The

Sociologist

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On the Cover: Clerk processes immigration paperwork, Ellis Island, 1930s.
Source: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services History Office and Library.

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Wednesday, November 5, 2014, 6:30pm

Paula England, 2014 ASA President

Professor of Sociology, New York University

Hosted by ASA

Open to the public.

Sociology's Place in the Academic Labor Movement

Marisa Allison
George Mason University

These days you don't have to look too far on any college or university campus in the Washington, D.C. metro area (or in any other metro area of the U.S., for that matter) to see adjunct and other contingent faculty organizing for better working conditions. The hub and testing ground of what has become the modern movement strategy (the metro organizing strategy) began with colleges and universities in the Washington, D.C. metro area and has spread to institutions in Boston, Los Angeles, and Seattle.

Part-time faculty at George Washington University, American University, Georgetown University, Howard University, the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C., and Montgomery College and the Maryland Institute College of Art in Maryland have all won collective bargaining rights by joining Service Employees International Union Local 500's Coalition of Academic Labor. The burgeoning academic labor movement creates a rare and important opportunity for sociologists both inside and outside the academy to consider what role sociologists should play as the professoriate and institutions of higher education transform.

The business of higher education is no stranger to the precariously employed, though many would be surprised to find that the majority of the precariously employed in higher education reside in the faculty ranks. Contingent faculty, as they are broadly known, are given many different titles (adjunct, lecturer, term faculty, instructors, postdocs, teaching assistants, etc.), yet together they now make up the majority of faculty on U.S. college and university campuses.

Nationally, adjunct and other contingent faculty are estimated to make up 75 percent of the total faculty in higher education

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Nationally, adjunct and other contingent faculty are estimated to make up 75 percent of the total faculty in higher education, according to the U.S. Department of Education's 2009 Fall Staff Survey. More frightening than the numbers of contingent faculty in U.S. higher education are the employment conditions they face, mirroring conditions historically encountered by the precariously employed in other industries: earning less than a living wage, having little to no employee benefits, lack of job security, lack of representation on faculty senates, and little to no advancement opportunities. The plight of contingent faculty is now slowly being revealed.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, two colleagues and I in the Public Sociology Association at George Mason University (GMU) took up the cause of contingent academic labor rights on our campus. GMU is no stranger to this phenomenon, reporting that 71 percent of their faculty for the 2012-2013 academic year are contingent faculty. Working with contingent faculty members at GMU, we constructed and distributed a campus wide survey to comprehensively assess the working conditions of the approximately

1,600 contingent faculty on Mason's campuses. That survey is now available for open-source use to anyone who wants to understand the working conditions of contingent faculty at their institution. The survey instrument and report can be accessed on our project website: contingentfacultystudy.wordpress.com.

Photo: Katie Figenbaum. 2012 March for Adjunct Faculty at American University in Washington, DC.

The report was publicly released in early October 2014 with findings that have shocked the community, including low levels of compensation in addition to significant amounts of uncompensated work; minimal hiring requirements and being hired right before a semester begins; a lack of resources and access to a private space to meet with students along with few training opportunities to accommodate students with special needs; and high percentages of contingent faculty who provide their own resources to prepare and carry out their courses. GMU, however, is no different than most other institutions of higher education as the results found in this research mirror those found in national surveys of contingent faculty. The university has since responded and is taking action to address many of these problems, which is encouraging.

Though there are many ways sociologists can help the advocacy efforts of contingent faculty, one of the best roles sociologists can play in support of the academic labor movement is by using the skills we have as social scientists to conduct research and advocate for the collection of more and better information concerning academic labor at the institutional and national levels. Determining how institutional research offices at your current university or alma mater collect faculty data and encouraging them to include contingent faculty in their collection efforts would help improve the quality of existing data. Similarly, if the human resource office at your institution conducts a faculty work/life survey, advocate for the inclusion of part-time and other contingent faculty participation in its construction and implementation.

On the national level, until 2003, the U.S. Department of Education collected detailed information about the academic workforce through the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty. With inadequate funding, collection efforts ceased at a time when national data has been needed most. Joining other voices in our community, and calling for the resumption of these collection efforts would greatly assist the advocacy efforts within the movement.

Afterword: The authors of the GMU contingent faculty working conditions report are far from the first Washington D.C. metro sociologists to address contingency employment in higher education.

Check out the work done by fellow sociologists: Dr. John Curtis, Director of Research at the American Sociological Association; Dr. Esther Merves Director of Research at the New Faculty Majority Foundation; and Dr. Rita Kirshstein, Director of the Delta Cost Project and Managing Director at American Institutes for Research.

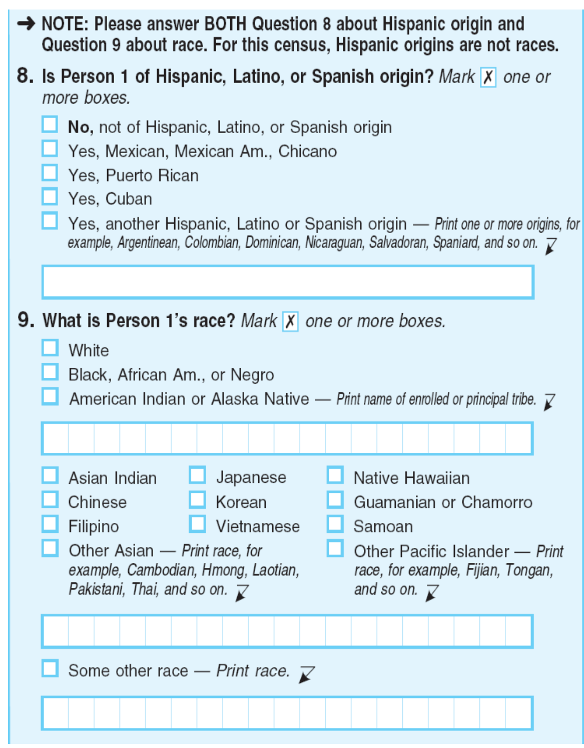
Measuring Identity among Hispanics in the United States

C. Soledad Espinoza
Johns Hopkins University

Based on the 1997 federal standards (Office of Management and Budget or OMB Statistical Policy Directive No. 15), the U.S. Census Bureau asks all American residents to identify a race category apart from identifying ethnicity on the decennial census. In the most recent 2010 survey, the question for ethnicity asks if the respondent is Hispanic/Latino[1] or not Hispanic/Latino noting that, "for this census, Hispanic origins are not races." Yet the included race categories relate to ethnic content (e.g. language), legal content (e.g. tribal enrollment), and geographic origin (e.g. continent-level or state-level). Various non-Hispanic origins are included in the race question as check boxes or written examples (e.g. Chinese, Chamorro, and Hmong). The census question for Hispanic origin is the only origin group treated separately and apart from other origin groups.

Though the census form is structured to require all respondents to report race in addition to a response for Hispanic ethnicity, many Hispanics do not comply in reporting a standard OMB race category.[2] Instead, over a third of Latinos use the residual race category, "Some Other Race" (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). In a large number of these cases (over 80 percent), Hispanic respondents write in what is typically considered to be a U.S. ethnic origin term like "Latino" or "Mexican" (U.S. Census Bureau 2014a). These self-reported responses to the race question suggest that for many Hispanics, the origin terms are appropriate responses within the schema of the standard OMB race categories. That is, the terms are meaningful options that relate yet are distinct from the standard OMB race options.

In the 2010 Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE), the U.S. Census Bureau tested a combined race and ethnic origin question as part of its planning for the 2020 census (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). The AQE study shows that a different pattern of race reporting emerges among Hispanics when the race and Hispanic ethnicity questions are combined.[3]


➜ **NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 8 about Hispanic origin and Question 9 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.**

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? *Mark ☒ one or more boxes.*

- ☐ **No,** not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- ☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
- ☐ Yes, Cuban
- ☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin — *Print one or more origins, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.*

9. What is Person 1's race? *Mark ☒ one or more boxes.*

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black, African Am., or Negro
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.*
- ☐ Asian Indian
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Pakistani, Thai, and so on.*
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.*
- ☐ Some other race — *Print race.*

The two-question format used on the last census and tested for the AQE.

Less than one-in-five Latinos report as white. In contrast, about half of Latinos report as white when race and ethnicity are asked as separate questions (U.S. Census Bureau 2011).[4]

A different pattern of race reporting emerges among Hispanics when the race and Hispanic ethnicity questions are combined.

As historical context, early legal precedence conferred institutional whiteness to people with Latin America origins despite persistent social exclusion from whiteness in the U.S. (Gómez 2007). Edward Telles,[5] a Princeton University sociologist and author of *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican-Americans, Assimilation, and Race* (2008), provides an example, “Mexicans were long racialized in the U.S. southwest, i.e. popularly seen and treated as a race separate from whites, Chinese, African Americans, etc. But they were made citizens and thus de facto given white status under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.” At that time, whiteness was a requisite for U.S. citizenship and the protection of one’s legal rights.

“Mexican” was first included in the U.S. census as a race option in 1930. During a period of great racial fear, lack of civil rights protections, and political backlash, Mexican as a race option was removed in the subsequent decennial census. Since then, the Hispanic origin question has never been re-integrated with the standard (OMB) race options into a combined census question. Yet various studies find the Hispanic reporting of whiteness with the census-like (two-question) format to be highly inconsistent, difficult to substantively interpret, and, most concerning, inaccurate (Telles 2008; JBS International, Inc. 2011; Dowling 2014). These studies show that when researchers use a combined question format or follow-up interviews they find that many Latinos who report as white under a two question (census-like) format explain that they do not actually identity as white.

In the contemporary U.S. context, many Latinos and Latino scholars reject whiteness as the social reality of Hispanics (Gómez 2007; Telles 2008; Dowling 2014).

The formal categorization of whiteness attributed to Latinos is a contradiction of the “one-drop rule” experienced by Americans of black descent and the racialized experiences of Latinos and multi-racial persons within the U.S. Including Hispanic origins in a census race and origin question may better allow Latinos to self-report as they see themselves. According to Julie Dowling,[6] a University of Illinois sociologist and author of *Mexican Americans and the Question of Race* (2014), “asking for ‘race or origin’ accommodates the different ways Latinos may see their identities.”

There are also other implications, Dowling continues, “my concern has actually been that people interpret the census racial responses for Latinos as a measure of skin color, when for many (or even most) it is not. Moreover,…the news media has at times reported that Latinos are assimilating and no longer facing discrimination based on the number who label as ‘white.’ And this really concerns me, especially because my research reveals that Mexican Americans in Texas are highly racialized despite the fact that many identify as white on the census.”

An additional issue is the equitable treatment of Latinos, which was reported as a concern in the AQE study when focus group participants discussed the two-question race and ethnicity format (JBS International, Inc. 2011). Dowling characterizes this as a disadvantage in the current census format, "many Latinos felt stigmatized by the separate question, while non-Latinos thought it was preferential treatment."

Past researchers have characterized the distinction between U.S. race and ethnic categories to be arbitrary. In 1997, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) [7] recommended that Directive No. 15 combine the race and ethnicity categories into one question. AAA noted that "race and ethnicity categories used by the Census over time have been based on a mixture of principles and criteria, including national origin, language, minority status and physical characteristics." Three census forms later, it is not clear if all American origins will be combined into one race and ethnicity question or separated across two questions. Planning for the 2020 census at the U.S. Census Bureau is still underway, and a final decision has not been made yet (U.S. Census Bureau 2014b).

Amidst concerns about data accuracy and validity, research suggests that the present census (two-question) format may compromise the scientific, legal, and social value of the important (and costly) information collected on race and ethnicity. The U.S. Census Bureau has a mandate to collect the national data that underlie civil rights enforcement, budgetary allocations, and electoral representation. It is a critical national and local concern that the agency may not be appropriately measuring identity for Latinos—the second largest ethno-racial group in the country (U.S. Census Bureau 2011).

Notes

1. The terms Latino and Hispanic are used interchangeably in this article.
2. The standard OMB race categories are White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
3. The AQE tested format includes the option of choosing multiple race and ethnic origin responses.
4. The percent of Latinos that self-identify as black reported in the combined question format is found to be comparable to the percent of self-identified Afro-Latinos using a separate question format (JBS International, Inc. 2011). Other research shows that responses to the census-like format generally do not match color for Latinos despite some interpretations in the media that race reporting by Latinos reveal color variation within the group (Telles 2008, Rodriquez 2000, Dowling 2014). Per Telles, "if persons that are perceived as Afro-Latino don't see themselves that way, then we are unlikely to pick that up in a Census question on self-identification."
5. Dr. Edward Telles is author of *Pigmentocracies: Ethnicity, Race, and Color in Latin America* (2014) and *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican-Americans, Assimilation, and Race* (2008).
6. Dr. Julie Dowling is author of *Mexican Americans and the Question of Race.*
7. According to correspondence with the American Sociological Association (ASA) for this article, the ASA does not have available official statements directly related to the 1997 OMB federal standards (or the recent AQE format testing at the U.S. Census Bureau) on race and ethnicity.

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Media and Social Movements Scholar Traces Source of Letter M

JL Johnson
George Mason University

I spent last spring writing my dissertation proposal on social movement communication and the social structure of digital media, sometimes taking walks around my Mount Pleasant neighborhood in northwest Washington, D.C. A sign announcing the beginning of a school zone stands at the end of my street. Stuck to the sign is a black and white sticker of a cryptic capital letter M. On bad writing days, the M was a reminder that I was struggling to articulate a research project on movements and media. On good writing days, the M inspired wonder. What is this M? Who put it here? Why? What does it stand for?

I would walk east from my apartment to Columbia Heights, a neighborhood nearing total gentrification that historically has been a working class neighborhood for African Americans and Latinos. Ruby Tuesday now welcomes you at the intersection of 14th Street and Monroe Street. A community institution, the Hispanic Theatre Gala, survives next door, Z Burger offers grilled burgers, milkshakes, and fries for $15 at the end of the block. Across the street, corporations display their singularly colored banners at the maximum height allowed by city law. Bright red signs announce Target, the Washington Sports Club, and Staples. Best Buy's neon yellow complements the attractions. Columbia Heights Metro Station sprawls out belowground. Expansive luxury apartment buildings stretch out to the playgrounds of Lincoln Middle School. The campus rests at the intersection of 16th Street and Irving Street.

16th Street serves as both an actual and invisible line that separates nearly gentrified Columbia Heights from my neighborhood, gentrifying yet resilient Mount Pleasant.

16th Street serves as both an actual and invisible line that separates nearly gentrified Columbia Heights from my neighborhood, gentrifying yet resilient Mount Pleasant. By invisible line, I mean that community politics and neighborhood zoning rules seem to keep corporations at bay. By resilient, I mean that small businesses survive by servicing working-class Latinos. The presence of three Laundromats signals the absence of luxury apartment buildings. Haydees offers cheap enchiladas and margaritas. A bodega's sign reads, "*Los Primos Productos Latino*." This is not to say that Mount Pleasant is not gentrifying. A citywide Thai restaurant chain has established a location in the neighborhood. A locally sourced pizza place flourishes. An organic bistro is replacing a bar. The inexplicably named Marx Café hosts no communist conclaves, but its line-dancing night is popular with young white professionals. Sociologically, a conspiratorial link between line-dancing white professionals and the overthrow of capitalism would be ideal. Nonetheless, the M sticker near my apartment was not for Marx Cafe.

Mount Pleasant Street, for all intents and purposes, runs diagonally from Park to Columbia. It is very short. A nondescript, red-bricked structure sits halfway down the road. This is La Casa, a multiuse community building. During one of my walks, I looked through a window to the right of La Casa's front door, seeing the fair-trade offerings of an African boutique. Then there it was, to the left of La Casa's front door, a small sign, white and blue, featuring the very M stuck to the school sign beside my apartment building. And unbelievably, the M stood for Movement Media, the combination of my two subfields.

After a few pass-bys, I found courage to cold-call the offices of Movement Media. I learned that Ryan Fletcher founded Movement Media in 2013 after spending more than a decade in a workers collective called Mintwood Media. Mintwood provided affordable communications and public relations management to non-profits and progressive groups engaging in social change oriented projects. Mintwood offered everything from campaign management to media coaching and digital media strategy. Ryan grew Movement Media out of Mintwood with a similar yet more focused mission to "create and anchor public relations and communications infrastructure to build movements, sustain momentum and influence social change." Through its mission statement, the firm encourages within its own organization the very communicative relationships that it seeks to foster between movement groups and the public sphere. Movement Media focuses on under-heard stories. It seeks "healthy, honest, effective, and horizontally empowering dialogue." Importantly, it serves as an outlet for social movement communication workers to do globally relevant projects that pay a livable wage.

Movement Media's current clients can be loosely grouped under the umbrella of the political consumption movement, with a particular emphasis on food and environment issues. Forest Ethics is a non-profit organization supporting environment rights work to protect endangered ecosystems. It has helped transform Fortune 500 companies into best-practice corporations that better protect endangered forests and wildlife. Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap is a fair trade company. It produces organic soaps and oils while supporting campaigns for Animal Rights and GMO labeling. In the weeks following my visit to their offices, Ryan and his team of "activists by heart and publicists by trade" were extremely busy helping Fair World Project participate in the People's Climate March that took place on September 21st 2014 in New York City, where they petitioned the United Nations to prioritize small farmers in the fight against climate change.

Concurrent with the People's Climate March, Movement Media assisted in organizing and publicizing the 21st annual hemp industry conference and Compassion Over Killing's annual Vegan Festival, both in Washington, D.C. It was not the best time to host a pesky sociologist, but Ryan graciously answered a few questions by email.

JL: You worked for Mintwood Media before founding Movement Media. Can you talk about your work there, and what about it led you to found Movement Media?

Ryan Fletcher: I joined the Mintwood Media Collective in 2002. Mintwood began in the spring of 2000 as a worker-owned and operated collective providing public relations and communications services to non-profit and social justice organizations. The collective was founded by a group of activists in Washington, D.C. who came together shortly after organizing for the Mobilization for Global Justice, a large protest and rally targeting the April 2000 meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank that focused on economic and environmental justice. Coming off the heels of the World Trade Organization shut down in Seattle, Washington, in November 1999, the project was founded during a really explosive and powerful moment of social movement activity. That energy went into the creation and continuance of Mintwood Media.

Mintwood began as a four person collective. It was basically an umbrella for activists working as contractors to share overhead and lean on each other for logistical, administrative and strategic collaboration. We did this work to throw ourselves into social movement work, and the collective helped fund many unpaid activist projects that each of us where involved in. From 2009 -2013, we ceased to operate as a collective when three out of five of the business partners left. When my business partner began preparing to launch a local ballot initiative, it became clear that it was time to end Mintwood and create a new entity that could better meet the needs of my clients. I formally launched Movement Media on October 1, 2013.

JL: What is the strategic significance of a Washington, D.C, location, and why Mount Pleasant?

Ryan Fletcher: I was born and raised in the D.C. area. It's my hometown. Politically, I think it's a logical place to be an activist. Our clients appreciate that we are situated here and that we know the D.C. political landscape and media. I live in Mount Pleasant. There's a rich progressive history here of social struggle.

There's a rich progressive history here of social struggle.

We are headquartered in La Casa, which has been an important space in the community for decades. It's been a central meeting space for local organizers and activists. Benefits, film screenings and other progressive events happen there regularly. These are related to immigrant rights, housing and economic justice, environmental sustainability, anarchist, socialist and other left organizing, you name it. It also provides office space to the D.C. Language Access Coalition, a Fair Trade store, another progressive media project, and our business.

JL: Are Movement Media clients usually based in Washington, D.C.? How does a movement group partner with Movement Media? Can you describe the process?

Ryan Fletcher*:* Right now, none of our regular clients is based in D.C. But many of them have staff here doing lobbying or other work. We are often hired to provide support for protests or other events in D.C. Location plays an important role in that. Many of our clients hire us in part because we provide a D.C. presence for their work. Typically we meet our clients by word of mouth and referrals from past or current clients. Occasionally we reach out to campaigns or organizations that are interested in working with, but mostly groups contact us. We learn about a group's issue and try to figure out *if* and *how* we can help. Business is steady and sustainable enough that we can make choices based on whether or not the issue "speaks" to us and we can play an effective role in helping the organization meet its communications goals. Often we are too busy to take on new projects and will refer folks to allies who do similar work, like Aid and Abet or D.C. Action Lab.

JL (after emailing a photo of the M): This sticker is on the back of a sign near my apartment, at the intersection of Newtown Street and 18th Street. It's you guys right? How did it get there? What's the story?

Ryan Fletcher*:* Not sure how the sticker got up on the sign. But yes, that's definitely one of our stickers! I'm a fan of all things street art and love the concept of building intrigue and curiosity through imagery. The consistent placement of subtle and sharp images around the city is always something I enjoy seeing. Not sure how that sticker got up - but hopefully people see that sticker and wonder, what's the M? What does it mean? It's a fun way to engage with the urban landscape. I love artists like Banksy and Swoon, and even D.C.'s own BORF who do this stuff on an even more explosive scale.

We don't know who put up the sticker, so the mystery of the M is not completely solved. Nonetheless, Ryan might be pleased to know that my interaction with the sticker led to the discovery of his firm, and hopefully their work will interest sociologists looking at social movements and communications.

Isn't that like most things sociological? We pursue clues, unveil much, but ultimately struggle to find clean and direct causes of our personal experiences.

Gender, Work and Class in the Great Depression and the Great Recession

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ASA Presidential-Elect Address to DCSS

Friday, January 23, 2015
6:30pm

Ruth Milkman
2015 ASA President-Elect
Professor of Sociology,
City University of New York
Graduate Center

Hosted by ASA
Open to the public.

Markets in the Name of Socialism, Planning in the Name of Capitalism

Johanna Bockman
DCSS President

Many scholars have assumed that Americans converted Eastern Europe, Latin America, and other parts of the world to free market capitalism by propagating mainstream American economics abroad. Mainstream American economics does present an abstract world of rational individuals and rational prices responding to supply and demand on perfect markets. Further confirming this view, famous economists, such as Milton Friedman, continually praised free market capitalism and condemned state intervention, central planning, and socialism.

Moreover, economists trained in the United States often work in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, imposing free-market policies on those abroad. These economists seem fundamentally different from economists in the former socialist world, who, it is assumed, practiced Marxism-Leninism and called for the dismantling of free markets and imposition of centralized state planning. Yet, when we place the United States within a transnational context, we can see that its mainstream economics is rather tenuously tied to markets and capitalism and that many of the supposedly capitalist reforms thought to have been imposed by the United States abroad in fact have their origins in local attempts to perfect socialism.[1] How might markets be quite socialist? How might planning be capitalist?

In my book *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism*, I go back to the nineteenth-century beginnings of what would eventually become mainstream neoclassical economics in the United States and take this history up to just after 1989. Being a historical comparative sociologist, I would never use the tools of neoclassical economics. However, understanding neoclassical ideas over time and in transnational context has helped me make sense of many trends we sociologists find interesting: neoliberalism, the Washington Consensus, economic development, and many socialisms.

My research originally started in socialist Hungary, where I had attended Karl Marx University of Economics as an exchange student and took courses with teachers who sounded more like Milton Friedman and Ronald Reagan than like Karl Marx. During my later dissertation research, I found that Hungarian economists had been calling for both markets *and* socialism since the 1950s. My research became transnational and multi-sited as I followed the paths of economists who worked with each other across the Cold-War divide between the socialist East and the capitalist West. Economists from socialist Eastern Europe told me that they worked with, for example, economists at Harvard or at Stanford during the 1960s and 1970s. Why did economists in capitalist countries and their counterparts in socialist countries find it interesting and useful to work together? It had something to do with economists' unexpected understandings of markets and planning. I had to look further back in history to find the answer.

Economics flowing from East to West

Marginalist economics, what would become neoclassical economics, formed in the 1870s in Austria, Britain, and Switzerland. These economists criticized Karl Marx and the labor theory of value because, they argued, value was not determined by labor but rather by supply and demand. They also understood markets as the most efficient way to allocate goods. These economists determined that they could describe the movements of supply, demand, and prices through a series of mathematical equations. In the 1890s, Vilfredo Pareto, who would later become so important to sociology, surprisingly stated that economists could ignore real markets and instead use these equations describing markets to plan the economy. A central planner could, therefore, use these tools for planning. As a result, neoclassical economists have continued to understand markets and central planning as mathematically identical and, thus, equally efficient, at least in theory.

Furthermore, these economists had long criticized Karl Marx and other socialists for refusing to describe the future socialist world. According to them and Marx himself, Marxism was, in fact, a critique of capitalism, not a science of socialism. Karl Polanyi (1922) similarly recognized that only marginalist economics provided a model for a socialist economy: *Marx had indeed created a theory of the capitalist economy; it however consciously avoids mentioning a theory of the socialist economy. The only theory of a market-less economy that we have at our disposal originated from the marginalist school and indeed as the theory of a closed economy. So, paradoxical as it might sound in many ears, a communist administered economy could turn only to this school to found its own theoretical economics.*

> Marginalist economics provided not just a tool, but a blueprint, for socialism.

In the 1920s, neoclassical economists developed their theories and complex mathematics in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Berlin. The Soviet Union then exiled many neoclassical economists, who went to work in the lively intellectual worlds of Vienna and Berlin. With the rise of the Nazis and the coming war, many of these economists brought their professional knowledge to the United States. There they found work in the military and in universities often on military contracts. Some economists later worked within large corporations, including IBM. Both those working for the military and for corporations within a capitalist system continued to practice planning as they had in the planned economies of Eastern Europe, and they thus brought new planning methods for economies into these large organizations. Planning turned out to be as important for capitalism as for socialism.

Other neoclassical economists remained in socialist Eastern Europe and used their professional training to develop a variety of socialisms. Some worked in the national planning offices. Others criticized central planning as carried out in their own countries and called for market socialisms based on the models of neoclassical economics. In socialist Yugoslavia, for example, economists worked towards dismantling the state, creating completely free markets, and converting state property into the “social property” of cooperatives and worker-managed factories and other enterprises. These cooperative enterprises would, ideally, compete on a free market, thus realizing a socialism of actual workers’ power and the stateless society all agreed was the goal of communism. In the minds of these economists, the Soviet Union and the United States could only create statism, while truly socialist countries could establish fully competitive markets and radical workers' power. Thus, they used markets in the name of socialism.

Economists East and West found both markets and planning professionally interesting and useful. Those outside of economics often label economists as either for free markets (Milton Friedman) or against free markets (maybe Paul Krugman or Joseph Stiglitz). Whatever their politics, in their professional work, economists do not choose between markets and planning because both markets and planning are located at the core of their professional work. Economists from many different political orientations often pursue quite similar professional practices. Paul Krugman (2007) has rejected the politics and ideology of Milton Friedman, while stating: "I regard him as a great economist and a great man," which he similarly espoused more recently (Krugman 2013). Similarly, Paul Samuelson (1983) supported Keynesianism and Friedman's professional work: "I could disagree 180º with [Friedman's] policy conclusion and yet concur in diagnosis of the empirical observations and inferred probabilities" (pp. 5–6). This shared neoclassical practice enabled Milton Friedman to work for a short time in the socialist Yugoslav central bank (Friedman and Friedman 1998: 291-293). Finally, in contrast, Milton Friedman rejected the professional work of Friedrich von Hayek, while accepting his politics, because Hayek no longer practiced neoclassical economics.

Mainstream neoclassical economists do differ over the type of institutions they recommend to organize the economy – economic democracy or technocratic planning, forms of property, and so on. On the one hand, by the late 1980s, planners and other more authoritarian neoclassical economists in the East and West continued to support more hierarchical institutions, such as large-scale corporations and a strong disciplinary state, deemed necessary for both competitive markets and central planning (e.g., Lipton and Sachs 1990). On the other hand, other neoclassical economists understood markets and planning as necessarily embedded in decentralized socialist institutions that would allow political and economic democracy (e.g., Stiglitz 1994). The usual focus on market versus planning, Hayek versus Keynes, has obscured the nature of neoclassical economics, neoliberalism, and what was at stake in 1989.

Capitalism + Socialism = ?

What was at stake in 1989?

Throughout the 1980s economists in Eastern Europe called for "genuine markets" and for radical economic reforms, but these calls remained within a socialist framework. Eastern European economists had long envisioned reform as a process that could move forward or backward, as "stages" or "waves" of reform, but essentially as a linear process, a single path toward a more successful socialist economy. The experience of recurring political obstacles to reform had made economists interested in radical economic reform, which, in the context of the late 1980s, meant "genuine," competitive markets and socialist institutions, especially socially owned, non-state enterprises with worker self-management. The idea of achieving a pure form of market socialism that brought together competitive markets and socialist institutions evoked a great deal of excitement in late 1980s Eastern Europe and elsewhere. The transition offered the possibility of radical economic reform and the final realization of market socialism with actual workers' power.

After 1989, however, the political opportunity structure changed. Political and economic elites interested in centralized authority in both corporations and the state shifted the policy discussion from socialist transition to capitalist transition. Only then did American neoclassical economics flow from West to East. Economic consultants, usually unaware of earlier East-West discussions and the continuous neoclassical work during socialism, found an unexpected consensus in favor of competitive markets and against Soviet state socialism.[2] A strong state – much like neoclassical economics' central planner – imposed neoliberal policies that undermined the markets, the businesses, the international trade, and the worker self-management developed during socialism. This destruction was done rhetorically in the name of markets and in practice in the name of old and new economic elites and hierarchies.

Fundamentally, neoliberalism privatized public goods. What characterizes neoliberalism is that individuals dispossessed societies of a variety of socialist products and institutions: companies, mines, workers' resorts, cooperatives, squats, money accumulated through socialist trade and production, as well as socialist ideas or goals, such as workers' power, decentralization, and so on. Looking back to Keynesianism and the New Deal, we can see these as appropriating the products of 1930s state socialist movements with the goal of saving capitalism. Similarly, more recently, neoliberalism appropriates the products of socialist and other non-capitalist movements with the goal, again, of saving capitalism. Therefore, 1989 involved accumulation by dispossession and the privatization of social property rather than a conflict between markets and planning.

Notes

1. Americanization narratives assume that the active agents are American, while the rest of the world remains passively vulnerable to indoctrination and conversion. As with other scholars (Eyal 2003; Gille 2010; Lemon 2008; Rogers 2010), I realized that such assumptions are incorrect. During socialism, Eastern European countries had their own traditions of neoliberalism or traditions that could be distorted into neoliberalism. Recognizing the Eastern European origins of neoliberalism allows us to move away from U.S.-centrism or (West-)Euro-centrism. In this paragraph, one could replace "American" with "European" or "West European" to talk also about Westernization.
2. Gil Eyal and I talk about this process (Bockman and Eyal 2002). Recently, I wrote a short explanation of neoliberalism intended for a general audience (Bockman 2013).

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