at a webinar in honor of Michael Burawoy by the Social Theory Network, based in Bangladesh. The webinar was titled "Public Sociology & the Global South."

Michael Burawoy was my PhD advisor and was in my life from 2001. I had the privilege of sharing a rich and wonderful dialogue with him for over twenty-four years. My last email to Michael was just a few hours before I learned of his passing, sharing with him my thoughts for a Palestine teach-in that he generously encouraged. Just minutes after teaching his brilliant 2000 essay, "Marxism after Communism," I received a voicemail and then read the devastating email.

It's both painful and heartwarming to help honor his legacy in these different ways. And this event is especially meaningful because reaching across national divides was so important to Michael from the start, and then through his work with the International Sociological Association and his extensive travels to meet sociologists where they were across the world over the last fifteen years.

Michael had about 80 graduate students whose dissertations he chaired. Many came to him because of their interests in labor or the former Soviet Union and post-communist transition. And many others because of his support for ethnography, global comparative work, and/or his Marxist approach to sociology and the world. I'm in that latter category, which also means I didn't at the time engage a lot of Michael's empirical work. But I'm now in the process of discovering it and devouring as much of it as I can. And every time I go back and read Michael's writings, I'm struck by the poetry that's embedded in how he wrote. The passion that he communicated in real life is very much alive on the page.

As an ethnographer, Michael worked as a machine operator, a radial drill operator (I'm not even sure what that is!), in a rubber factory, a champagne factory, and in a furniture factory up in the Russian Arctic (where I joked with him that I wanted to visit). Michael's early work was about race and class in the copper mines of Zambia. He wrote about the bases of how workers consent to their own exploitation in the American factory, production processes, and the different state interventions and ideological regimes that sustain them; actually existing socialism in Hungary and the Soviet transition to capitalism. He had a sustained engagement with Polanyi and the changing nature of countermovements, and an elaborate and years-long engagement with Bourdieu and, more recently, the sociology of Du Bois and the larger project of decolonizing the canon. He wrote a good deal on ethnography and my favorite book, The Extended Case Method, and of course on reconstructing Marxism. Michael also wrote critiques of the neoliberalization of the university, racial capitalism in South Africa, and finally, among his last projects was his commitment to Palestine—understanding it as a case of settler colonialism, drawing out a comparative analysis with apartheid South Africa, and above all galvanizing and reminding American sociologists of our moral responsibility to speak out to reduce the suffering of Palestinians.

I want to read just a few short favorite passages to share the poetry of his writing:

"What is positive science? For Auguste Comte, sociology was to replace metaphysics and uncover empirical laws of society. It was the last discipline to enter the kingdom of science, but once admitted, it would rule over the unruly, producing order in progress out of chaos. Thus, positivism is at once science and ideology" (Extended Case Method, p. 31).

"In the view of reflexive science, intervention is not only an unavoidable part of social research, but a virtue to be exploited. It is by mutual reaction that we discover the properties of the social order. Interventions create perturbations that are not noise to be expurgated, but music to be appreciated, transmitting the hidden secrets of the participants' world" (Extended Case Method, p. 40).

"Is there not something special that warrants our support for the Palestinian cause? Perhaps, the ongoing massacre of Palestinians is the most egregious, the most barbaric atrocity of all. It takes place live on our screens; it is in our face; it is inescapable. The unconditional support of Western powers on the side of Israel gives it world historical significance. For a sociologist, it is not enough to declare whose side you are on and then move on; as sociologists, we embed our political commitments within a theoretical framework. In a period of 'postcoloniality,' the systematic and transparent repression of Palestinians by the Israeli state makes it unique, compelling us to re-examine our own past, giving new salience to 'settler colonialism,' as the debris of decaying Empires."

These were only three out of countless passages that are just as beautiful.

I'll now share a bit about Michael's influence on me and my work. And then I'll say a few things about public sociology.

When Michael retired in 2023, I wrote some reflections, as did his other students. I'm sharing a small piece of that here: I started graduate school in September 2001. Two weeks later, Congress voted to invade Afghanistan, and the world would never be the same. I remember Michael's Soc 101 lectures in those early weeks, where he boldly critiqued the impending war and brilliantly got a lecture hall full of students to think critically about 9/11 and its aftermath [at a moment when American nationalism was at an all-time high]. I knew then I was at home.

Within a couple of years, Michael was carving out the public sociology agenda, and the excitement and energy around this was palpable and shaped my remaining years. As Michael wrote in 'For Public Sociology' (2005), "Many of the 50 to 70% of graduate students who survive to receive their PhD, sustain their original commitment by doing public sociology on the side - often hidden from their supervisor.' Today, while I don't have a supervisor, per se, it's indeed public sociology on the side that has sustained me.

Michael's influence today on my thinking is subtle but deep and unshakeable. My work on religion and madness in Morocco reflects what I learned through him about Fanon's psychoanalytic work in Algeria and the sociological roots of trauma. My research on household debt in India takes me back to my first love of Marxism, that he nurtured. Indeed, Michael's Marxism was my sanctuary.

I gravitated to Michael not only because of his intellectual and personal charisma but because I saw alienation and class in everything I was studying, whether it was how people thought about the pornography industry (my MA thesis that Michael served on) to types of political mobilization among Muslim minorities (my dissertation he supervised and eventual book).

Michael encouraged me in my ethnography to avoid the hegemonic sites of power and global cosmopolitanism and to focus instead on more marginal cities in my field sites of France and India. So I ended up studying in Lyon in southeastern France and Hyderabad in South India. And I'm so thankful for this, to have lived and learned in the margins. Through Michael, I learned to think analytically, and when I'm stuck in my ability to form an argument, I go back to the 2 x 2 table he was so fond of and find the clarity and sharpness that are otherwise so elusive.

Michael, of course, shaped my understanding of ethnography. Grappling with profound ethical questions and power relations in the field, studying subaltern Muslim communities, I knew Michael was with me in spirit. And I quoted him in my methodological appendix in my book.

Again from Extended Case Method: "On whomever's side we are, managers or workers, white or black, men or women, we are automatically implicated in a relation of domination. As observers, no matter how we like to deceive ourselves, we are 'on our own side,' as Alvin Goldner would say.... Our mission may be noble, broadening social movements, promoting social justice, challenging the horizons of everyday life– but there is no escaping the elementary divergence between intellectuals, no matter how organic, and the interests of their declared constituency."

Michael lived and breathed Thesis 11: "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."

I think his students would all agree he believed foremost in changing the world and in revolution rather than in theory for theory's sake or knowledge for the sake of knowledge. This drives me in all that I do; indeed, it haunts me. But it has a funny place in American sociology. I remember years ago, I got a very negative evaluation from a student in my class. They wrote, "Professor Parvez's class is useless-unless you want to be a communist revolutionary." I wasn't sure whether to be insulted or to wear that as a badge of honor. I'd like to think Michael would've laughed and been proud. As Zach Levenson wrote in a tribute essay, "Michael couldn't stand empiricism, but he was equally repulsed by theoreticism. The task of sociological Marxism, he thought, was to carefully navigate between these twin pitfalls."

Another exemplary thing in Michael, that I hope has influenced me, was his willingness to change as the world changed. Again, this was true to his understanding of Marxism. Although he taught his social theory class in a very particular way for decades, he came to embrace Du Bois and embarked on a whole new conversation, and began changing his theory course. Before Du Bois, he had had a long encounter with Bourdieu. (I remember him enrolling as a student in Loic Wacquant's graduate seminar on Bourdieu and grumbling about how much homework he had!) I was lucky to have been part of that cohort of students that debated and argued about the limits and potentials of a Bourdiesian perspective. Michael had such a deep need to understand and clarify his own theoretical lenses, and it was thrilling to share a small part of that dynamism.

Public Sociology and Optimism of the Will

Michael had written in 2011: "Antonio Gramsci is famously associated with the phrase, 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will'. Pessimism of the intellect refers to the structural determination of social processes, setting limits

on the possible. Politics, on the other hand, requires optimism, concerned as it is with collective will formation, dissolving limits, and striving for the impossible... Optimism of the will calls for pessimism of the intellect, and vice versa. They are Siamese twins."

Though I had some indications, I don't know if Michael believed that the crises in the US were becoming deeper and deeper, and the contradictions would eventually ripen to the point of moving toward socialism. I don't know. But Michael was always excited and supportive of contemporary social movements, from Occupy Wall St. to the movement for justice in Palestine, something he had talked about occasionally over many years.

But he would often remind us that our number one public was our undergraduates. And to the extent that we are in a Gramscian war of position, the university is inside the trenches. Raising the morale of our students, helping them see that something is rotten to the core of our capitalist system, that yes, they can and must change the world—for those of us in education, this is perhaps our most important task.

In his characteristic humility, Michael always used to say that public sociology was mainstream sociology in much of the Global South, from S. Africa to India – that he wasn't making a particularly new intervention when it came to advocating for the idea that our work as sociologists must be accountable to or engaged with the public. I think he was learning in the Global South and learning from activists and sociologists in the Global South.

He wrote, again in 2011: "Public sociology cannot be the name for bad sociology, it cannot be vanguardist or populist, but must aim for a dialogue [with labor] on the basis of what we know as sociologists" (2011: 75).

We have to keep having these exchanges across the North and South, continuing to dismantle this binary towards a real solidarity that Michael so embodied in his practice. We have to keep sharing knowledge in a real multidirectional way—to share our insights with communities on the ground and with social movements. We won't always agree, and for those of us ethnographers, our arguments may not always be what communities want to hear—but this is what constitutes a tradition—you dialogue and debate, and in that process we move forward.

Based on a 2021 essay he wrote, my sense is that it was increasingly important to Michael that public sociology go beyond traditional means of writing for the media, op-eds, and radio, but to actually engage with activists and communities in an "organic public sociology." For me personally, this is the direction I've been moving in. There's no blueprint for how to do it, and I'm very much learning by doing—trying to figure out where is that sweet meeting spot of sociological analysis and theory and the lived realities and face-to-face communication with those most impacted by the violence and suffering we want to fight—whether alongside refugee communities, migrant workers, or working-class activists protesting in the streets.

While Michael didn't get into the weeds of navigating those power relations or how exactly to have those dialogues, especially across the class divide, I think we can still learn from his example. Specifically, I wonder if organic public sociology could be a process or an ethic.

Michael would never have articulated it this way, but based on his example, I think perhaps organic public sociology has to do with, on one hand, a commitment to science but also a commitment to engaging people with heart and a type of moral conviction and character.

What are some parts of Michael Burawoy's character that impacted so many hundreds of us around the world, perhaps thousands? He had an openness, a belief in the intuitions of others, a kindness and humility, and a true democratic spirit—the belief that you could learn from anyone, an ethic of treating everyone with respect, from his students to the custodial staff in the building. Don't get me wrong—he could be impatient, and he had no tolerance for intellectual laziness or grandstanding. But Michael had so many publics, across the global North and South, and what gave integrity to his public sociology was this ethic, his way of being.

I mourn the fact that I won't be able to have these conversations with Michael about public sociology and organizing in dark times. But in my stages of grief, I think about taking all the things I loved, his humor and energy and optimism and ethics—and making them my own. I think that's the journey now for all of us who were in his orbit and who were able to learn from him and take in his blessings. He wrote in ECM, "when the ground beneath our feet is always shaking, we need a crutch." For me, Michael Burawoy's corpus of writings (which I consider his poetry) and his ethics (which I had the privilege of witnessing) will be that crutch.

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THE PROMISE OF LABOR: IN HONOR OF MICHAEL BURAWOY

by CARMEN BRICK

A larger-than-life figure in Sociology, I met Michael as my theory professor during my first year of doctoral studies at Berkeley. His passion for teaching was undeniable, and he was known for his animated lectures and for his copious responses to students' memos and papers (even for the 100-word responses he demanded with a Saturday-night deadline). Each word was an investment in his students' minds, and as I reflected upon what Michael meant to me, I felt both profound grief and gratitude, feelings shared by his many students. I had benefited from the care of many good teachers over the course of my education, but my relationship with Michael was distinct in that he agreed to accompany me on my uncertain journey, as I searched for my place in intellectual life. Michael became my advisor and mentor, and over time, my friend and my neighbor. He was my constant companion as I made my way forward, and I will miss his encouraging emails at all hours of the day, the jokes we shared, and the way that he brought Berkeley Sociology together in his home, offering community. Michael gave me a sense of belonging in an unfamiliar world, and this changed my life.

From the outset of my work with Michael, it was clear that my path would be wildly different than his. We had shared questions about the nature of capitalist society and the production of inequality, but we diverged in our theoretical commitments and in the way we approached both research and social change. Yet, for Michael, this did not disqualify me from being his student nor diminish my value as a sociologist. He insisted that there was a place for me in the academic world despite these differences, and when I felt discouraged told me not to buy into narrow views of Sociology or social change. It was his ability to understand and accept my own (social democratic) vision of a better world and my own ways of being that made him my mentor and my friend. I know myself fortunate that Michael took an expansive, multi-faceted view of Sociology, and that his vision of a better world has challenged and enriched mine.

There was much to admire in Michael, and these days I admire more than ever that he had the courage of his convictions. He refused to turn away from the suffering in this world, despite the voices that encourage us to see the suffering of others as too distant, too complex, and beyond our power to change. His own activism was legendary, and he called upon us to overcome the alienation separating us from each other and to consciously and actively participate in remaking the world around us. In his last year, he rallied for sociologists to respond to the unconscionable loss of life in Palestine; he asked us not to look away. Indeed, Michael railed against indifference, and expected Sociology, and sociologists, to react to the world around us. He did not expect everyone to arrive at his answer of how to respond—he knew that across a varied discipline, he would find varied ideas of how to arrive at peace—but he expected each of us to ask this question, to use our sociological training when and where the world was in need. This is how I understand Michael's dedication to Sociology: he truly believed that it could lessen the suffering in this world. And he was willing to be out in front for the most contentious of issues because of this belief.

Michael's students and colleagues had the chance to thank him at his retirement party just two years ago, an event organized as a conference where his students of many decades could come together as a collective. At this event, I was able to tell Michael how much he had meant to me as I re-oriented my life through doctoral studies and as we pursued an ambitious research agenda arm-in-arm. Over the past few months, it has pained me to think of how much more was left unsaid, and how I wish now that I could tell him the myriad ways that he has inspired me and will continue to shape my life. I want to tell him that the world feels his absence, that I feel his absence, as we make sense of and respond to the assault upon humanistic values and democratic norms. We miss his leadership, as he implored Sociology to move beyond the confines of academic research programs and to engage in Public Sociology, meeting the world as it is and laboring toward what it could be.

Michael's accomplishments amazed us: he produced groundbreaking research and social thought while shepherding about eighty students through the dissertation process and inspiring thousands of undergraduates to see themselves as budding theorists and organic intellectuals. I see in these accomplishments a life of service, in which Michael was keen to pursue and share knowledge to empower those at the margins of society and to spark social change through the unveiling of sociological truths inconvenient to the powerful. By committing to his own way of serving others, Michael lived a deeply meaningful life, and while I cannot aspire to his greatness, I hope to follow his example of how to live with purpose, committing to my own life's work. What I learned from Michael was Sociology and so much more.

Over the past few months, I have found comfort in a song that my choir sang this spring, "The Promise of Living" by Aaron Copland. The infectious enthusiasm of Copland's music and the communitarian themes, including the dignity of everyday people and fulfillment through community life, remind me why Michael was an

inspiration for me and for so many others. This song thus evokes Michael's image in my mind, since his very essence interconnected the value of labor, community, and what we might call loving kindness. The final stanza is Michael for me:

"O let us sing our song, and let our song be heard.
Let's sing our song with our hearts, and find a promise in that song.
The promise of living.
The promise of growing.
The promise of ending is labor and sharing and loving."

With this song, I hear Michael still.

MY MOMENTS WITH MICHAEL

by HYUN OK PARK

"24 hours a day, seven days a week on sociology"—that's how Michael described his life during his retirement gathering in April 2023. For him, sociology had always meant teaching, so it came as no surprise that he agreed to the event only on one "non-negotiable condition" that the event be an opportunity to bring together and celebrate not him, but his students and former students from across nearly five decades, as the organizing committee wrote to us, his students.

This is Michael, forever curious about what we think and do. Back at Berkeley, during that intense yet bewildering stretch of writing our dissertations, we used to whisper among ourselves that we saw him in our dreams more often than we saw our own parents. It wasn't some Freudian spell. He wasn't a demanding father figure; quite the opposite. He related to me as an equal, listening intently to my ramblings and half-formed ideas with such intent and making them feel worth pursuing. Sometimes, his typed pages of our discussions would magically appear before my eyes the next day. His pedagogy was grounded in dedication and deep respect for how each of us developed our thinking. He didn't manufacture his students or their projects, as some famous people do. Instead, he nurtured us to become original thinkers in our own ways.

For his retirement gathering, "Conversations with Burawoy: Pedagogy, Power, and Practice," we were invited to share updates on what we had been doing. A few days before the event, Michael sent us his "Final Instructions," writing, "You can say a lot in five minutes, and I want to make sure that the people who come last are not squeezed out of existence. . . . Be aware! This is going to be a great reunion!" The phrase "Final Instructions" felt like it had come straight from the Central Committee, so I took it seriously. Here's what I shared at that momentous reunion.

"Michael's lifelong interest has been in the great transformations of the first and second worlds. I have joined him from the Asia side, performing a kind of duet across continents in thought and writing for decades.

Coming from South Korea during the heyday of the student movement, I landed in Berkeley in 1987 to study what was prohibited in South Korea at the time – socialism and North Korea. Michael had recently landed what he called his dream

job at Lenin Steel Works in Hungary as a furnaceman. He tended an 80-ton furnace burning at 1,600 degrees, seeking to witness democratic socialism in practice. But instead, it marked the beginning of his decade-long journey into the transition from socialism to capitalism. During this period, I wrote a dissertation about the perilous united front of Chinese and exiled Korean communists in northeast China. Franz Fanon, Michael's interlocutor on postcolonialism, saw peasant militancy and bourgeois nationalism as two historical trajectories facing the colonized. I compared how Korean peasant migrants turned these trajectories into regional, temporal, and gendered variations. Korean citizenship, labor, and property rights constituted the rivalry between Chinese nationalists and Japanese colonizers—the two bedfellows sharing the capitalist bed. When I wrote the first draft, entitled Materializing Nation and Gender, email technology had not yet been invented. Michael was working in a Russian mine, enduring humiliation as an unproductive worker, but still found the time to read it and fax me single-spaced, five-page comments within two weeks. With such a devoted advisor, anyone could finish the dissertation against all odds.

After graduation, a three-year postdoc at the University of Michigan, a hub of interdisciplinary studies, and my joint appointment in Sociology and East Asian Studies at NYU steered me into reading and teaching Marx's Das Kapital and Marxism, French Marxist philosophy, postcolonialism, and poststructuralism. In this new phase, I reworked the national and colonial questions, incorporating new archival research from China, which had made up half of my dissertation, treating it as a workbook in which I tested my newfound learning. This resulted in my first book, Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution. I gave Michael a copy in his office. He flipped through it from cover to cover, then placed it face down on his desk, saying, "Every word is different," with a mix of excitement and disapproval.

Still, I followed Michael as he pursued the dream of Leon Trotsky. Trotsky viewed the revolution in the Soviet Union as betrayed but not overthrown, believing that the future would depend on the workers. As Michael moved his fieldwork from Hungary to the Soviet Union and then to Poland, socialism was collapsing upon his arrival in each country. His friends urged him to stop traveling, perhaps to save Cuba and other socialist countries. While Michael witnessed these shocking transformations in each nation-state, I did so in a transnational process. The return migration of ethnic Koreans from northeast China to South Korea, which I began to research as a postdoc project, turned out to be a crucial piece of the larger puzzle—the epochal transformation in East Asia. China and North Korea were transitioning to capitalism, while South Korea transformed its long-sought democratization into a neoliberal capitalist machine. The cascading labor migration of Koreans across these borders—refugees from North Korea to China, filling jobs and lands left behind by ethnic Koreans who migrated to South Korea as undocumented laborers—contributed to the global reign of capitalism and the formation of a transnational Korean community.

This was a central theme of my book, published in 2015, The Capitalist Unconscious: From Korean Unification to Transnational Korea. It offers a counterintuitive argument on Korean unification. While postcolonial and Cold War Asia have traditionally fixed the inquiry of Korean unification to ethnic and territorial integration, I argue that South and North Korea are already unified by capital in a transnational form. This thesis focuses on the synchronous marketization across these countries. More importantly, I reinterpret the 20th-century socialist revolutions in China and North Korea through the lens of the Russian Revolution, examining their built-in contradictions resulting from the incorporation of capitalist principles such as commodity production and the appropriation of surplus value. I consider the current marketization a repeated effort to reconcile these contradictions. This book critiques the conventional transition paradigm of history and instead examines the temporalization of history as a process of political subjectivation. I wrote the book in the company of historians during many years of residency at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and I dedicated the book to Michael.

Revolutionary Michael was drawn to Karl Polanyi to understand society's responses to current market despotism. Here, too, we have met again. I am now completing A Sublime Disaster, a book based on eight years of ethnographic research into the 2014 ferry disaster in South Korea and the diverse ways different groups have responded to this capitalist catastrophe. For instance, both the far right and the far left share a common language of rhizomatic sociality—fun, spontaneous, anonymous, horizontal, and non-cumulative associations. I interpret this as a shared opposition to a social life saturated with competition and commodification. Some of the most utopian practices flourished and disappeared without due recognition, simply because they exceeded the leftist imagination. How many such praxes emerge and vanish, never crystallizing into a new political order? As Walter Benjamin reminds us, we must remain vigilant in recognizing revolutionary interventions. Though critical theorists like Alain Badiou and Sylvain Lazarus claim that politics is rare, I believe that such rare events cannot occur without the small, often unrecognized events in the social. In the grim reality of our times, I hold fast to Michael's favorite from Gramsci: 'Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will.'"

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The invited contribution to "In Celebration of Michael Burawoy" in Critical Sociology (editor, David Fasenfest) gave me the opportunity to step back and situate his work within the broader Marxist tradition. At the time, my colleagues and I at York and in Toronto were launching initiatives to bring together Marxists around the city. I returned to Michael's defining work from my generation at Berkeley and in South Korea: The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism. This time, I realized that he, too, was part of the May '68 generation, having graduated that year with a BA in Mathematics from the University of Cambridge. He was a contemporary of Louis Althusser and his students, including Étienne Balibar, whose writings from the 1980s and 1990s—many of which have been translated in recent years—continue to shape the current of Western Marxism. In The Politics of Production, Michael engaged deeply and deliberately with Althusser, particularly on the concept of totality, and joined his critique of the idea of expressive totality advanced by Georg Lukács and the Frankfurt School for its near totalization of social life under the terms of alienation and commodification. Michael conceptualized what readers and translators of Althusser term "structural totality" as "structured totality."

Michael wrote in our email exchanges in July 2024:
"What an honor, what a delightful essay revitalizing a book that has been lost and linking it to other more contemporary visions of politics. . . . I'm not sure I ever use the word 'structural' totality, I think it is "structured' totality."; and "In English 'structural totality' doesn't sound right and is a rather weak and passive version as compared to 'structured totality' which implies a totality that is STRUCTURED. In other words, something is done to the totality. Anyway, I like the way you have revised it. Thank you! One other thing has stuck in my gut, and that is the phrase: '24 hours a day, seven days a week on sociology'—that's a bit much! Can you just replace that with 'he summarized the last four decades of his life as a 24 hour sociologist' . . . .' As I say I love your piece because it unequivocally marks me as a Marxist in the company of other Marxists and points to The Politics of Production as the signal text."

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At York University in Toronto, many people regard the place as another Berkeley from the 60s, though it has been changing in recent years. In January 2023, I invited Michael to be the keynote speaker for a conference on Korean Marxism and Capitalism, which I co-organized with Dongjin Seo in South Korea. At the time, I didn't know he was retiring just a few months later, but I wanted the event to be a celebration of his life and an opportunity to honor his work as both a researcher and a theorist, especially given how rare it has become to see such a seamless blend of the two roles. His talk took place in person, not long after in-person classes had resumed post-COVID, although most meetings and talks were still conducted online. Nevertheless, more than 150 faculty and students filled the room for his lecture, and over sixty stayed for hours afterward for the reception. Michael saw this as a sign of people's yearning for conversation and connection. I immediately thought of his comment as reflecting his belief in people and their energy to act collectively, in contrast to modern thinkers like Max Weber and Carl Schmitt, who harbored deep mistrust of the masses.

The celebration of his life, centered around his latest writing on W.E.B. Du Bois, ended with a fitting finale—the cake. When the university's post-COVID policy banned outside food, I still managed to bring in a special cake I had designed at a local bakery. I'd asked for miniature gears, dynamite boxes, and worker figures, all arranged on a Minecraft-themed base to reflect his decades of work in factories and mines. Michael got a bit nostalgic, sharing stories from his time underground. But the cake started melting, and he had to pause and cut it. I sometimes wonder what more he might have shared if that sweet interruption hadn't come. He kept the cake topper, while Fidan and I split the figures and decorations. Now, I see them on my bookshelves as I write.

This was from what he wrote about the occasion:
"Dear Hyun Ok, Gosh, that was an intense and interesting day for me. I met so many interesting and exciting people. And I had lots of interesting responses to the talk. And such a nice reception after the talk, people hung around for the mechanical cake! But the dinner was spectacular. The highlight was getting together with you and learning about this amazing book that you are writing. It sounds absolutely fascinating, situating the disaster in its widest context – the perfect extended case method! The conspiracy theories are so interesting and justified. It's OK to take your time in finishing - sabbatical is perfect for that. . . ."

I never imagined that the introduction I gave at his talk would become a tribute to his life just two years later. A slightly different version appeared in Canadian Dimension, a leftist publication. Here is the introduction.

"Certainly, it is my most profound honor and utmost privilege to present Professor

Michael Burawoy. He does not need an introduction. Instead, I want to present him as a revolutionary, not just writing revolutionary texts, but working and living as a revolutionary.

At Berkeley in his mid-40s, whenever he gave a talk, he used to wear the same red shirt and walk briskly across the podium with such passion about what he was talking about. Watching his hair blowing, we also blew away our anxiety and insecurity, and we were rooting for him. At the center of his office door, he put the logo that marked the relaunching of the South African Communist Party in 1990, when his neighbors were late professors Neil Smelser and Robert Bellah, and network analysts.

As a revolutionary, he did not just study workers but became a worker, not for a conventional ethnography of participant observation and interviews but for sharing work and life with other workers, a universal socialist ethic. Born in Manchester, the first industrial working-class city, it was as if he was destined to lead that life. After earning a BA in mathematics from Cambridge, he soon headed out to Zambia to research the copper mines in 1968 and produced his amazing first book, Manufacturing Consent. When doing his PhD at the University of Chicago, he began working on the shop floor as a machine operator in Chicago in the 1970s and then also in Hungary and Russia in the 1980s and early 1990s. In his interview with the Village Voice, Michael said that his work as a furnaceman in Lenin Steel Works in Hungary in 1984, tending an 80-ton, 1,600-degree furnace, fulfilled his life dream of getting a job in a steel mill in a socialist country. That story becomes a legend. He has published books from these experiences, including his Magnum Opus, the Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism. Though published 40 years ago, it remains a must-read for anyone interested in such key questions in Marxism as surplus value, totality, crisis, and periodization.

I think Michael also followed the dream of Trotsky, who saw the revolution in the Soviet Union as betrayed but not overthrown, believing the future would still depend on the workers. While the Frankfurt School focused on alienation and commodification of the masses to explain why revolution did not occur in developed Western capitalist countries, machine operator Burawoy, in contrast, was a productionist who ventured into the belly of the beast—the shopfloor and Marxist-Leninist countries. When various Marxists debated whether 20th-century socialism was state capitalism—a mirror image of welfare capitalism—Professor Burawoy crossed the two great divides of socialism and capitalism, and of West and non-West, long before postcolonialism theory emerged. Instead, he theorized hegemonic and despotic labour regimes across these divides, organizing them into 2x2 tables that produced four types of labour regimes: bureaucratic, market, colonial, and hegemonic despotisms. This theory itself remains a paradigm in labour studies.

In fact, his love for 2x2 tables that highlight comparisons was a secret formula in his revolutionary work in sociology. All of his students knew well that comparative analysis would help ensure the successful defense of their dissertations. Burawoy's work has always been comparative, even in theory building; for instance, he compared Gramsci and Bourdieu on hegemony and domination, and Fanon and Du Bois on anti-imperialist Black Marxism.

He constantly revolutionized his own life. For Burawoy, sociology meant teaching. As students, we knew that he sacrificed his hobby of watching Monday Night Football for the weekly dissertation workshop—the Smith Group—held at his home (I recently learned that his real passion had been what they call "soccer" in the US). To each workshop, he brought a chocolate cake on his bike from his office. We would start the meeting by sharing it, which created a sense of calm. At each meeting, one of us presented our thesis chapters, on which the others had provided written comments in advance, allowing us to begin the discussion by responding to these comments, including Burawoy's. In these sessions, I learned the importance of constructive critique that offers solutions or at least proposes ways to rethink issues. It was the best intellectual training I ever had.

As is well known, Burawoy assumed the presidency of the American Sociological Association and the International Sociological Association as platforms to disseminate what he called Public Sociology. He wrestled with various theories and questions for decades, engaging deeply with pressing issues in politics and social movements. This engagement shaped his discussions with students, as teaching is also a site of his public sociology. Over the years, he engaged directly with the thought of such giants as Braverman, Bourdieu, Polanyi, and Gramsci. In recent years, he revolutionized theoretical canons once again by writing about W.E.B. Du Bois and decolonizing the discipline of sociology.

Without further due, here is our dearest comrade, professor, and furnaceman, Michael Burawoy."

After this introduction, Michael stood up from his chair and walked toward me. "No one's ever introduced me like this," he said, before giving me a long, heartfelt hug.

TEACHING & THE UNIVERSITY

FIGHTING FROM THE UNIVERSITY

by ZACHARY LEVENSON

I have this one funny interaction with Michael emblazoned in my memory. I wasn't yet his student, and we didn't know each other well—honestly, I wasn't even sure he knew who I was at that point. I was taking a seminar with his late friend Erik Olin Wright, who was then workshopping the manuscript that would become *Envisioning Real Utopias*. I was chatting with Erik in the hallway just before colloquium when I noticed Michael approaching. When he got to us, he stopped suddenly, patted my belly, and turned to Erik with a big smile: "Be careful with this one," he joked. "He's not one of your sociological Marxists; he's a *real* Marxist." The two of them chuckled, and I just stood there, wondering what the hell he meant.

These days, I care less about what he actually meant at the time and more about his own Marxism. Why was he so invested in Marxism as an identity? I tended to think of myself as a Marxist first and a sociologist second, whereas he seemed intensely devoted to sociology as a vocation, to professional sociology, and to the university. I sought out every opportunity to take my politics off campus, prioritizing struggles in nearby Oakland and national-level campaigns. I cared deeply about something called "the left," and I found my primary intellectual community beyond the academy, even if that included sociologists. But Michael never seemed particularly interested in the organized left, and for many years, I couldn't quite figure it out. Maybe I still can't.

During my fourth year in grad school, I was a TA for his social theory sequence, which was a truly formative experience for me. This was the year I asked him if he'd chair my dissertation committee, and he put me through it. I'll never forget having to write him a weekly memo—and by "memo," he really meant ten to twenty-page papers—about some aspect of my project. To be clear, I already had my dissertation prospectus approved, and I'd already carried out six months of fieldwork in South Africa. But this was under the tutelage of a different advisor, and for Michael, it was insufficient. After about 8 months of these memos—it was actually probably closer to a year—he turned to me one day, as we sat in his office. These were incredibly tense meetings. He turned to me, looked me right in the eye, and said matter-of-factly, "Okay, I'll be your chair."

I had assumed he already *was* my chair! But in Michael's mind, he first needed to mold me into one of his students. He hated my dissertation proposal, which he dismissed as too concerned with urban space. "The answer isn't space but *labor*," he told me at the time. "Now figure out the question." I ended up writing a second

prospectus—an entirely new project based on informal labor rather than informal housing—and then finally, once I had his blessing, I went back into the field. Six months of fieldwork later, in response to one of my weekly memos—and yes, he commented on them every single week, often within an hour of me sending them to him—he casually admitted that my project wasn't about labor after all and suggested I return to my initial proposal. But I didn't blame him. This is what an urban sociologist got for working with an avowed sociologist of the labor process.

At the end of that class I TAed for him, we held a giant party in my backyard for the entire class of over 200 students. At the time, I lived in a quadplex with a bunch of Oakland Marxists, none of them academics. Watching them interact with Michael was amusing. I still remember one of my housemates walking up to him in awe. He knew that Michael was one of the more prominent academic Marxists, and this was just a couple of years after the 2008 crisis. "So," my housemate asked him, "who has the best account of the crisis? Do you prefer Harvey, McNally, or Brenner?" It was a pretty forward way to begin a conversation, but we were talking among Marxists here. Michael blew off the question entirely, seemingly uninterested in what he viewed as merely academic debates—funny, given that he was the academic.

When I think about it, Michael probably viewed the political approach of most Marxists on "the left" as spreading themselves too thin. If I had a solid foot in the university, why in the world would I also try to organize in a half dozen additional sites at once? Why not build real power in the places I knew best? I used to be really skeptical, and even dismissive, of this approach, which I viewed as too narrowly academic. But looking back, I actually think Michael thought a bit differently about his strategy—and I do think he conceived of it as a strategy. Broadly, he understood public universities as key institutional sites for building political power. I never really liked his engagement with Polanyi in the aughts, though I admittedly always found Polanyi to be hopelessly organicist. He was actually the only figure over whom Michael and I consistently clashed. But in his writings in this period, Michael saw the commodification of knowledge as a relatively recent front in capital's colonization of our lifeworld. And as he formulated the problem, a key site in this onslaught was the public university.

It was always less about defending the university qua institution, and more about transforming the university in the process. I'm not convinced he'd thought through the practical and strategic implications of this politics, and what it would entail on the ground. But I do know that he understood "the university" as something that extends far beyond our brick-and-mortar campus. It should be as expansive as possible, and this is the work Michael was doing in two respects: first, pedagogically, he saw his teaching as a means of developing a critical consciousness in a sizable cross-section of working-class students; and second, institutionally, he saw his work in the

International Sociological Association as developing a deliberate internationalism that could transcend the limits of a narrow American approach to sociology.

While he never won me over to this political approach—nor did he really try for that matter—I have come to develop a deep respect for what he was up to. As Trump wages his war of attrition against institutions of higher education, I have begun to reflect on the meaning of the university—and the public university in particular—in relation to our broader society. I don't think that the reactionary assault on universities is only about creating a populist bogeyman—critical race theory, DEI, cancel culture, and so forth; it is equally about one of the only institutions in our society that continues to enable critical thinking. Now, I admittedly think Michael had a rose-goggled vision of the university, especially teaching at Berkeley. Though even there, he was faced with the neoliberalization of the public university. In the UC system, much like universities in the rest of the country, critical thinking has been consistently relegated to the margins, and is in the process of being shrunk down until it's small enough to drown in the bathtub. Deans of finance turn campuses into glorified real estate holding companies, and disconnected consultants instruct us to worship at the altar of efficiency. Broadly, this assault has unfolded over many decades, assuming the form of a slow chipping away rather than a blitzkrieg. And yet, Michael saw the university as an institution uniquely positioned in our society to enable us—whoever this collective subject might be—to wage a war of position.

Of course, this politics is marked by all sorts of tensions and contradictions. Are we waging a defensive war, preserving the (limited) university as it already exists? Are we attempting to return to a past whose conditions of possibility are no longer with us? Or are we waging an offensive war, seeking to remake the university in the process? I think Michael saw himself as doing both simultaneously, but I'm not quite sure. Over the last year, we exchanged countless emails about my move to a public university in Florida, and especially after he visited 13 months ago, we were in regular dialogue about the so-called "war on woke" here—that, and the repression of Palestine solidarity activism on campus. But it was only after his untimely death that the full extent of Trump's assault became apparent, and so it was really in the last month or two that I came to reflect on the university in this way. I wish he were still with us so that I could initiate one of our interminable email exchanges.
Even now, over two months after his killing, I still find myself reflexively opening new emails and typing "Bu" into the "To:" bar, watching his full name and email address appear as if by magic. And then I remember, sheepishly closing the window. Sometimes I wait a beat, open a new window, and instinctively find myself typing his name again. Other times, I just close the window and stare for a while. But one thing is certain: I don't think I'll ever stop thinking of Michael as my first reader, no matter how much time passes. His influence was really that formative, and at this point, he will live on as my mentor, my role model, and my superego.

THE PIED PIPER

by ELISE HERRALA

I didn't know Michael well the first time I went to his office hours. I was one of the teaching assistants for his social theory class, and I had been dazzled by his brilliance and charisma in lecture. But when I arrived, he was in a sour mood, something I hadn't yet experienced (although I would certainly become familiar once I was his advisee!). Up until that point, I had only seen Michael-as-legend, the Pied Piper of sociology. He could get those undergrads to do anything! He had them enthusiastically reciting Marx, writing songs about Gramsci, excitedly forming study groups outside of class. This was 2010, and the students expected PowerPoint notes they could download in lieu of attending lecture. But Michael, who refused to own a cell phone, kept it analog. He filled all four of the giant blackboards in Le Conte Hall with his notes and diagrams. "I'm going to draw you a beautiful picture!" he would say in a sing-song voice, the pictures decidedly not beautiful but effective. (I use my own renditions for teaching fifteen years later!) He was serious and systematic, of course: his lectures were dense, and he was often visibly sweating by the end, wiping his brow with a handkerchief. But what I remember most is the laughing: Michael laughed at himself, often, and he loved to gently tease the students and us GSIs. Crucially, we were all in on the joke.

From any other professor, this display of over-the-top enthusiasm would come off as corny, like the rehearsed zeal of a motivational speaker who was high on their own supply of aphorisms. It would therefore be ineffective: undergrads may not have fully developed frontal lobes, but they are expert bullshit detectors. But not Michael. Was it his accent? His avuncular charm? His good-natured teasing? Whatever it was, his exuberance worked them into a frenzy. The students' hands shot up, eagerly competing for Michael's spotlight to shine on them. I remember wondering idly if we would be reading Weber on charismatic authority. I had never seen anything like it.

But on this day, in office hours, his characteristic good cheer was notably absent. He was morose, drained. I was taken aback, and because I didn't know him that well, I ventured a hesitant "everything okay?" He sighed and told me that he wasn't happy with his lecture that day. He then detailed everything that had gone wrong: the dynamic was off, he couldn't get the students engaged, he had forgotten to mention something crucial, his explanations were convoluted. "A disaster!" he said, his face slack with disappointment. I sat there quietly and in shock, not least because I was getting a glimpse of the emotional interiority of a notoriously private person, but also because I had actually been in lecture that day and hadn't noticed *any* of the things he said.

"Even after almost 35 years, a bad teaching day still gets to me," he said.

Here was the best lecturer I had ever seen, an incomparably dedicated, generous, organized, inspiring teacher who had been at it for longer than I had been alive! And he was *this* bummed out from a lecture that was leaps ahead of your run-of-the-mill theory class? How could that be? Perhaps it was such a surprise because it brought Michael down to earth: turns out, contrary to popular belief, he was human after all. But beyond finding out that Michael was a mere mortal like the rest of us, the conversation made such an impression because it went against the grain of the dominant message that I had received in graduate school until then: *avoid teaching at all costs*. Teaching was often framed as an obligation that academics had to do from time to time, but this was always to be second to what was most important: our research. As hyper-professionalization was increasingly overtaking the discipline—I distinctly remember in our first year proseminar in 2007 being told by a faculty member that "to be successful, you cannot take a single day off, not even Christmas"—the status of teaching sunk even lower. I acutely felt the hierarchy among the graduate students, those with cushy multi-year fellowships at the top, and those who had to teach at the very bottom. As someone at the bottom, seeing Michael take teaching so seriously was a revelation. I loved teaching, as unfashionable as that was, and it was validating to see how it could be valued by someone who was also a serious scholar.

That memory has resurfaced frequently for me over the years, especially after my own unsuccessful classes, which similarly ruin my day, and I often think about what made Michael such an extraordinary teacher. He wrote a few articles about his teaching, which explain the logic and brilliance of his teaching much more successfully than I can here. But long before I read those pieces, I experienced firsthand the magic of his approach. Specifically, the importance of creating community for learning. Make no mistake, Michael was no Durkheimian—but he understood the power of collective effervescence. To be in his class, to teach for him, to be his advisee was not just to go through the motions, a means to an end—the grade or the degree. It was, as I quickly learned, to be inducted into something bigger than oneself. To buy in was not just about learning theory or writing the best dissertation you possibly could, although those things would also happen. It was the thrill and strength of being part of the collective, learning together, struggling through difficult texts, of being in on the joke, and then Bob's your uncle! You're a sociologist.

Michael, ever the ethnographer, leveraged his skills of observation in his teaching and advising. This was important when figuring out how to be an advisor to so many students. At his retirement party in 2023, it was a shock and delight to see the ways he was the same with all of advisees—how exacting and hard on us he could be!—and yet how each of us had an idiosyncratic mentoring relationship with him that was specific to us as individuals. That he achieved by paying such close attention, noticing the quirks of our personalities, our strengths and weaknesses. I often felt he could see the cultural capital chip on my shoulder, that I was desperate to leave behind my rural midwestern roots. Every week he generously treated the teaching assistants to dinner, and he always asked me to pick the wine. I knew nothing about wine but liked the idea that someone might think I did.

Michael eventually became my dissertation advisor, and after that my project was central to our discussions. But my connection with Michael, really, was about teaching. It is fitting, when I look back at our relationship now, to see that I taught for him first and was his advisee second. Teaching for him changed my relationship to the discipline. The "rituals of solidarity"[1] that he put in place for the graduate students who taught for him—the weekly meetings, dinners, arguing over theory, gossiping, endless inside jokes—meant everything to me. After feeling alienated and distanced in grad school, I finally saw my own worth and contribution that was forged through experience of teaching together. At last, I was tethered. Maybe I did belong at Berkeley after all.

These days, my commute to work is long—two hours each way. When I started teaching the two-semester theory sequence at my college, I was nervous. I decided I needed to put my long drive to good use, so I began listening to Michael's theory lectures from 2008-09. It was less a lesson on Marx and more a pep talk, as if between the lines he was urging me: *you can do it!* Listening to them again was soothing and entertaining—I still laugh at the jokes even though I've now heard them three or four times each. Sometimes I even groan out loud and say, "Michael!" at the particularly cheesy ones. It has become my pre-teaching ritual, and I know the lectures by heart.

After he was killed, I wasn't sure I could handle listening to them anymore. Would I end up a teary mess by the time I got to work? But I found they had the opposite effect: piped in through the speakers of my car stereo, suddenly Michael was alive again, vital and laughing, shouting about how *Marx was totally wrong...but he was very nearly right!* What a comfort to feel that the Pied Piper was still at it. I'll always follow. Thanks for the lessons, Michael.

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BOB'S YOUR UNCLE: A REMEMBRANCE OF MICHAEL BURAWOY

by CHRIS RHOMBERG

It's not easy to find words to say about Michael Burawoy, his passing is still so near, and others who knew him better have already spoken eloquently. We will be remembering him and debating his work for a long time. Let me thank the BJS editors for providing us an occasion for that remembrance in this special issue.

I first met Michael when I arrived in Berkeley in 1988, I was part of the cohorts who entered the sociology Ph.D. program from the late 80s to the mid-90s. By that time, he had weathered his tenure battle and established a reputation as a dynamic teacher, but I was far from certain that I would work with him, or he with me. I was not an ethnographer, and I was more interested in urban and historical sociology, having worked for a few years for a community organization in Boston before graduate school. I had studied Marxism in college and knew of his research, though, and when I got a chance to join the group of teaching assistants for his legendary two-semester undergraduate course on Marxism and sociological theory, I jumped.

Being in the group was an education in itself, you truly felt like part of a collaborative process. In his lectures, Michael would be riffing like a jazz musician, improvising on his themes in interaction with the class, while we played rhythm in our sections, breaking down the readings and prepping students to participate. You could see his delight when a question or response surprised him, and he welcomed it, like he hadn't thought about it like that before. He could explain complex and abstract theories so that students could visualize them, and who could forget his diagrams of ideas in boxes with lines connecting them, drawn in chalk on a blackboard in those days, or his use of 2 x 2 tables as heuristic device (a method he so often used in his own theoretical work), juxtaposing concepts and putting Marx in imaginary debate with Durkheim, Weber vs. Lenin, Gramsci vs. Foucault, and other combinations that changed every year he taught the course.

As a graduate teacher, Michael had an eye for recognizing the value of students' ideas, even if at first, you didn't always see it yourself. Late one afternoon, I was reading alone in the TA's office when he walked in to see what's up. He asked me what I wanted to do for my research, and I told him I was interested in Oakland, well-known as the birthplace of the Black Panther Party in the 1960s. I had started to dig into the local history, I said, and I discovered there had been a general strike in the

city led by the American Federation of Labor unions in 1946. And as I dug into the background for that, I found that the Ku Klux Klan had been powerful in Oakland in the 1920s. Funny thing, I just mused, three radically different movements in one city, that cut across each other in the course of one person's lifetime. "Oh, that's really good," he said, "that's a dissertation!"

Fellow students have told me of similar experiences they had. When he thought you were onto something, his enthusiasm was infectious. "That's grrreat!" he would say, like Tony the Tiger in the old cereal ads on television. Yet, he could be a demanding interlocutor. I spent years arguing with him about American social movement theory, which I felt I had to use to compare three cases of mobilization in Oakland. Michael would have none of it. It was only later, when I rewrote the dissertation as a book, that I fully understood the real object was the city, and the puzzle was the discontinuity between the movements within it. As an ethnographer, Michael developed the extended case method to rescue his approach from inductivism, ground it in its historical and spatial context, and make it both cognizant of theory and able to advance it through empirical critique. Its relevance, however, should be obvious for all qualitative, case-oriented studies, including historical and comparative sociology: it shows us how to use theory to see cases as junctures of forces or contradictory trends, and to use the analytic leverage of the case to reconstruct theory and historical interpretation.

Even if we didn't always agree, I admired Michael's intellectual restlessness, his willingness to challenge himself and his own thinking. Never complacent, he was always looking several steps ahead, pursuing his scholarly journey as ever unfinished. He could be intensely competitive, anticipating his critics in order to re-frame the debate on his own terms, not to defend himself but to advance the field in fruitful ways, moving from Marx to Gramsci to Lakatos to Polanyi and more recently Du Bois. He reveled in counter-intuitive moves, yet often with genuine humility and an impish grin. Who could have imagined this outsider becoming the chair of the Berkeley department, much less president of the ASA and the ISA? Around the time he was elected ASA president, he described to an interviewer his fish-out-of-water reactions to his industrial shop floor experiences. "It's good to be humiliated from time to time," he said, "Getting to know the underside of domination is the first step to change...perhaps all academics should have to do this sort of work" (Byles 2003).

I came to see Michael as an archetypal émigré intellectual, an itinerant and intrepid spirit who had already traveled across continents before he got to Berkeley. During my time there, he regularly took leave to work in a steel mill in Hungary or a furniture factory near the Russian Arctic Circle. The East Bay was his refuge; he loved the community of his students in Berkeley, living for decades in a modest middle-class apartment above Lake Merritt in Oakland, riding his bicycle to work. Yet he never surrendered his Englishness, his avid fandom for Man United, or his favored idioms. I have no doubt that more than one of his graduate students has felt compelled to ask who Bob is or why he is their uncle.

In the last few decades, he preached the gospel of public sociology, arguing for the special role of practitioners in our discipline to defend civil society against the predations of the market and the state. Whether one sees the impact of sociologists as an independent vanguard and political class, or attached to larger collective actors or movements, or in the role of bearing witness, in the U.S. we are now all immersed in public sociology whether we like it or not. We face grave and direct threats to the university, academic freedom, and democracy in our country. As Americans, we are not used to such challenges, though they are familiar to scholars in many parts of the world. At this moment, we need Michael more than ever, and he is sorely missed.

There is, of course, so much more to say. I can't begin to claim that these few fragments capture who Michael really was, or what he meant for so many people. I only hope they can add to a fuller picture of him, like the way a simple detail can add to a good ethnography or historical narrative. So, Michael, there you have it. Bob's your uncle.

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DRAWING THE LINE: LEARNING ETHNOGRAPHY WITH MICHAEL BURAWOY

by EMINE FIDAN ELCIOGLU

This is a story about my first real encounter with ethnography—and, not coincidentally, with Michael Burawoy.

We met during visiting week at Berkeley in 2006. I thought, "I'm a Marxist. He's a Marxist. We'll hit it off." He took me to a Thai restaurant. I arrived ready for a spirited political discussion over noodles. Instead, he interviewed me. He asked about my childhood, my father, the grain of my upbringing. While I stumbled through answers, he just nodded, slowly, expressionless. Only years later did I realize: Michael was doing fieldwork. I thought I was introducing myself. He was already studying me. Then he glanced at his watch, realized he'd double-booked, and dashed off, leaving me alone with two plates of pad see ew and a strange mixture of awe and disorientation.

Two years later, I found myself in his Public Ethnography seminar. We were five students tucked into a storage room on the fourth floor of Barrows Hall. No windows. Flickering lights. An unglamorous setting for what turned out to be the most luminous classroom I've ever been in.

At the time, I wasn't sure I belonged in graduate school. I didn't think I had anything original to say. But something about that seminar pulled me in. Michael didn't frontload us with rules or templates. He created a space of discovery. A place to work things out—intellectually, politically, methodologically—by doing it together, over time.

We read whatever we wanted: Freire, Latour, Bourdieu, Mills, Gouldner. Most memorable, perhaps, was Paul Rabinow's *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*—especially the moment when Rabinow describes staying on the shore while his companions go skinny-dipping in a mountain spring. Too prudish, Michael teased. Too much observation, not enough participation.

Tuesdays were for theory—intense, searching discussions and in every discussion, the same urgent questions surfaced: *What is our relationship to the people we study? How do we construct knowledge? And how does knowledge lead to change?* These weren't abstract prompts or academic exercises—they were beams of inquiry, refracted through every text and sharpened in dialogue with Michael and each other. Thursdays were for fieldnotes. Each of us had chosen a site and were doing live ethnography. One student shared notes each week, and the rest of us read them closely—not to critique, but to think with. To draw out tensions. To pose questions the writer hadn't yet seen.

My field site was a boutique temp agency in downtown San Francisco that catered to high-end restaurants and hotels. On the surface, it sold flexibility and professionalism. But as I kept returning, patterns emerged. Stories and practices that didn't match the agency's polished front. Each Thursday, those fragments began to cohere. What I couldn't quite see alone became visible in the company of others. And here's where Michael gave us a deceptively simple instruction—one that changed how I thought: after writing your fieldnotes, draw a line.

Above the line: what you observed. Description, detail, scene. Below the line: reflection, interpretation, theory. What felt strange or telling? What questions emerged? What would you pursue next time?

That act—drawing the line—created a threshold. It invited you to pause. To sit with what you'd seen. But it also demanded you cross over. That you risk interpretation. That you try, however clumsily, to make sense of what was unfolding.

I remember writing about how the temp agency I was studying rotated its best workers across different client sites, making sure they always had a placement. At first, I thought it was just scheduling logistics. But below the line, a logic emerged: the rotation prevented clients from getting attached to any one worker—and thus from hiring them away. Precarity wasn't a glitch. It was designed. Carefully managed. Deeply intentional.

Michael read every fieldnote, every memo, like it mattered. His late-night emails were electric: "Why does capitalism need a temp agency?" "Jackpot! Brilliant! Magnificent." Or simply: "You're circling it — now land the plane."

He told us: Pick one book. Not ten. One. Read it generously. Argue with its best self. Treat it like a partner. My midterm was a dialogue with The Good Temp by Smith and Neuwirth. That paper became my MA thesis. Then, unbelievably, my first publication. That was the moment I realized I might have a future in this strange, demanding, beautiful thing called sociology.

Michael didn't just teach ethnography. He taught us how to see. How to think dialectically, to walk the tightrope between detail and abstraction, observation and theory. He taught us to be rigorous, but never rigid. Reflexive, but never solipsistic. He believed that the field could surprise you—if you let it. That theory could travel—if you carried it honestly. And that sociologists could be public and political, without sacrificing precision. These weren't just values. They were habits of mind, practiced week after week, in a room without windows.

Losing Michael feels like losing a force of nature. We've lost so much in losing him. He was our most important interlocutor—challenging, generous, always a few steps ahead.

But he lives on—in our fieldnotes, our classrooms, our questions. In how we draw our lines, and in what we do beneath them.

So here's to Michael —

Who taught us to theorize with care,
To write with rigor,
And to stay in conversation with the world.

CAN ONE HAVE TOO MUCH BURAWOY? (TLDR: OF COURSE NOT!)

by GABRIEL HETLAND

In the Fall of 2008, I inadvertently set out to answer this question by enrolling in Michael's Public Ethnography graduate seminar, which met on a twice-weekly basis for two hours, on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, while simultaneously serving as Michael's TA for his justly-famous social theory course. The latter met on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The Thursday afternoon lecture was followed up with a two-plus hour theory-filled meeting in Michael's office where he and all of us TAs (or GSIs as it were) discussed the weekly readings and a host of issues related to them. And that, of course, was not all, with Michael then taking us all out to sumptuous feasts at wonderful restaurants across the East Bay, with adventurous bike rides to and fro adding to the fun. In short, I spent a good chunk of four weekdays with Michael nearly every week in the fall. (And in the Spring I did the same, with the modest change that the still-going Public Ethnography class now meant less frequently, just once every week or two).

The answer to the question of whether one could get too much Burawoy was a resounding no, with this year, Fall 2008 and Spring 2009—easily being my favorite time in graduate school and amongst my favorite times in my entire life.

Being Michael's TA for theory was life-affirming and life-altering. What a treat to hear Michael's brilliant expositions of Marxist, classical sociological, feminist, postcolonial, and post-modernist theory expounded on a twice-weekly basis. The rigor and clarity of Michael's lectures will never cease to amaze me, and I have gone back and listened to them many times as I prepare for classes on social theory that I am teaching and have taught well over a decade since. Michael's ability to draw connections between the different theorists we read—Marx and Engels, Lenin, Gramsci, and Fanon in Fall 2008, and Durkheim, Foucault, Weber, and de Beauvoir in Spring 2009—was truly amazing and something I still feel so immensely privileged to have been able to participate in.

It was equally amazing to see Michael in action as a lecturer to over two hundred undergraduates, who were usually rapt with attention. He blew minds on a weekly basis, and he entertained effortlessly. How could anyone fail to be taken in by Michael's brilliance, charisma, and profound warmth and humanity? Fall 2008 was a special time to be teaching the Marxist tradition, as the US and global economy were imploding and a historic election, which saw the election of the first-ever Black president, to boot.

This setting fed our amazing GSI conversations each week, in which we went into the weeds regarding Lenin's theory of the capitalist state, Gramsci's thinking on hegemony, and the relevance of Fanon's biting and brilliant analysis. Those conversations were amongst the deepest and richest I've ever had with any group. And of course, I am far from unique, as Michael did this every year or two for decades. So many Berkeley grads could recount stories similar to mine. What a treat to have experienced this. What a treat just to remember it today!

And then there was the Public Ethnography class, a small affair with just 5-6 students (if memory serves) sharing our ethnographic adventures on a weekly basis and getting the best advice. I was comparing the Green Party and the 2008 Obama campaign. To most, this would have seemed an absurd thing to do. To Michael, it was the most natural and logical thing in the world. Michael not only encouraged but also exhorted me to go further and further with my edgy ethnography, in which I repeatedly provoked real-world actors—specifically fellow volunteers in the Obama campaign—with absurd questions designed to elicit their deepest thoughts. Other professors might have said this was a crazy idea. Michael showed me how to do it better and better. And then he stuck with it as I figured out what I was comparing—the utopianism of the Greens and of Obama. And Michael stuck with me for nearly two decades, in which I repeatedly tried and failed to publish the results of my research, before finally succeeding in doing so last February in a prominent sociology journal. And of course, Michael gave the same energy and attention to each of the other students in the seminar, all of whom produced fascinating and important work on a wide range of issues, from hospices and the gig economy to Hindu nationalists in the East Bay.

This is but a snippet of what it was like for me to experience the joy of working with Michael. I was so privileged to be his PhD student and lifelong mentee. There's not a day that goes by that I don't miss Michael's profound wisdom and care. The world is forever less since his tragic passing. But along with thousands around the world, I am blessed by the memory of the joy and brilliance of Michael's incredible life. Thank you, Michael. I hope you, Erik, and all those you loved who have passed are enjoying the adventures of being stardust once again.

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS: REFLECTIONS ON THE EXTRACTIVE UNIVERSITY PROJECT

by MARGARET EBY
ELIZABETH TORRES CARPIO
JUSTIN GERMAIN
THOMAS GEPTS
NATALIE PASQUINELLI

Margaret Eby, Elizabeth Torres Carpio, Justin Germain, Thomas Gepts, and Natalie Pasquinelli spent several years working with Michael Burawoy on what they called the Extractive University Project, a collective ethnographic investigation of public higher education from the standpoint of graduate student workers. They share these reflections on their early days of the project with Michael as the project moved from a graduate pedagogy course to an ethnography practicum and finally to an ongoing conversation among friends.

Margaret:
When we gathered to talk about times when we felt Michael's passion and attention most keenly, one exchange rose to the surface. About six months into our work together, we dropped the ball. After giving Michael a truly awful set of drafts – which three years later would become a special issue of Work and Occupations – he sent us an email sharing his disappointment and frustration and encouraging us to seriously consider whether we wanted to continue with this project. We each remember this turning point in different ways, but we all agreed that this was a moment both in which the entire enterprise might have shut down, and one in which the stakes became clear.

Eli:
Our group emerged from a required course for first-time teaching assistants, co-instructed by Margaret and Michael, during the first remote semester of COVID-19. Invigorated by the pedagogy of sociology, a group of us decided to continue meeting to explore the sociology of pedagogy with a set of ethnographic studies.

During that Spring, I was engaged in one of the toughest wars I've had to fight. In my quest to make a family, back-to-back miscarriages were my battlefield. With each fight and each loss, Michael was there with encouraging and kind words. When I was late turning in something, he was understanding and accommodating. His feedback was gracious and supportive, while also determined to get the best work out of my wartime psyche. While it was a particularly tough time for me, my colleagues were going through it too. We were teaching for the first time in the panic and uncertainty of the pandemic. When our first drafts were due, they were nowhere near complete. Michael then changed his approach to us in a single, memorable email.

The email came on June 1, 2021, about five days after we met at Michael's apartment to celebrate the end of the semester, physically turn in our papers, and eat Thai food in his dimly lit living room. The opening lines read: "Well, I've read your papers. There is no shortage of ideas but there is scarcity of follow through. I'm disappointed. I've never received such a set of incomplete papers—papers without a beginning, a middle and an end!" Then he set out two alternatives: to stop where we were or to reaffirm our commitment to the project, and to each other. Reading these opening lines was a punch to the stomach. But boy, did it work! We met as a group within hours of receiving that email, and we drafted a response that reassured him that we were in it. We had working sessions almost every day for the next two weeks and submitted our completed drafts. Michael knew exactly what we needed, when we needed it, and how we needed it. The tough love reaffirmed our commitment to the project. For the next five years, we soared as a group, meeting every week, always on Zoom since we lived all across the country and even, as Michael loved to share, on the day after Thanksgiving.

Natalie:
You would think, given Michael's rebuke, that the draft comments would be harsh. Instead, mine opened with, "MAGNIFICENT! Fabulous diagram to open your paper!! This is already a racy account." His disappointment was tempered with encouragement, awe, the sense that you can't give up--this idea is too brilliant!

As I've re-read this exchange—the disappointed email and the exuberant comments—I felt moved by his absolute devotion to us and to pedagogy. He had spent the previous year meeting with us for three hours every week, reading every draft, and commenting on every set of fieldnotes. He had just given each of us thousands of dollars of summer funding so that we could shape the paper drafts into book chapters. And what did we do? We didn't even really write the drafts, and we showed up at his apartment to eat Thai food anyway. He should have been angry; he probably was. But he set all this aside in his comments so that I wouldn't lose faith in myself. They were characteristically Michael—serious but cheerful, pointed but hilarious ("This is a paper, not a murder mystery! The argument should come at the beginning!")

At the time, I thought maybe my work was so magnificent that, even if he was furious, he simply couldn't help but respond this way. It's embarrassing to admit this, but I'm sure others recognize the feeling. This was Michael's gift to us—he made us believe we were brilliant. And he must have really thought we were, at least some of the time anyway. How else could he have continued to deal with us for four more years?

Margaret:
Michael and I exchanged hundreds of emails since we started teaching the graduate pedagogy course. Searching for the word "incomplete" turned up not just the email responding to our drafts, but also an exchange that I had completely forgotten about—Michael had emailed me privately to talk through his feelings of disappointment and devise a plan before he sent his message to the group. Towards the end of a thread with the subject line "Are you OK?" (it was the week of my qualifying exams and I'd been uncharacteristically out of touch), Michael tells me that he's read through the papers, none of which he says are complete, some barely making it through an introduction or referencing field notes. "I'm feeling what a number of the GSIs were feeling at the end of the semester about their own students - a sort of betrayal on the one side and a recognition that it's been just too much for everyone." In the messages that follow, we talk through the options—Michael agrees it would be a shame to leave the project at this stage—he says he'll send a message to everyone that day to discern their commitments. I remember realizing through those messages that he understood my own fragility around teaching so clearly because he felt it himself. Michael never stopped recognizing himself in the teacher's struggle. He was deeply committed to the emotional and intellectual vulnerability that comes with sharing something you care about so much.

Justin:
To know Michael was to know his pedagogy. In no way did he view education as happening solely within the walls of a lecture hall, as much as he was known for invigorating even the driest lectures on social theory by racing down the aisles. Michael's pedagogy extended to the picket line, connecting the solidarity, rage, and hope of his students to a long history of labor struggle. It extended to Zoom, where not even a pandemic could stop his push to study the university we take for granted, to reflect on the successes and failures of teaching, and to check in on each other as life's hurdles made intellectual progress feel so daunting. It even extended to something as small as an email replete with tough love. Michael was not one to sugarcoat the difficulties of academic work, nor to cast it aside as something not worth doing—much of this rang true in these late-night emails, all still ending with some message of hope. Hope for the project we all cared about, hope for the university amidst its crumbling support for education as a social good, and hope for his students—we all felt his care as he ushered us through life's lowest points, showing that we and our work mattered. Michael saw us, understood us. To engage on this project with Michael as our guide was to live his pedagogy, one inseparable from thoughtfulness, empowerment, and hope.

Thomas:
"From the perspective of Oakland, California, it looks like the planet will never be the same again." So wrote Michael in his 2021 "critical memoir," Public Sociology, referring to that time's conjuncture of the COVID-19 pandemic, global protests for racial justice, and sharpening left and right politics. On the rainy day when I learned of Michael's tragic passing, it was immediately, painfully obvious that the planet would indeed never be the same. Mixed with my shock and grief was a fear of facing today's dark sociopolitical moment without Michael. It felt gratuitously unjust to not only lose Michael as we did, but to lose him in a time when those of us inspired by his moral and social commitments needed his loving spirit and intellectual light more than ever.

Truthfully, this fear remains. However, with the privilege of being Michael's student for over five years, I learned to vest faith and hope not with any single individual, but in the members of a community committing themselves to one another toward collective discovery and growth. His mentorship and teaching modeled this wisdom. Responding to those most incomplete papers, his challenge to us was to either quit while we were ahead or to reaffirm "a strong collective commitment and mutual aid." Looking back on how the project flourished into a vitalizing and supportive exchange, probably the greatest educational experience of my life, proves to me the truth in Michael's approach. From my perspective in Berkeley, California, the planet will never be the same without Michael, but the profound care he showed those around him provides us a rich example of how to carry forward his legacy in our professional and, inseparably, our public lives.

All:
Michael often signed off emails with "OAU," his acronym for "Onwards and Upwards," including in his response to us after we reaffirmed our commitment to our collective project ("renewed our vows," as he put it). With these reflections, we renew our vows once more, recommitting to the collective, engaged, and moral sociology that Michael taught us. OAU.

ON THE CRITICAL PEDAGOGY OF A HIKE IN PT. REYES

by MARA LOVEMAN

Months later, I still find it next to impossible to conjure words to convey what has been lost with Michael Burawoy's untimely death. The weight of his absence is enormous; its expanse vast and far-reaching; its reverberations still in motion, their endpoints still unknown. When forced to harness feelings into words, I return again and again to one facet of Michael's being that connects so many of us - whether we know it or not - and that is somehow a bit easier for me to write about: his teaching.

Although I was never Michael's student, formally speaking, teaching was a central pillar of our relationship as colleagues and as friends. Teaching somehow shaped almost every conversation we ever had. On our regular walks in the Berkeley hills above Campus, we talked endlessly about teaching. About the practice of it; the theory of it; the politics of it; the sweat and tears and stress and administrative headaches of it; and most of all, in the day-to-day and over the long-term, about the deeply gratifying joy of it.

Michael loved teaching with all of his heart. And he taught with all of his might. He often said teaching was a privilege. He engaged in teaching as an existential mission. Teaching was integral to who Michael was as a scholar, a writer, a speaker, an activist, a colleague, and a human being. I think teaching is what made Michael the sociologist he was. I also think Michael's distinctive sociological lens deeply shaped the kind of teacher he was.

Michael never let us forget that teaching is at once a social relation between human beings, and a labor relation, between worker and employer, especially in the context of the neoliberal university. Michael worked and played with this tension in different ways at different moments. Whenever there was a labor action, he refused the question: "Do I cancel class or do I cross the picket line?" Michael never cancelled class. His students had worked too hard to earn their spots at UC Berkeley, and he did not see how cancelling their classes was anything but abdication of his responsibility to them. But nor would he cross the picket line. Instead, he taught his classes on the picket line.

Michael completely rejected the "empty vessel" or "banking" theory of education, recognizing, with Paulo Freire, that students arrive at school, and even more so at university, already filled with knowledge and theories that have served them to survive in the worlds they come from. Michael valued and was endlessly curious about those many worlds. Again and again, each year anew, he sought to learn about them through getting to know his students.

Michael's teaching made students feel seen and valued as individuals. His teaching made students feel this way because he did see and value them as individuals. Michael was genuinely interested in who his students were, where they came from, what experiences had forged them, what conjunctures and decisions had brought them to a seat in his classroom at UC Berkeley, and what they would end up doing afterwards with whatever they learned (or unlearned) there. He was genuinely interested in the research his students did and in how it might disrupt the status quo. His default assumption was that each student he encountered – indeed, each human he encountered - was a uniquely interesting person with something uniquely important to contribute to building a better world - at least potentially, if provided the minimum necessary intellectual support and material conditions to do so.

Michael also saw students as the most innovative and powerful creators of community, of solidarity, and he worked hard and consistently to create and s ustain conditions that facilitated their collective efforts. His undergraduate and PhD students will tell you all sorts of ways that he did this. He did this for his colleagues and for staff members in the department too, making each of us feel seen and special, and fostering our community through a sense of shared purpose in the radical pedagogical mission of Berkeley as a flagship public university in the state of California.

For many, many years, Michael gave the closing speech at our department's graduation ceremony. Sociology at Berkeley graduates a few hundred students per year, and sometimes as many as 50% of these students are first in their families to graduate from university. Michael would pause at one point in his remarks and ask all the students who were the first from their families to graduate from university to stand up. Then he would ask them to turn around and face their families and friends in the packed auditorium. From my perspective as a faculty member, sitting in a row of other faculty up on the stage in our ridiculous robes, I got to see the faces of all the parents, family members, and friends beaming with pride as they looked into the faces of their new graduates. These were the moments I felt most proud to be a teacher, a professor of sociology at UC Berkeley, a part of the collective political project to defend and sustain the public university as a space and set of relations where it is still possible to nurture the conditions for the cultivation of good sense, to help sow seeds for a more socially just world.

Michael was a fierce defender of the public university and its potential to create conditions for more radical social change. At the same time, he was a realist about its current guise and form, its bureaucratic inertia and institutional conservativism.

I learned so much from his theatrically brilliant leadership of the Berkeley Faculty Association. His leadership persistently centered the question of what the university and its faculty owe its students – not as "consumers," but as human beings who deserve the opportunity to pursue their own curiosities, to ask big questions and think big thoughts, the chance to learn, and to put what they learn into action.

When I became Department Chair, Michael was a trusted confidant as I learned to navigate the labyrinthine bureaucracy of the UC system, and to do so with that same question always in mind. Michael would be bluntly honest when my ideas about changing the system from within were laughable (and yes, he laughed out loud, and loudly). In my experience, it is a rare and precious thing to find a human in the world who you can trust completely, who will tell you what they really think about your ideas with brutal honesty, with beautiful clarity, and with just the right dose of compassion. There are even fewer who you can trust in this way and who will continue to support you unequivocally as a friend and colleague when you ignore their skepticism, treat their laughter as a gauntlet, and proceed to act against their sage advice.

Michael's affective approach to teaching spilled over to his approach to living (or perhaps it was the reverse, or perhaps there is no real distinction): he was open, curious, eager to learn from others. And he was always so damn game. He seemed game for anything really. From: "Hey Michael, want to help me shell a basket of beans from the farm?" "OK!!!!!! What time??" To: "Hi Michael, I think we should start a new tradition - an annual hike for the first-year cohort in Pt Reyes. What do you think?" "OKEE-DOKEE!! Let's give it a try!"

During my years as Department Chair, Michael and I started an annual ritual of taking the first-year cohort of graduate students for a little hike before the semester began. We initially conceived it as a chance for the new students to get to know the "Department Leadership." More importantly, it was a chance for the newest members of our sociology community to start to get to know each other "before the Fall semester consumed them", as Michael put it. We'd set out early in the morning from Campus – Michael smiling and ready to go in his black Adidas track suit, already warmed up by his bike ride from Oakland. We'd caravan north across the Richmond bridge through Fairfax and over the hills to Pt Reyes. After a stop for provisions, we'd embark the unsuspecting students on a 15km out-and-back trek to the glorious edge of a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It was a long hike, admittedly. All the more time for Michael to engage each and every student in conversation. We learned. Sometimes we modified the route in the following years. We also broadened the invitation to include other colleagues, students from older cohorts, visiting postdocs, and dear old friends. Those hikes with Michael Burawoy and all the extraordinary human beings they brought together are among my most precious memories as part of the UC Berkeley sociology community. When I look back -- through tears -- at these photos today, I'm struck by all the faces who were strangers to me on the morning each hike began, and who I now know well as members of our shared sociology community, as students, colleagues, and as friends.

My colleague and friend Dylan Riley has observed that grief feels heavy because grief is not only sorrow for what is lost. Grief weighs because it is the ongoing presence of responsibility, for what remains. UC Berkeley Sociology is left with an enormous responsibility to carry forward Michael Burawoy's work, on so many fronts, as best we can. As I think about how to even begin to do this, I return again and again to Michael's teaching as a pillar of his life's work and his way of being in the world.

Michael practiced teaching as a quintessentially human relationship, between un-alienated human beings. He practiced teaching as a refusal of the commodification of learning. He practiced teaching as resistance against neoliberal and managerial pressures within the university that would diminish and deaden and devalue our genuine connections with each other and with the world. And he practiced teaching as radical politics, a means to learn together and to unflinchingly reveal critical truths - about class exploitation under "capitalism on earth", about colonial subjugation, about masculine domination, about the violence of white racism, and about genocide of Palestinians in Gaza - however uncomfortable to the powers that be.

As the university, as a place for genuine teaching and learning, comes under increasing pressure and outright frontal attacks, I sometimes find myself talking to Michael in my head: "But Michael, what is to be done?" And he replies: "But Mara, what choice do we have?" We must continue to train ourselves against the assaults. We have no other choice. We must put on our own personal equivalents of Michael's black Adidas tracksuit and train, gearing up for the struggle over the long haul.

Among the many things I learned from Michael: training in and for these times includes taking regular walks with friends. Friends we already know and trust and love. And friends, we are open to getting to know - open in the way Michael always was – to new humans we might learn from, and to new and more just communities we might still form and become, as teachers and as students, all of us, always, both.

ONE LAST LETTER FROM THE EDITORS, FOR MICHAEL

by JANNA HUANG & TIFFANY HAMIDJAJA

CURRENT BJS EDITORS IN CHIEF

Back in 2020, we both started graduate school from afar in New Haven, Connecticut. In a time when everything felt so uncertain and so much of our lives were rectangular boxes filled with faces that were still strangers and a quiet solitude in our own homes, one thing that was both consistent and exciting was Michael's theory class on Monday nights. Our entire first-year graduate experience unfolded virtually through Zoom screens, and every week our three-hour Zoom seminars flew by as he guided us through dense theoretical terrain. Sharing his screen with bright blue and yellow diagrams on PowerPoint, often leaning in his newsboy cap and Adidas tracksuit, he commanded our complete attention. What started as short lingerings post-class grew to become a weekly ritual where we gathered at our "virtual watering hole," filled with stories and his excitement for us about the department we had yet to meet, and us grasping for the social connection that felt so scarce during the pandemic.

It was during these casual post-seminar conversations that the idea to revive the BJS took root. As newcomers to both the department and graduate school, we watched Michael illuminate not only how the canonical texts we were wrestling with—Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Du Bois—spoke directly to our contemporary moment, but also how they connected to his vision of public sociology. Through him, we learned about the Berkeley Journal of Sociology's distinguished legacy as one of the world's few graduate student-run publications, a journal that had published emerging scholars alongside many of the twentieth century's leading sociologists. By the end of the semester, we were convinced, and he promised that he'll be right there with us the whole way.

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Janna:
I met Michael through the social theory class, one of the reasons I was so excited to come to Berkeley. As someone transitioning from computer science into sociology, I was craving that deep immersion in social theory I had heard so much about as a hallmark of Berkeley, and Michael truly delivered. I loved going to his classes every week, chatting with him afterward, watching him pull out his Marx puppet on Zoom, picking him up with Tiffany for dinner when the three of us were living remotely on the East Coast, and later having the opportunity to teach Michael's undergraduate theory course on Du Bois. These moments revealed how deeply Michael cared about us as people and as students, but also called on us as sociologists to remember our responsibility to impact the social world through our scholarship.

Though Michael was never formally my advisor or on any of my committees, he was always deeply supportive and one of the most generous and generative people in my corner in graduate school, especially in the early years. Like so many others have reflected, I would send him early drafts, and somehow, Michael was always able to send back paragraphs of thoughtful feedback, often as soon as the next morning. I remember sitting in his office and just rambling on early ideas for projects, and Michael would be intently listening with his classic toothy grin before showing me a way forward or offering words of encouragement. Even though we worked in very different areas of sociology, he always seemed to grasp exactly what I was trying to say even before I could fully articulate it myself. I know I will always draw inspiration from Michael's boundless energy, insatiable curiosity, and intellectual rigor through the rest of graduate school and my career.

Tiffany:
Michael also never formally was my advisor, but consistent with every one of his students' experiences, Michael was incredibly kind, generous, and supportive of me as a scholar and as a person. I think our relationship is best described as an informal mentor-friendship, one filled with lots of conversations about theory and how to navigate graduate school and academia, but also talking about our families and friends, reflecting on our community. Michael had always passionately described to us how vibrant our department was and how beautifully organic conversations in the halls can lead to the best of friends, but he buried the lead by not mentioning that he was going to be a big part of that community for me.

For much of my first year, I felt like I didn't belong. I didn't belong in graduate school and most certainly not Berkeley. Whatever it means to be a Berkeley student, I sure wasn't it, and there were many experiences where it felt like I was being reminded of that. So much so, by the end I wanted to quit. Alas, 5 years later I'm still here, and the only reason for that is Michael. When I told him that I was thinking about leaving because I was feeling out of place and defeated by the lack of kindness I was experiencing, he stopped me right there. He shared stories of his path to Berkeley and academia, followed by steadfast reminders that I did belong, that I was enough, and that me being at Berkeley wasn't some mistake, no matter who told me otherwise. All of the discouragement I was experiencing was met tenfold by his encouragement, and I was lucky to have been cared for and made to feel like I mattered, even if we'd only then known each other for 2 semesters. Lucky for me, this was only the beginning followed by many years sharing stories about our travels, dinners in Boston during

his sabbatical where we'd have to tell him we've arrived by sending him an email (this was pre-iPhone Michael), teasing Michael that he finally caved on the iPhone post-retirement, and sweet emails of encouragement and pride every time a new volume of the BJS was out. Our theory endeavor came full circle, where my last class was also the last class he ever taught on Du Bois. Many years apart, I could have never imagined all the tears, laughs, and hugs in between. And I couldn't have ever imagined doing this.

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Michael is the reason we have remained steadfast in our commitment to making Berkeley a hub for graduate student publishing in sociology. Throughout every uncertain moment of publishing public sociology, he has been our most unwavering, energetic, and fearless champion. Our editorial philosophy reflects Michael's commitment to institutionalize a scholarly culture that not only identifies social problems but actively centers the voices and perspectives of the communities we both study and belong to. Through our platform, we aim to foster a supportive intellectual community for graduate students and early-career researchers of all backgrounds—particularly first-generation scholars and students of color in sociology and related fields—to engage with questions that extend far beyond academia's internal debates.

Though he is no longer with us, we feel profoundly connected to past generations of Berkeley students and BJS editors through his enduring influence. When we reached out to his former students to contribute to this issue, we were deeply moved by the response—so many shared that they too had served on the BJS editorial board. We have been showered with many sweet memories across many generations of students, joyful pictures of the past and present, and lots of grief and love. Michael's legacy lives on through us and the countless students whose lives he has fundamentally shaped. He serves as the vital link connecting us to generations of Berkeley scholars, and we are honored to continue this tradition that he helped nurture and sustain. With that, we want to continue to thank everyone who has contributed to this labor of love. Thank you for everything you've shared with us, not just the pieces you've written but also the stories, the reflections, and the support. We are so grateful to be in community with you, and we couldn't have done this tribute to Michael and his life without you.

And to Michael, we love you, we always will.