
A Public Sociology for Human Rights

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A public sociology that will tackle the public issues of today requires the transformation of sociology as we know it. This is the stirring message of this volume—at the heart of sociology must lie a concern for society as such, the protection of those social relations through which we recognize each other as humans. Thus, the chapters focus on those fundamental human rights that uphold human community, first and foremost, against the colonizing projects of states and markets. In this vision of sociology, as Judith Blau and Alberto Moncada (2005) underline in their book *Human Rights: Beyond the Liberal Vision*, society can no longer be taken for granted. The devastation of society—whether in civil war or in famine, in prison or in ghetto—cannot be consigned to some marginal specialty or to some other discipline. Rather it must be the principle focus of our discipline, casting into relief threats to society’s very existence.

What could more exemplify the devastation of society at the hands of market and state than Hurricane Katrina? To be sure this was no tsunami. As I write, two months after the storm, the death toll is at 1,055 but still climbing as more bodies are continually being recovered. Yet in neighboring Cuba it is a national tragedy if a single person dies in a hurricane, even one so fierce as Katrina. And so it should be; hurricanes are predictable in their effects and give ample warning of their arrival. But warnings were ignored by a state bent on war abroad and repression at home, sacrificing levees for arms, and social relief for “homeland” security. When the water flooded out, markets flooded in—corporate America would gorge itself on the disaster, on lucrative con-

tracts to rebuild New Orleans for a new privileged class, a New Orleans rebuilt on the backs of cheap imported labor, suspended labor codes, and the expulsion of indigenous poor and blacks. When the state fuels corporate America with outsourcing, suspending labor rights and withdrawing social rights, then “the other America,” the underside of urban apartheid, whose livelihood depends upon those hard-won rights, must resort to the most basic human rights as the only rights they have left to defend.

One can indict this individual or that, President Bush or Mayor Nagin; this agency or that, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the National Guard; this organization or that, the media or the churches; but such a politics of blame misses the bigger picture: the levees of society came crashing down in the storm of a rapacious capitalism—a rapacious capitalism that destroys everything in its path, from wetlands sacrificed to real estate and the leisure industry, to oil extraction from the Gulf, leading to the subsidence of its coastlands, to global warming that intensifies the hurricanes that sweep through the region. To grapple with the destruction of human community we need a new public sociology that brings together state, economy, and society; that draws on different disciplines; and that is not bound by the nation-state. It will be a sociology, as Eric Klinenberg (2002) shows in *Heat Wave*, of everyday immiseration and isolation that stand revealed in human catastrophe.

The race and class wars of the United States are, so far, silent if nonetheless palpable in their effects. Another area for a public sociology of human rights is the not-so-silent civil wars of the post-Cold War period, with their untold human suffering. Ahead of Rwanda, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, the civil war in Sudan tops the list of the ten deadliest armed conflicts in the world between 1986 and 2000, with nearly 1.3 million people killed (Ron, Ramos, and Rodgers, 2005: 569). This figure does not include the latest round of atrocities in Darfur—an all-too-little understood war in the west of Sudan, which has so far left over four hundred thousand dead and two million displaced. The majority were killed at the hands of the Sudanese state and its marauding Arab militia, known locally as the Janjaweed, the devil on horseback.

It was no accident that the hostilities in Darfur began in February 2003 just as Sudan’s twenty-one-year Second Civil War between the so-called “Arab” north and the so-called “African” south was coming to an end. The rebel groups in Darfur—the Sudanese Liberation Movement (Army) and the Justice and Equality Movement—wanted to be included in the spoils of the peace agreement that would divide up the Sudanese oil revenues between the elites of north and south. There were festering local antagonisms too with nomadic Arab herders encroaching on the shrinking lands of African farmers. The mil-

itary cabal running the government in Khartoum sided with the Arab population, colluding with the Janjaweed, on the pretext of quelling the rebel movements. The Sudanese government turned Darfur into a zone of ethnic cleansing, and so it became a maelstrom of international forces as concerned to protect the rich oil deposits of south Sudan as to protect the population of Darfur from murder, rape, and pillage.

The United States has been deeply involved here, as in other epicenters of human devastation. In this case it used social science to justify an opportunistic reversal of policy, which would turn a blind eye to the genocide in Darfur. In the summer of 2004 both houses of Congress unanimously passed resolutions condemning genocide in Darfur. It was left to the State Department to produce compelling evidence for genocide, that is, the deliberate, premeditated attempt to destroy a population in whole or in part. Based on a survey conducted in the refugee camps of Chad, Colin Powell, then secretary of state, did indeed conclude that there had been genocide, perpetrated by the Sudanese government. That was September 2004. Less than a year later in April 2005, with Powell gone, Assistant Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick refused to repeat or confirm the claim of genocide. This coincided with his mission to Sudan to seek, so it was reported, the cooperation of the Sudanese government in the war on terrorism. The Sudanese government had been host to Osama Bin Laden and a center of Al Qaeda operations in the 1990s, but now was supposedly developing a strong partnership with the CIA.

Along with the renewed ties between the Sudanese government and U.S. intelligence forces came revised figures of the death toll. The State Department claimed that between sixty thousand and one hundred and sixty thousand people had died in Darfur since the hostilities began, much lower than the previously cited figures. At this point sociologist John Hagan and his collaborators entered the war of numbers to lay bare the war of atrocities. The State Department's lower figure, Hagan, Rymond-Richmond, and Parker (2005) argue, came from a misleading review of surveys conducted by various international health organizations and the Sudanese Ministry of Health in the summer of 2004. This survey was based only on deaths within the refugee camps, that is, deaths from disease and starvation, since the Sudanese government obstructed surveys of death through violence. The latter were calculated by Hagan et al. from a survey also conducted in 2004 by the Coalition for International Justice, sponsored by the U.S. State Department in support of Powell's earlier testimony concerning the Darfur genocide. It was administered in the refugee camps in Chad where a large sample was interviewed about deaths in the villages from which they had fled. Hagan et al. came up with a total death toll of 390,000—a figure close to other calculations—which, together with the descriptions of hostilities given in the interviews, led

them to conclude that this was indeed a case of genocide. This claim based on the larger mortality figures was given some play in the national media, in opinion columns in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Nonetheless, the U.S. government stuck to its lower figures, but with little attempt at justification.

In a paper he wrote with Heather Schoenfeld and Alberto Palloni, John Hagan (2006) reflects on his frustrated advocacy of public sociology around human rights. First, criminology has been in a state of denial when it comes to crimes against humanity, genocide, and ethnic cleansing. Just as criminology made a great leap forward when Sutherland recognized corporate crimes so now it must also be prepared to take on states. Criminology must step into the field of human rights, but it must do so together with demographers who study mortality from “natural” causes. By accepting the separation of the investigation of public health from violence, the U.S. state has been complicit in covering up the crimes of its intermittent ally, the Sudanese government. The U.S. government, as well as the UN and other major world powers, was unwilling to consistently declare genocide in Darfur not only because they did not wish to offend their collaborator in the war against terrorism or disturb the exploration of the rich oil deposits in southern Sudan, but because they did not want to have to deploy troops in Darfur. Whatever the reason, the United States colluded in a defense of the indefensible. It might be more difficult for governments to hide genocide, Hagan and his colleagues concluded, if social scientists were to develop an integrated approach to human rights that would, for example, connect the analysis of state crimes and public health. This would be just a small piece of the revamping of sociology to meet the urgent need for an effective public sociology of human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS: WHOSE RIGHTS? WHICH RIGHTS?

Expanding catastrophes, whether genocide, civil war, military occupations, hurricanes, global warming, or earthquakes, call for a public sociology for human rights, built on a professional sociology that refuses to compartmentalize or decontextualize the sources of suffering. In pursuing such a sociology of human rights we must not confound human rights with the rights of states and markets. We see how the U.S. prosecution of the war against terror, in principle an eminently defensible human rights project, entails the sacrifice of populations in the United States, the suppression of genocide in Darfur, and the occupation of Iraq. The public defense of human rights becomes a cover for their violation.

Indeed, human rights are the currency of contemporary international relations, an ideology of domination deployed by the United States, in particular, as a cover for wars and occupations as well as sanctions and hostilities. It has justified atrocities and interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan; it has been the alibi for sanctions against countries such as China and Cuba, although even here profits speak louder than human rights as U.S. sanctions against China have been especially tame for fear of endangering lucrative trade agreements. Human rights have been the ideological advance guard of occupation and recolonization, whether for geopolitical or economic ends. It has been used to divide the world into good and evil: those nations defending human rights and those supporting terrorism.

Even on its own terrain the so-called U.S. Patriot Act has sanctioned the erosion of civil liberties by the Department of Homeland Security in the name of the “greater good,” in the name of the war against terrorism. It has denied others the right to examine the U.S. record of human rights, whether in Guantánomo Bay or Abu Ghraib, not to mention the abuse meted out in its own prisons. It has outsourced the torture and interrogation of suspects to third-party states out of sight and beyond U.S. law. It has opposed the development of an international court of law for fear human rights abuses would be turned against the practices of its own soldiers on foreign soils. In the schizophrenic view of the U.S. state, human rights are always abused by others and always upheld by the United States. It has resisted applying human rights to itself, not just in its foreign operations but also on the domestic front, especially when it comes to marginalized populations—labor, racial minorities, immigrants. If human rights discourse has been corrupted by its use as an ideological weapon of a conquering state, can it also be turned against that state, can it provide the basis of a public sociology? The chapters in this book come to a common verdict—an unqualified yes. But how?

The advantage of a human rights framework is its widespread appeal. Who, after all, can be against human rights? If the collective will is present, universalism can eventually be turned against any power that seeks to justify atrocities in its name. But “eventually” too often means after untold human suffering. The disadvantage of human rights is not only the often-slow pace of implementation but also the way they have been tainted by geopolitics. It might be appealing in the United States, where the population is naïve and misinformed about U.S. military adventures abroad, but much less appealing in other countries where the underside of “human rights” interventions is readily apparent. To the subjugated, parading human rights too easily appears as yet another civilizing mission of foreign (“liberating”) powers. If it is to gain credibility among oppressed peoples the defenders of human rights must be prepared to turn this ideological weapon against its misuse by colonizing

powers and their satrapies. In particular it must be turned against the United States both in its imperial adventures abroad but also on its domestic terrain.

The danger in the use of human rights, therefore, is their abstract character. Bandied around as if they belong to some disembodied but essential human being, they can assume any meaning their purveyors wish. Disconnected and abandoned, the refugees of Darfur have no human rights at all, while predatory states can proclaim they are their authentic voice. Or to enjoin two familiar examples: just as the battered woman who can stand the violence no longer and kills her abuser, so the suicide bomber cannot be separated from the terrorist state that knows no limits to the application of force to deny humans self-determination (Pape, 2005). Rights (or their absence) cannot exist outside the institutions that guarantee (or deny) them, and which they in turn support (or challenge).

A sociology of human rights must take as its first principle the investigation of the institutional context of human rights. In the world of capitalism there are three sets of institutions: the market economy, the liberal state, and civil society. Each has its associated rights. The market economy demands the rights of property, and the freedom to buy and sell, to exchange. The state is concerned with its own coercive stability and, in a liberal democracy, with rights to vote, rule of law, freedom of speech. In contrast, collective organization in society defends human rights of survival whether against the commodification of the market or the violence of the state. If the first two have been the realms of economics and political science, the latter is characteristically the realm of sociology and the allied disciplines of anthropology and human geography. In short, human rights become publicly defensible if they become part of a public sociology.

THREE WAVES OF MARKETIZATION, THREE ERAS OF SOCIOLOGY

The framework that presents society as an endangered species in the face of state and market aggression derives from Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*—the classic analysis of the devastation wrought by the market. If the state initially sponsored the rise of the market in eighteenth-century England, once established the market generated a momentum of its own, attempting to reduce everything to a creature of itself. There were no limits to commodification, even entities that were never intended to be commodities, what Polanyi calls fictitious commodities. Paramount among these were labor, land, and money. If labor is commodified, bought and sold at will, then it will lose its human form and thus its character as labor, capable of creatively and spon-

taneously transforming nature. If land—and we could substitute the environment—becomes a commodity, defiled in the interests of profit, then it will no longer serve to nourish the human species. Finally, if money itself is freely bought and sold, businesses themselves will be threatened by the uncertainty of fluctuating exchange rates. When it becomes subject to arbitrary changes in value money can no longer function effectively as a medium of exchange.

In short, markets tend to destroy the very conditions of their own existence, and generate a countermovement by society for its self-protection. Here Polanyi focuses on how the commodification of labor in England in the first half of the nineteenth century led to a counterrebellion by society. The rise of labor organizations, cooperatives, and Chartism conspired to impose restrictions on the commodification of labor, imposing minimal conditions on employment such as the length of the working day, constraining the whim of the employer. The landed classes sought to protect agriculture from competition through tariffs as well as erect legal limits on the use of land, while the business classes forged the control of national currencies through the creation of a central bank. Similar defenses against the market came somewhat later in Europe and the United States, defenses that involved political parties and the state in the former and more laissez-faire social self-protection in the latter.

This was the first period of sociology, responding to the rawness of markets with a strong moral and reformist bent. You might call this the period of *utopian sociology*. In England it was represented by the critical thinking of practitioners such as Robert Owen, while in the United States utopianism was rife in the postbellum period. Many of these schemes were rooted in the *rights of labor*, the defense against its commodification, against the tyranny of the unforgiving market in labor. In the era of the Gilded Age sociology took up the cause of the working class, especially when economics, within which sociology had hitherto developed, distanced itself from the critique of capitalism and adopted the professional mantle of neoclassical theory, of marginalism.

The countermovement to the first epoch of market expansion was impelled by the self-organization of society in the nineteenth century, starting out at the local level and finally rising to the level of the state. In Polanyi's scheme the next century saw the renewed expansion of the market at the international level. The movement for free trade was temporary halted by World War I but then redoubled its momentum in the 1920s with the advance of the gold standard. In the 1930s, however, nation-states recoiled against the menacing uncertainty of the global market, leading to extreme reactions—Fascism, Communism (Stalinist collectivization and planning), New Deal and Social Democracy—all aiming at insulation from international markets and at the

same time subjugating national markets to state control. In Polanyi's view these new forms of state—destroying society or reconstructing it in the image of the state—owed their origins to the overextension of the market. In some countries—Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union—this meant the end of sociology, while in other countries, such as the United States, sociology turned toward policy science. Funded by foundations such as Rockefeller or Carnegie, and then by the state itself during the Depression, World War II, and most extensively after the war, academic sociology engaged social issues defined by various clients. This was the era of *policy sociology* concerned with *social rights*. It was the era in which sociology, as we now know it, was established with its distinctive concerns, namely, social inequality, status attainment, stability of liberal democracy, participation in organizations, and the conditions for modernization. State and civil society were viewed as allies in the containment of the excesses of the market economy.

With the experience of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Polanyi assumed that the lesson of the market had been learned, namely it had to be carefully regulated if it was to serve humanity. Writing *The Great Transformation* in 1944, he imagined a socialist world in which market and state would be subordinated to the self-organization of society. He was overly optimistic. The twentieth century ended just as it began with a renewed commitment to the market—the neoliberal messianism that surpasses, both in ideology and in practice, the previous two rounds of market idolatry. It began with the economic crisis of the 1970s and was consolidated by the collapse of holdouts against market supremacy, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the market transition guided by the Chinese party state, and the slow erosion of social democracy in Europe. This third wave of marketization, the era of neoliberalism, has a global dimension never before achieved, promoted this time by supranational agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), and World Bank, as well as by nation-states themselves, often organized into regional consortia.

The countermovement by society has therefore had to grope forward from local and national to a global scale, something never anticipated by Polanyi. Insofar as it speaks for this countermovement, sociology has to keep its distance from states and even supranational regulatory agencies since these are now no longer opposing or containing the market but promoting its expansion. Neoliberalism and militarism become partners in the destruction of community. The collusion takes different forms: in Darfur neoliberalism turns its back on genocide, while in New Orleans the neoliberal state casts militarism in the form of limited social support. Whether distant or proximate the connection of neoliberalism and militarism calls for a countermovement that appeals to multiple publics knitted together across the world, often sus-

tained by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements. This is the period of a *public sociology* concerned to protect distinctively *human rights* of local communities—freedom from the depredations of markets and states, freedoms to survive and collectively self-organize.

If labor rights were won on the terrain of the economy and social rights on the terrain of the state, then human rights will be won on the terrain of self-organizing society. This succession of rights is an ascendant movement toward ever greater universality—just as social rights include labor rights, so human rights include social rights as well as labor rights. The universality of rights is the reaction or countermovement to the universality of markets. The chapters in this book speak to a public sociology, defending human rights in the face of threats to society from the third wave of market expansion. Human rights are a last ditch defense against the headlong retreat of labor rights before capital's property rights, and the retreat of social rights before the state's regulatory rights.

THE EROSION OF LABOR AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

The broad parameters of this public sociology are sketched by William Robinson (chapter 2) as critical globalization studies, taking for granted the entities that Polanyi could barely imagine, not so much the supranational political bodies such as the UN, WTO, IMF, and World Bank, but the development of a transnational civil society, made up of NGOs, environmental movements, and traces of international working-class solidarity. Jackie Smith (chapter 4) points to this organic global civil society as a repository of a new set of rights associated with the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and along with these emancipatory human rights come new forms of postnational citizenship, the basis of what Gerard Delanty (chapter 3) calls a new cosmopolitanism. Here we find rights that attach to human beings irrespective of their national status, the rights of migrants that pertain irrespective of location. As the consciousness of a global citizenry these human rights do indeed become the experiential basis of a public sociology, defending society against neoliberal globalization.

One can catalogue the movements that have captured the public imagination, as Walda Katz-Fishman and Jerome Scott (chapter 5) do, but one must be wary of romanticizing this embryonic global civil society. It does, after all, operate on a terrain dominated by powerful nation-states. As James Ron, Howard Ramos, and Kathleen Rodgers (2005) have shown, even such a reputable and independent organization as Amnesty International adopts an information politics influenced by the power of states, the proclivities of media,

and the amount of military assistance, as well as by actual human rights violations. In Sudan, NGOs, the World Health Organization, and agencies monitoring peace initiatives operate on a difficult military terrain controlled by the Sudanese state (Hutchinson, 2005). No less important are the influences of market forces on global civil society—influences that see international NGOs crowding one another out, scrambling for resources that make them prey to the interests of large funding agencies (Cooley and Ron, 2002). They become the lubricant and contraceptive of third-wave marketization. Global civil society is Janus-faced—decisively shaped by and connected to the interests of nation-states and multilateral agencies even as it is also a terrain for contesting those interests.

Just as serious are the deep and abiding fissures within the transnational civil society, fissures brought about through the collusion of markets and states. A global market means the mobility of capital as it seeks out ever cheaper labor. Robert Pollin (chapter 6) writes of the sweatshop labor in the Global South where indeed working conditions may be monstrous, but where, as we are repeatedly told, it is better to be super-exploited than not to be exploited at all—a condition that is itself the product of capitalism seeking markets for its surplus products, uprooting populations from access to their means of existence, turning them into surplus populations, dependent on sweatshop labor. This is a return to the nineteenth century but with a vengeance and a difference—the sweatshops exist side by side a Global North, whose richest and poorest consumers benefit from the cheap commodities, the sweatshirts that contain no trace of the sweat, of the expended life that has gone into them. Pollin calculates that an increase of 1.8 percent in price is equivalent to 100 percent increase in wages—that's a public proclamation of the way some make gains at the expense of others within that same putative transnational civil society.

If one strategy of capital is to seek out cheap labor abroad another strategy is to import cheap labor. The United States is home to all manner of migrant workers—legal and illegal—defenseless against the practice of capital. They work under appalling conditions in the garment trade or they are the day laborers of the construction industry. Migrant workers can be assumed to be single and, thus, employers are not responsible for paying a family wage. For the same reason states also profit, not having to foot the welfare and education bills for absent family members. As Anthony Orum and Arlette Grabczynska (chapter 10) describe, migrant workers are subject to arbitrary abrogation of their rights; no wonder that they are often the first to form unions—whatever their legal status. The national social rights response to second-wave marketization marginalized (im)migrant workers, and segregated them from mainstream labor movements, but with third-wave marketi-

zation they are at the vanguard of organizing campaigns, the prototype of the broadening swathe of disenfranchised labor, embedded in networks that stretch across continents.

Indeed, the prominence of migrants may in part explain the assault on the welfare apparatuses of the state. It may be the hidden story behind the attempt to dismantle social security that Deana Rohlinger and Jill Quadagno (chapter 7) describe in their chapter. If the second wave of market expansion brought all manner of welfare provisions to guard against the uncertainties of commodifying labor, so now in the face of third-wave marketization those protections are being dismantled. This is an account of social rights being subordinated to property rights, how the freedom to choose takes priority over the freedom to live, pretending that we are all putative owners in the ownership society, ignoring the very distinction between owners of property and those who own nothing but their labor power. Like the peasants of the Global South, the laborers in the Global North are torn from their means of livelihood, but that does not mean they have common interests.

Are there, however, issues around which North and South, East and West could unite, human rights that they could commonly defend? There is one way in which everyone's life is threatened, and that is through the degradation of the environment. Hence the broad appeal of the environmental justice movement. Global warming, toxic waste, and pollution do not recognize social or geographical boundaries. We are all affected by the destruction of the environment. Yes, but not equally affected. As Havidán Rodríguez and Carla Russell (chapter 11) show, just as "natural" disasters have their social and economic origins, so they also have uneven social consequences. As they become more numerous or more hazardous, their costs are more unequally distributed. An earthquake in Pakistan has many more casualties than one of equal strength in Los Angeles; a hurricane in Honduras kills many more people than one in the United States, which in turn suffers a much higher death rate than Cuba. Within a single country the distribution of suffering mirrors the social structure. As we know only too well, blacks, the poor, and the elderly bore the greatest costs of Hurricane Katrina.

For Kenneth Gould (chapter 12) the costs of the ecological system cannot be separated from the social order. The need for an ecologically sound system becomes all the more urgent as it becomes politically infeasible precisely because privileged races, classes, and nations can more effectively protect themselves from the fall out of environmental degradation. The idea of technology as panacea misses the social and political context of invention and implementation. Gould argues that we must democratize economic decisions, making powerful economic actors and states accountable to public concerns.

Pushing the risks of environmental degradation upwards in the class hierarchy may be the only way to rescue the ecosystem from destruction.

Is this totally beyond the realm of possibility? Simone Pulver's (2004) analysis of the pressure that energy NGOs brought to bear on the major oil corporations of the world is encouraging—pressure exercised in a global public sphere constituted to address climate regulation. The very success in getting European oil companies to acknowledge the problem led to a split with U.S. corporations, which, however, had the perverse consequence of disabling the very environmental groups that had led the struggle. Once again we must be wary of any triumphalism, of detaching the global public sphere from supranational agencies, nation-states, and powerful economic actors that still decisively shape its terrain and wreak havoc with deliberative processes

THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Karl Polanyi thought the devastation of community wrought by the commodification of labor in nineteenth-century England spontaneously brought about society's self-protection. Nothing could be further from the truth. From Edward Thompson to modern social movement theory we have learnt that organization cannot be taken for granted. Secret societies, cooperatives, and diverse forms of trade unions arose to defend labor rights only through extended class struggle, and their survival was always uncertain. In the twentieth century social rights were no less a function of intense struggles on the terrain of national politics. Although enshrined in the law and guaranteed by the state they too have suffered reversal, and not just in the United States. Equally, there is nothing natural, inevitable, or eternal about the twenty-first-century struggle for human rights; there is no law of spontaneous counterhegemonic globalization. So what institutions might defend human rights? And will those institutions manage to restore labor rights and social rights as well as advance human rights?

Time and again the chapters in this volume refer to the United Nations and its 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What role is there for such a supranational body in guaranteeing the security of human populations? Jerry Pubantz and John Allphin Moore, Jr. (chapter 13) pin their hopes on the United Nations as increasingly responsive to a global civil society built on the foundation of an ever widening circle of NGOs. Its involvement in setting up war crime tribunals and peacekeeping forces, and establishing a global rule of law as well as fostering nation building endeavors all augur well, so they argue, for the United Nations to create a democratic public sphere—a

forum for the discussion, definition, and intervention in major world crises to defend human rights. This is the optimistic scenario in which global civil society, connected by a thousand threads to the UN, can contain or even prevent unilateral interventions by states and internal civil wars. But how much autonomy does the UN possess? Is it no more than a mopping-up operation that enters only after civil wars or predatory leaders have destroyed societies, and even then is its intervention strictly limited by local warlords or by members of the Security Council, the United States in particular?

Thus, Antonio Ugalde and Núria Homedes (chapter 8) are much less sanguine about the possibilities of supranational agencies protecting the welfare of the Global South. They see the World Bank, WTO, and World Health Organization as less concerned to develop effective health facilities and more interested in promoting the profits of the pharmaceutical industry, peddling their useless and expensive brands rather generic drugs. International agencies surreptitiously conspire to privatize national health care, with the result that both access and subsidies become ever more skewed toward the rich. The World Bank, for example, quietly insinuates itself into health ministries, restructuring health provision and circumventing any public discussion. There are emergent countermovements such as People's Health Movement and the Bangkok Charter on Health, and the success of one or two states, such as Brazil, in repelling the plundering of pharmaceuticals. Still, the overwhelming power lies with the proponents of commodified health care, disadvantaging not only the poor people of the Global South, but also the forty million poor Americans without health insurance.

A critical public sociology for today therefore will have to connect these disparate communities, facing pincer moves of state and markets. Its goal must be to develop a common language through which we can recognize common experiences at different ends of the world order. A public sociology will have to recognize the global character of public issues. It will succeed in this project only by capturing the imagination of publics with visions of alternatives. It is not a matter, however, of dreaming up alternatives and speculating on their possibility, but of focusing on real utopias, rooted in concrete movements and organizations. The Baptist Movement that challenged the Mexican state and the North American Free Trade Agreement constructed a real utopia out of the defense of the rights of indigenous communities. Keri Iyall Smith (chapter 9) extends such an appeal to the rights of indigenous communities across the world. Judith Blau and Alberto Moncada (chapter 14) extend the idea of collective self-organization to discover commonalities that stretch across the Global North and Global South. Local communities have inherent tendencies to form themselves into self-governing collectives when threatened by invasions of markets or states. The bases for such collectives

vary from depleting shared natural resources to collectives of fate cast together by accident such as the barrios of the world's largest cities; to communities of deliberate self-government such as Montage; and, finally, to the organization weapons, the terrorist cells that proliferate in the face of terrorist states. These are the concrete fantasies, the currency of public sociology, which can galvanize a collective will, mobilizing publics toward full-fledged alternative principles of organization.

PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY BEGINS AT HOME: FEMINISM, RACISM, AND TEACHING

Public sociology must begin back in the university. Its very possibility depends on the recognition of publics, something all too new for sociology. Going back to Durkheim or to Weber we find sociologists suspicious of publics. Durkheim and a long tradition that followed him saw social movements not as the voice of a public but as a sign of social pathology, while Weber spoke of an inarticulate mass given to irrational sentiments, easily manipulated by leaders. It was the idea of a mass society—not a society of publics—that propelled post–World War II sociology in the United States, justifying on the one side a retreat to professional sociology and on the other side an “applied” or policy sociology designed to regulate politics and consumerism. Even C. Wright Mills, a most vocal critic of sociology as market research, embraced mass society as an inescapable reality. He saw critical intellectuals as the only meaningful and progressive force in society. It was only the civil rights movement, and the women's movement in particular, that gave to sociology the idea of articulate publics that could rationally fight for their interests outside the realm of conventional politics. Social movement theory, critical race theory, and feminism brought about a revolution in sociology, making possible a sociology of publics and thus a public sociology.

Barbara Risman (chapter 16) is a forthright advocate of feminism as public sociology. The short history of feminism demonstrates that the pursuit of social justice is quite compatible with an expanding and vigorous research program around gender inequality. By their own careers feminists have shown they can sustain a public profile or at least contribute to public debate at the same time as being active scholars. Most importantly they have shed disciplinary chauvinism by bridging disciplines in pursuit of women's rights but also by joining forces with other extra-academic projects in the defense of human rights. One thinks, for example, of the successful feminist struggles to bring domestic violence to public attention, and how “sexual harassment,” “wife battery,” and “the battered woman's syndrome” have not only entered

public but also legal discourse. If only advances similar to those made by feminists against patriarchal violence could be made in the understanding of state violence, thus, for example, suicide bombers could be viewed not as pathologically demonic individuals but desperate responses to colonizing states.

Yet, there is also a downside to the feminist struggles for the expansion of the rights of women. Legal framings of domestic violence have led to the administration of women's needs, neutralizing their continuing political effectiveness, and sometimes even turning against women. The danger is that we now live in a postfeminist world, which regards male oppression as a thing of the past. So, in this regard, there is nothing more to achieve, even though the glass ceiling still exists and women are still paid, on average, considerably less than men. The same is true in the field of race relations, where the civil rights movement has supposedly ended institutional racism. This is a trap as Charles Gallagher (chapter 17) argues. We now have a color-blind racism, the racism that continues despite legal rights, the racism that gives rise to staggering rates of African American incarceration, the racism so apparent in the abandonment of the African Americans victims of Hurricane Katrina. Gallagher asks how we can sustain a dialogue about the rights of racial minorities in a world of publics that no longer wants to listen.

There is one thing we can do, and that is think of teaching as public sociology. Just as feminism, critical race theory, and social movement theory revolutionized how we understand and engage with subordinated and marginalized groups, so we are in the midst of a revolution in the teaching of sociology. Students are no longer seen as passive, empty vessels into which we pour our pearls of sociological wisdom, but as active citizens, capable of absorbing a rich lived experience, participants in public debates they carry beyond the classroom. Angela Hattery and Earl Smith (chapter 15) show us just what teaching can be by discussing their own strategies to bring new experiences to their students, getting them to enact remote and unfamiliar worlds. They do this through imaginative assignments that require students to participate in unfamiliar worlds, forcing them to recreate the world of welfare. Or, in another example, they take students on an expedition through the South, rediscovering the civil rights movement through interviewing participants in local communities. This is labor-intensive teaching, but it builds organic connections to marginalized communities and long-lasting experiences, deeply etched in the student's sociological habitus. It is not a matter of teaching public sociology but teaching *as* public sociology, the promotion of dialogues between teacher and taught, among the students themselves and thence between students and other publics. Teaching is the medium in which we all swim and through which we all can become public sociologists.

More than that, we can also ask the reverse question, whether teaching in this dialogical mode is a model for public sociology. Can teaching be the metaphor for the way we relate to publics more broadly as it was for Paulo Freire? If so, we have to steer a course between two dangers, between, on the one side, the Charybdis of vanguardism, preaching or worse, dictating to those we engage and, on the other side, the Scylla of faddishness, pandering to the lowest common denominator, to spontaneous prejudices. As its goal an organic public sociology tries to achieve a symmetrical, two-way conversation between publics and sociologists. As in teaching proper so in public sociology: the danger is one in which the imbalance of power can threaten the educative function. The teacher with her captive audience and an array of sanctions at her command all too easily imposes herself upon the students. Still even within these constraints it is possible to conduct fruitful dialogue, as Angela Hattery and Earl Smith demonstrate, by strategies that empower the lived experience of the student.

More usually, in the world beyond the protected sphere of the academy, the public sociologist finds herself competing for the attention of publics with television, film, and newspapers that have more immediate access and have no qualms about distorting communication. Public sociology of the more traditional as well as the organic type, that is, public sociology in which the sociologist is vehicle for generating dialogue within and among publics as well as public sociology in which the sociologist is the interlocutor, must learn to exploit these media for its own messages. In this area, too, we have still much to learn about how best to communicate sociological narratives that are alien to the common sense, narratives that see social forces where participants only see individual motivations, narratives that focus on social structure and institutions that both trap and enable individual self-realization.

REENVISIONING SOCIOLOGY

Public sociology may start at home but we cannot stay there—not in today's world. Living in the third wave of market expansion presents a specific set of challenges and opportunities. In the first wave the destructive power of markets was countered by local communities that hung onto labor rights enshrined in custom and practice rather than in a system of law. As the second wave of marketization eroded labor rights, it generated a countermovement. This time it was states that would regulate commodification, restoring labor rights but also promoting welfare or what I call social rights.

Today, we face a very different situation. Nation-states no longer contain markets, instead they unleash them through deregulation of industry, privati-

zation of public services, and the reversal of both labor rights and social rights. Once again society has to spring to its own defense, drawing on its own resources. This time the scope of societal self-protection is not confined to the local or national but extends to the global. Accordingly, the language of its defense has to be universal—the language of human rights, of self-determination that includes both labor and social rights. The era of human rights opens up the era of public sociology, that is a sociology that first engages with publics and only secondly with states.

As we saw in the case of Darfur, where we began, this involves understanding the local in terms of state and global forces. Sociology of the second wave of marketization took the nation-state as its unit of analysis, which continues to be an abiding framework for theorizing. We have to absorb it, however, into a global context, which means not only seeing things through an international perspective but also in terms of transnational connections, supranational agencies, and postnational consciousness—all three being terms of a human rights framework. It is not only a matter of increasing the scale of the sociological investigation, it is also a matter of reconfiguring the internal relations among subfields—criminology must join hands with public health, environmental studies must insinuate themselves into the study of social inequality, and so forth. Finally, sociology will have to join forces with other disciplines as it tackles environmental catastrophes, civil wars, famines, militarization, and so forth. It will have to forge alliances with human geographers and cultural anthropologists, with dissident groups in political science and economics, in other words, with those who recognize society as a value worth preserving.

I am not, however, proposing a single social science. Far from it. We have to maintain the integrity of sociology's critical standpoint, namely civil society, in the face of challenges from economists and political scientists who are largely responsible for ideologies justifying the collusion of market tyranny and state despotism, and thus, the abrogation of labor rights and social rights. If we don't follow the methods and models of conventional economics and political science, we have still much to learn from them, in particular the way their power derives from constituting a distinct object of investigation. The success of the economists in the policy world, but also in the public world, lies in their creation of a distinct object, the market economy, about which they have a monopoly of knowledge—a monopoly of knowledge that then furthers the autonomy of the economy with its untrammelled rights of property and free exchange. A successful public sociology will depend upon and encourage sociology to constitute its own object—society—and the project would be to subjugate state and markets to societal self-organization and the

defense of human rights, including the initiation or restoration of labor rights and social rights.

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