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On the Cover: Border Control Stop, Northern Border, 1920. Source: United States Customs and Immigration Services History Office and Library.

Contributors

Amitai Etzioni
Randy Lynn
J.L. Johnson
Briana Pocratsky
Maria Valdovinos
Emily McDonald

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Our team is made up of editor Y. Shaw-Taylor, and graduate students, including managing editor Briana Pocratsky and (volunteer) feature editors J.L. Johnson, Maria Valdovinos, Emily McDonald and Carol Petty.

Write for *The Sociologist*.
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Contact the managing editor
bpocrats@masonlive.gmu.edu
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Bonds of Community, Points of Individualism

Conversation with Amitai Etzioni

On December 14, 2016, The Sociologist (TS) interviewed Amitai Etzioni, who is the first University Professor of the George Washington University. From 1987 to 1989, he served as the Thomas Henry Carroll Ford Foundation Professor at the Harvard Business School. He served as Senior Advisor to the White House from 1979 to 1980. Professor Etzioni served as the president of the American Sociological Association from 1994 to 1995. Outside of academia, Professor Etzioni's voice is frequently heard in The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal and in appearances on network television. In 2016, a bill was introduced in Congress to implement his proposal to save 25,000 Syrian children. He is the author of 24 books. Below are excerpts from the interview.

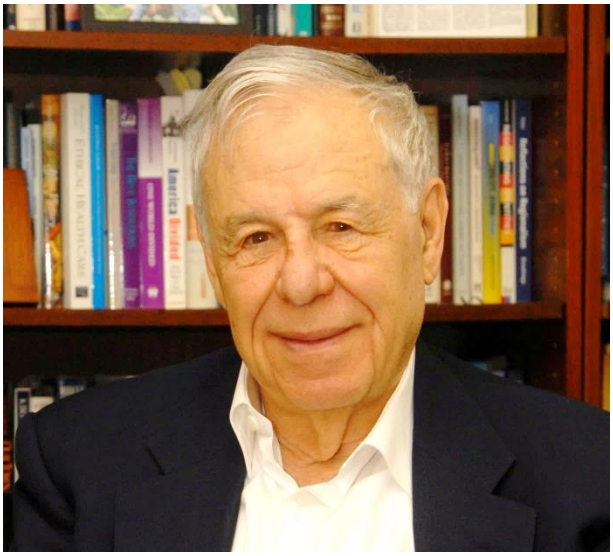
TS: What are the three most important insights you can share from your distinguished career?

Amitai Etzioni: One is that there are no good wars—even when the cause is just—there are no good victories. All sides end up suffering; that was my personal experience when I was in combat. And ever since then, I have used my writing and being active to try to prevent wars and violence. My second insight is: if you want to be an active academic, you have to pay for it. Many of your colleagues will not appreciate it.

So I advise my colleagues who plan to be politically active to note that if you want to be in the kitchen you must be ready to stand the heat. Finally, this might be the most difficult one to follow; we spend so much time and our energies on academic politics, the less you fuss about them, the more contributions you can make to society.

TS: How has sociology improved our world?

Amitai Etzioni: I will give you a very precise and short answer: far from enough. I think sociologists have excellent tools, to help change society, much better than economists, much better than psychologists, but we—many of us, not all of us—are into this science game. You cannot publish an article in many journals without some regression analysis or some highfalutin academic jargon and you miss the kind of articles that C. Wright Mills, Daniel Bell and Robert Nisbet wrote with strong intellectual



Source: Amitai Etzioni

and public power. I guess there is room for academic papers, in the narrow sense of the term. What sociology can do for the world is that we could do more work for change. I know that there are many urgent missions now and sociologists would do so much better than, for instance, the Generals. Look what happened in Iraq and Afghanistan; many lives could have been saved and billions of dollars could have been saved if sociologists would be more active; would be listened to by the White House and Congress.

TS: How do we get the people in power to listen to sociologists?

Amitai Etzioni: Surely part of it is, whether you have something significant to offer. There are two sides to it. It is often the case that it is not only that they won't listen to us, but we don't often have a solid shared opinion. The economists, they have shared storylines. We don't. If you call 5 sociologists, you get 5 different answers.

TS: So the problem is lack of consensus?

All communities, by definition, exclude some people. Communities have limited membership…

…the project to build one American society… has not been finished.

Amitai Etzioni: Yes, lack of consensus not in the political sense, but in a scientific sense. I once tried a simple sentence: "individual action is, to a large extent, determined by the group or groups of which the person is a member."

I thought it was a completely safe sentence; but there were a lot of people who thought you could change people one individual at a time. I could not get my colleagues to sign off on the idea.

Economists also disagree with each other, but take free-trade, for instance, most economists will sign off on free trade. I don't know anything that all or most sociologists will sign off on. We would have to have a roundtable for several years before we can get to them!

TS: Could there be a project to compile the contributions that sociology has made?

Amitai Etzioni: When I say my prayers every evening, I pray for that; God has not delivered that yet!

TS: If you were to pick the top findings, based on your distinguished scholarship, what would be your top choices?

Amitai Etzioni: I would say bonds of community, the exaggerating points of individualism, and the most important force for social change are social movements, not parties, not individuals, not leaders, but social movements.

TS: In terms of racial and ethnic relations, do you think the U.S. is moving closer to the diversity within unity ideal or are we moving closer to the American apartheid?

Amitai Etzioni: I think there are still high tensions among the racial groups, as you can see from their different descriptions of reality and surely the Trump Campaign has contributed to the tensions. On one hand, we are not proceeding in a good direction. On the other hand, despite these very troubling developments, the U.S. is doing much better than Japan, South Korea or most of Europe in these matters. We have a long way to go in the U.S. but oddly enough we are doing better than many societies.

TS: Why is the U.S. doing better?

Amitai Etzioni: This is because the other countries are highly homogenous middle-class societies. Take Denmark and Sweden, which are not used to having racial diversity; the U.S., because it was built on immigration to begin with, has much higher level of diversity and it has learned to deal with that. The other countries never had to and never had this level of diversity. Germany now has about 1 million Muslims.

TS: What are the problems of group identity, when it comes to fostering inter-community relations?

There has to be an opportunity for a shared value or mission in enough parts to override particularistic commitments.

Amitai Etzioni: The only way to foster relations is members of two or more groups realize that they belong to a larger community. All communities, by definition, exclude some people. Communities have limited membership and in order for members not to get hostile or confrontational towards members of other communities, they also, at the same time, have to see themselves as members of a larger community.

This is what happened after the Civil War; before the Civil War there were two different societies in the U.S. and we paid a very tragic price. In the 1870s the project to build one American society advanced, though that project has not been finished.

There has to be an opportunity for a shared value or mission in enough parts to override particularistic commitments. I am very worried about community relations in the U.S. and quite troubled that we are about to enter a dark age. Internationally, it is not clear to me where we are going. I just agreed with the University of Virginia Press to put to bed my book *Avoiding War with China*, and so I think if we can avoid major war, that should be our target for international relations.

TS: Who is your hero or mentor; who has inspired you?

Amitai Etzioni: When I came out of the Army, I was a student of a philosopher called Martin Buber; he was a pacifist and a strong communitarian and he had a lot of influence on me and I continue to embrace his vision – I never became a pacifist but I became a peacemaker because of my experience in war.

What We Can Learn from the Debate over Educational Technology in Schools

Randy Lynn

"We're here to be humiliated!"
"He's here to document the abuse!"
"Write this down—harassment!"

These were some of the statements made to and about me on my first day of fieldwork at Catholic Academy. The aggrieved party was Nicolette, a Spanish teacher in her early 60s. And the "abuse" was a controversial educational technology initiative for which the teachers at her school were being trained.

The use of digital technologies in schools is a hotly contested topic. But public debates usually focus on biology and pedagogy, rather than the sociological stakes. Having had some firsthand experience as an educational technology specialist before I became a sociologist, I knew there was much to be gained from studying the messy and sometimes fierce struggles among administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders.

So I conducted a total of 73 interviews, focus groups, and observations in two suburban high schools in the same large, Midwestern city. One was a public high school ("Public High") serving a mostly low-income, racially diverse student population. The other was an elite but financially struggling college preparatory academy ("Catholic Academy"), attempting to stay afloat through a unique partnership with an educational technology startup company. The results of my study led me to propose five recommendations relevant to parents, educators, and policymakers.

The assumption that all members of the "digital generation" have already acquired necessary technological skills is a stereotype…

Close the digital divide among students

An especially important need is to close the "digital divide" between economically disadvantaged students, such as those at Public High, and their more affluent counterparts at Catholic Academy. One such divide is a lack of access: students at Public High did not always have access to computers or printers at home. However, these students weren't given chances to complete assignments using school resources, and as a result were often required to bear additional, unnecessary burdens in order to complete their schoolwork.

Teachers should also consider the hidden costs and obstacles as they create assignments.

Another divide is a disparity of technological skills. Teachers at Public High falsely assumed that their students, as members of the "digital generation," had already acquired the necessary skills to use technologies, and were surprised to find that many had not.

The most effective way to address these problems, of course, would be to increase funding in impoverished school districts. But there are additional steps that could be taken as well. Technologies in schools should be made available to students who don't have them at home, so that lack of access isn't a determinant of academic success. Teachers should also consider the hidden costs and obstacles as they create assignments.

Allowing students to submit assignments digitally, for example, means disadvantaged students don't have to pay for paper to print their assignments—yet many teachers insisted that students must provide printouts.

Economically disadvantaged students also urgently require remedial training in basic technological skills. The assumption that all members of the "digital generation" have already acquired necessary technological skills is a stereotype that fails to recognize the vast disparities of experiences that exist among young people.

It also reproduces class inequalities, as schools wrongly presume that instruction in this area is not necessary, and as a result, these unskilled students remain at a disadvantage as they enter higher education or the job market. If time can't be created during the academic year, summer may be an ideal time to address this problem, due to the wide body of

research suggesting that summer learning loss contributes to the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students.

Make more effective investments

Educational technologies are extremely expensive. At Public High, the school couldn't provide many resources, forcing students and teachers to bear many of the costs as they brought their own technologies into the classroom.

…many teachers saw technologies as an erosion of their autonomy, while those who felt positively about technologies saw them as a way to enhance their autonomy.

At Catholic Academy, where every student had a laptop, the school spent $100,000 annually to provision a student body of only a few hundred. At all but the most affluent schools, the best use of funds is an investment in inexpensive yet effective hardware and software, so that funds will remain available to meet the formidable needs of technical support and professional development. But the pressures on school and district administrators encourage them to prioritize dazzling yet inefficient investments instead.

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Public High, for example, had equipped about one-third of their classrooms with flashy and expensive smart boards. As a result, a few teachers were well-equipped, while the rest had to scrape together whatever they could, when more prudent spending could have properly equipped all teachers. Parents and other members of school communities should be aware of this administrative temptation, and resist such flashy initiatives.

Provide better support to teachers

At both schools, some teachers were very skilled with technologies, while others had hardly any technological skills. Most unskilled teachers, like Nicolette, were curious and willing to experiment with new technologies. But they were essentially asked to learn a whole new set of skills that introduced delays and disruptions into their already hectic workflows, when what they really needed was time and support to learn at a slower pace.

As a result, optional development of the sort offered in Public High's district, resulted in lackluster participation during the school year, while mandatory development during the school year, of the sort required at Catholic Academy, produced strong feelings of resentment.

Educators, rather than dismissing student complaints as misguided adolescent angst, should take their discontentment seriously and respect their opinions…

The only model that seemed to yield success was a once-per-week summer session at Catholic Academy, with teachers grouped according to their existing technological abilities, which provided additional support to a few of the more deficient teachers.

Other schools should consider implementing such a model, rather than attempting to force more work upon already overburdened teachers during the school year. Ideally, teachers should be compensated for their attendance at these workshops—with a small stipend, for example—to recognize their commitment, and to avoid creating the appearance that attendance at such sessions is punitive.

Directly address the working conditions of teachers

Discussions about technologies at both schools revolved around debates about what was in the "best interests" of the students. But this admirable focus on the students' well-being led many teachers to neglect their own interests. As underpaid, overwhelmed, and under-supported workers, many teachers saw technologies as an erosion of their

autonomy, while those who felt positively about technologies saw them as a way to enhance their autonomy. But teachers tended instead to attribute such differences of opinion to other variables, such as age or a psychological "resistance to change."

As a result, educators were very much divided among themselves regarding the use of technologies, instead of unified around their common interests. This was compellingly illustrated at Catholic Academy, where the school attempted to partner with an educational technology startup company. The partnership was extremely controversial, as teachers were required to produce 20-25 videos during the school year, even if they had no intention of using them in their classes. Although the partnership was eventually abandoned, teachers at the school could not mount an effective, organized resistance, even though it was an initiative that provoked widespread discontent.

Involve students in decisions about educational technologies

For all the talk I heard regarding the "best interests" of students, most decisions about how to implement educational technologies were made behind closed doors, in meetings among teachers, administrators, and other adult stakeholders. Students were conspicuously absent from all decision-making processes.

Yet the students, in my conversations with them, revealed that they understood very well the struggles, dilemmas, and inefficiencies in their own schools—sometimes even better than the teachers. Educators, rather than dismissing student complaints as misguided adolescent angst, should take their discontentment seriously and respect their opinions—especially when these opinions contradict educators' own ideas about who young people are, and who they should become.

It will be important, as technologies continue to be adopted in schools, that they are truly used to promote students' best interests. That means the technologies should not be used as superficial window dressing, or treated as a new market for companies to "disrupt." The educational technologies should, instead, be used to empower teachers and students and advance their common interests.

Randy Lynn's scholarly work has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. His latest project is the Few Years' Resolution initiative (www.fewyearsresolution.com).

Tuesday Night Lights

J.L. Johnson

Friday Night Lights

In 1988, George H. W. Bush emerged from a private plane in Odessa for what would be his only visit to the small Texas city during his presidential campaign. Addressing the crowd assembled at the airfield, the elder Bush relayed his love and admiration for Texas football. He reminded the assembly that he had lived in the area for the last eight years, during which time he attended a Permian Panthers high school football game for one fluorescently lit Friday night.

Now Bush is asking the Texans in the crowd for their vote, seamlessly weaving into his stump speech the vocabulary of football, linking community and traditional values to those deeply felt codes of pride and competition ritualistically enacted when the Panthers take the field. In 1988, the city of Odessa overwhelmingly voted for George H. W. Bush, on his way to becoming the 41st President of the United States.

Tuesday Night Primaries

On February 9, 2016, Greg Popovich, affectionately known as Pop, the basketball genius (responsible for another legendary Texan sports dynasty in the San Antonio Spurs), resembling a curmudgeon grandfather with thinning white hair and a matching wizened beard, exited his locker room and sidled up to a television broadcaster for his live halftime interview. The National Basketball Association's (NBA) media partnerships include the contractual obligation that head coaches answer questions from reporters during nationally televised games, a sacrificial offering of access to televisual corporations anxious for new content. Pop famously despises the arrangement. He almost never answers more than the mandatory two questions and only offers curt answers. But his interview on the Tuesday night of the 2016 New Hampshire presidential primaries was a little different. Receiving a cue from television producers, the broadcaster asked Popovich about his struggles against the Miami Heat. "Thanks again guys. Pop, your impression of the first quarter?"

Pop says, "We're behind and they're ahead."

"Why is that?"

"They scored more points than we did. We were pretty crappy on defense. It's been fun."

Broadcasters know Popovich views them as trivial marketing ploys, and so this broadcaster gamely laughs. Pop smirks, pivoting on his left heel and taking a few quick steps toward his sideline. Then something extraordinary occurs. The broadcaster halts Pop's brusque walk by asking him, "Do you want election results?"

Pop is confused at first, but then the corners of his upturned lips flatten. He steps back into the microphone, asking, "Who is it?"

"It's Sanders and uh, Trump."

Pop frowns. His bottom lip drops. The smile in his eyes deteriorates into a bleak incredulity. He stares for a few seconds, sighs. It seemed like he has something to say, but then Pop's shoulders sag, he shakes his head, his eyes drop to the hardwood, and he turns around and slouches to his sideline.

Whether the Sanders or Trump primary victory dismayed Popovich was impossible to tell from the interaction. Close followers of the Spurs, like basketball fans more generally, might guess it was not Sanders. Though basketball and football are often lumped together with baseball as the Big Three popular major sports in America, football and basketball are arguably worlds apart. Basketball and football are at the center of two differently shaped galaxies, at times conditioning and at other times reinforcing diverging sets of moral and political schema and basic categories of thought about things social.

…the different structures of American football and basketball tell a different story about race and solidarity in America, one that sadly is more about power…

Is Greg Popovich the NBA's Bill Belichick?

Pop's stoicism resembles the quiet moodiness of Bill Belichick, the head coach of the National Football League's (NFL) New England Patriots. But claiming Belichick as Popovich's counterpart in the NFL would be inaccurate. Belichick seems to experience the pain of mandatory communications for different reasons than Pop.

If Popovich is your curmudgeon grandfather who nonetheless believes in the sanctity of his sport, Belichick is your uncommunicative shady uncle. To Belichick, transparency is weakness. Secrecy is strategic advantage. In accounting for Belichick's four NFL championships over the last seventeen years, we would need to reckon with more than his coaching and the quality of the play on the field.

Some manipulation and backstage nefariousness have certainly been factors, embroiling Belichick's teams, particularly his star quarterback Tom Brady, in no fewer than two publicly verified cheating scandals.

Basketball has been likened to participatory democracy… Football's division of labor unfurls like a liberal democracy.

Over the same timespan that New England has led the NFL in championships, Popovich's San Antonio Spurs have led the NBA in most championships won, tied with the Los Angeles Lakers. But Pop's controversies consist of mild league annoyances; for example, he opts to rest his star players throughout the season, even during nationally televised marquee match-ups. Much like his aversion to marketing ploys, Pop opts to do what is best for the health of his players and what increases their chances at having success during the playoffs, resting players strategically yet transparently.

Another key difference lies in the racial makeup of Pop and Belichick's teams. Pop's teams certainly do not resemble Belichick's teams in terms of nationality and ethnicity. The three best players during the San Antonio Spurs' championship era have been Tim Duncan, a center from the Virgin Islands, Manu Ginóbili, a forward from Argentina, and Tony Parker, a point guard from France. With a record number of global players joining the roster, the Spurs paradoxically have been the United Nations (UN) of the NBA. I say paradoxical because the team's Texan fan base, whatever of it exists, is likelier than not to distrust the cosmopolitanism and global institutionalism represented by the Spurs and the UN alike.

It's not as though the NFL has not reached for global participation. The NFL has recently made a concerted effort, with minimal success, at exporting its sport to a global audience, most obviously by staging games in England. Without similarly concerted effort, basketball has been the better loved American sport abroad. Professional basketball leagues exist in all major European states, in China, and in many South American countries. Of America's three most popular sports, the Olympics include only basketball. Onshore, football may be supplanting baseball as America's favorite pastime, but it does so provincially and, at some tacit level, somewhat arrogantly. Outside the U.S., folks put "football" in quotation marks or qualify it as American.

The context of Belichick's stoicism, unlike Pop, is parochial. The New England Patriots are no cosmopolitan outfit. Belichick's sport is populist. His secretive ways are celebrated. His reign consists of viewing rules as things to be massaged, bent, or broken, if certain results are desired. Not a cheater, the white superstar quarterback Tom Brady is All-American.

Differences of Race and Control in Football and Basketball

Dwelling on the differences in how football and basketball are played may seem trivial, but I want to say that those gaps in the architecture of the games reveal much about today's gulf in American thought on race and politics. Basketball places far fewer players on the court, and each basketball player is responsible for both offense and defense.

A football team resembles a modern corporation. There is a pronounced division of labor. Within a football team are more teams, offense, defense, and special teams. Within those separate teams are highly specialized units, each with its own unique skillset. Wide receivers are much smaller and faster than offensive linemen. Offensive linemen, stronger and gargantuan, protect the interior.

Source: pixabay.com

Émile Durkheim had something in mind like the modern structure of a football team when he argued that modern societies, in all their complexities and, especially, in their differences by race and class, would become bound by solidarity *despite* increasingly specialized, separate, and dependent units, because the mystifying work of the whole is what enables modern success.

But the different structures of American football and basketball tell a different story about race and solidarity in America, one that sadly is more about power over racial divisions.

While a lot of careful thought goes into the structure of a basketball contest, a game looks to casual fans like barely organized chaos. Basketball has been likened to jazz, but here I want to emphasize basketball as participatory democracy. Every player on the court will touch the ball often during a contest, and games occur frequently, three or four times a week. Although the coach develops and calls plays, the point guard exercises extraordinary discretion in changing the play or choosing an unscripted move toward the basket, to which teammates will react and improvise their play. Increasingly, all players might take the role of the point guard at some point during the game.

Source: pixabay.com

Forwards like LeBron James, or legend Magic Johnson assume some of the duties of a point guard during gameplay. Even more complicated, in today's game, seven-foot centers make three point baskets. Football's division of labor unfurls like a liberal democracy. Players might interact with coaches throughout the week, voicing concerns or offering feedback. Meetings are held, plans are worked out, but coaches take control on game day.

When your favorite team's offense goes on the field, you can trace a chain of command. A play gets called by the coach. Your quarterback huddles up the offensive units. Your team's offense fans out, runs a play, stops to take stock. Attention is fixed on the quarterback, the head coach's chosen representative, who takes possession, moves the players downfield, and seemingly leads the team to victory or defeat.

Two Quarterbacks

A year before Tom Brady was drafted by the New England Patriots, the Philadelphia Eagles selected Donovan McNabb second in the 1999 NFL draft, making him at the time the highest-drafted African-American quarterback in NFL history. Philadelphia fans attending the draft responded by booing McNabb. Claims that such a reaction was overtly racist were rejected by counterclaims that the jeers were caused by a fervent preference for Ricky Williams, the best college running back in 1998.

…unlike football, professional basketball seemed to be yielded to Black America and its cosmopolitan, global, and youth allies.

But not enough has been admitted about Rush Limbaugh and Curt Schilling, two provocateurs beloved by listeners of right-wing radio, who were implying on-air what many white Philadelphians were undoubtedly saying privately. Black men can't play quarterback. They aren't intelligent or responsible enough to be leaders. It was a combination of Philly's infamous sports incivility, a preference for a running back, race-based assumptions about the quarterback position, and the control of black bodies. Fans saw themselves as corporate stockholders with power over who gets drafted; running backs are likelier than quarterbacks to be black; and Donovan McNabb, the first African-American quarterback to be chosen as the immediate face and future of an NFL franchise, was publicly rejected.

Measured by wins, division championships, and individual statistics, McNabb proceeded to become the best quarterback in Philadelphia's franchise history, joining an elite company of only four NFL quarterbacks to pass for more than 30,000 yards and run for more than 3,000 yards in their careers. In 2004, McNabb steered the Eagles to an NFL championship game. McNabb's Eagles lost to Belichick and Brady's New England Patriots, costing McNabb his one chance to earn consensus as a future Hall of Famer. As it stands, sports writers debate whether McNabb should be enshrined at all. Too many Philadelphia fans and writers wrongly experienced the loss as McNabb's personal failure. A second public rejection ensued. Despite football's corporate structure as a team game and the multiple factors in any loss, Brady and McNabb were juxtaposed in black and white. Brady was the better quarterback. Brady possessed the truer skills to lead a team. McNabb ran too much and made poor decisions. Brady knew how to make a team great. McNabb was a loser.

The disproportionate handwringing over McNabb's performance concurred with Philadelphia's embrace of the basketball superstar

Allen Iverson. Jeering McNabb while cheering Iverson made sense only if one considers the different racial codes of morality and politics at play in their respective sports. Those audiences listening to right-wing radio dismissals of McNabb also heard that the NBA was out of control, yet, unlike football, professional basketball seemed to be yielded to Black America and its cosmopolitan, global, and youth allies. Iverson and the new era of basketball could be celebrated on their own terms, a celebration of a small victory in the 1990s culture war over race. Iverson was simply the stamp on the NBA as hip-hop, authentic, genuine, and urban.

Surely, this is all way too simple. With more time, we could detail the more complicated race tensions around NFL quarterbacks and Allen Iverson alike. We could further discuss the incorrectness of a common lament that Iverson caused too much one-on-one basketball, often code for undisciplined and out of control black behavior.

For their part, NBA owners, managers, and coaches have mostly cooperated in a tacit alignment with BLM, as well as socially progressive issues...

Iverson innovated some of the most complicated offensive sets of screen-and-rolls and cuts, but the point is that the ways of framing black professional athletes and their professional leagues, and responding to their moments of success and failure have been diverging since the 1990s.

Obviously, both sports employ white and black athletes, but there are far more white athletes in the NFL, and while a record number of African-American quarterbacks started in 2016, the quarterback position continues to be white-dominant. And given the quarterback position's disproportionate status in the outcomes of contests, by extension, the game of football is imagined to be under white control. For example, the criticism against Cam Newton, the first black quarterback to be selected outright as the NFL's most valuable player in 2015, was that he wasn't a "true" quarterback because he ran too much and danced after touchdowns.

The absurd controversy over the ascent of Newton, and especially his signature move, the Dab, evinces how whites continue to view a black quarterback: too flashy, arrogant, doesn't play the game right, makes poor decisions, and, unlike Tom Brady, cannot win consistently.

The NFL's division of labor has structured social protest differently. There have been fewer signs of team solidarity. Instead, different individuals have chosen smaller acts of collective alignment with BLM…

Black Lives Matter Protests in the NFL and NBA

The divergent framings of black athletes in basketball and football are reflected in our talk about race and politics, and for some of us, it may influence how we make decisions in a democracy. The NBA has been a crucial site of movement visibility for Black Lives Matter (BLM), and LeBron James has been one of BLM's most outspoken supporters. Like White America's reaction to Cam Newton's MVP selection, white feelings of loss of control were belied when, in 2010, James left Cleveland for Miami as a free agent. A survey[1] at the time found that whites were much likelier than blacks to express anger at James' decision. James has extended his freedom of thought and action to speaking out on social issues.

He has organized boycotts of mandatory warm-up suits, leading teammates in shows of solidarity with BLM. After Travon Martin's murder, for example, James and the Miami Heat wore black hoodies like the one worn by Martin on the night he was killed by a vigilante.

For a few weeks, a network of NBA superstars threatened to boycott games if the league did not speak out against the shootings of unarmed black men. For their part, NBA owners, managers, and coaches have mostly cooperated in a tacit alignment with BLM, as well as socially progressive issues more broadly.

The NFL's division of labor has structured social protest differently. There have been fewer signs of team solidarity. Instead, different individuals, in consultation with their teammates and coaches, have chosen smaller acts of collective alignment with BLM.

"I think what he's doing is disgraceful. Is he starting yet or is he still a second string quarterback?"

At the beginning of the NFL season, for example, Colin Kaepernick began kneeling during the national anthem to protest police brutality and extrajudicial killings of black men. Kaepernick, an African-American quarterback, was supported by his teammates, but his actions angered many Republican and socially conservative fans. That such disapproval of football players has gained significant traction relates to the fact that the team, as a metaphorical corporation, does not unite in shows of solidarity. At most, a handful of athletes kneel or hold up fists in a sign of Black Power and solidarity, and these athletes tend to know each other from their specialized units of play.

The 2016 NBA and NFL seasons and their different moments of racial politics coincided with the 2016 Presidential Election. On September 28, 2016, Bill O'Reilly, a pundit on Fox News (the cable channel preferred by most Republicans and many social conservatives) casuistically asked the Republican Party's nominee what he thought about a BLM protest in the NFL. O'Reilly asked, "Last night Colin Kaepernick said another bad thing about his country. You did own a professional football team. What would you do with Collin Kaepernick?"

Donald Trump staked his campaign on his billionaire status, promising Americans that he could pivot from his prowess as a multinational real estate tycoon and his donor status in America's political system. Trump said, "I think what he's doing is disgraceful. Is he starting yet or is he still a second-string quarterback?"

"Second-string," O'Reilly assured him, "But what do you do to him if you were the owner? What would you do?"

At his campaign events, Trump told mostly white and working class audiences that America was out of control. Cosmopolitans and global elites were endangering their lives, and only he was the law and order candidate able to restore America to its proper greatness. Trump said to O'Reilly, "He's making a tremendous amount of money. He's living the American dream. He's trying to make a point. But I don't think he is making it the correct way. Personally, if it was me, I would not be happy if I were the team owner, and I don't think I'm going to tell you what I would do…"

Trump is a real estate mogul who became a reality television star. In his televised competition shows, he would use a catchphrase, "You're fired." He would spit this at the end of a show to the contestant who had lost that week's episode. O'Reilly asked, "Would you fire him?"

"I wouldn't be happy," Trump said, "They are paying him all of this money. And I think what he is doing is very bad for the spirit of the country. At the same time, he has the right to protest and that's one of the beautiful things about the country."

During the campaign, Trump framed himself as the one candidate able to sort out the winners from the losers in America and make the country and economy what his supporters want. His political career essentially began as a publicity stunt to remove the first African-American President from office on the fabricated charge that he was not a real U.S. citizen. At campaign events, Trump has called Mexicans rapists and killers and black protesters losers, the people who are not making America great.

"I can't imagine being a Muslim right now or a woman or an African-American, Hispanic, a handicapped person. How disenfranchised they might feel."

O'Reilly pressed Trump, "But does he have the right to protest on your dime? Say you're the owner. It's your stadium. It's paying customers. It's your dime. This is right in your bailiwick. OK? So he's protesting on your dime doing something that offends you. Would you take action against him?"

"I'll tell you. Offends me, it does," Trump answered in characteristic fragments, "Especially since he's doing so well in terms of economically and so many other ways. I guess he probably lost a starting position because something happened to him. He went downhill fast. And, frankly, that's okay. But I would not be a happy camper."

On November 7, 2016, the night before the general election, Trump emerged from his gilded jet and addressed a crowd in New Hampshire's biggest city, Manchester. Trump bellowed about the New England Patriots' quarterback, known to be a good friend and Trump's frequent golfing

partner. Trump told the crowd, "Tom Brady called today, he said, Donald, I support you, you're my friend, and I voted for you." Trump added that the Patriots' head coach, Bill Belichick, sent him an endorsement letter. Trump quoted Belichick, "Congratulations on a tremendous campaign. You have dealt with an unbelievable slanted and negative media, and have come out beautifully." By reading Belichick's endorsement, Trump seamlessly incorporated into his stump speech Belichick's unapologetic winning ways, his ruthless secrecy, his sullen tenacity in producing championships, generating in the New England area a defensive team pride in the winningest NFL team of the past fifteen years.

Trump continued by quoting Belichick, "You've proved to be the ultimate competitor and fighter. Your leadership is amazing. I have always had tremendous respect for you, but the toughness and perseverance you have displayed over the past year is remarkable. Hopefully tomorrow's election results will give the opportunity to make America great again." Trump successfully drew a chain of command from himself, to New England's head coach, along to its star white quarterback, positioning himself atop and in control of a chain of command that many white football fans prefer to see every Sunday. Trump lost New Hampshire by the slimmest of margins, but he won Manchester on his way to becoming the 45th President of the United States.

Coda

The Friday after the election, Greg Popovich took his seat for a pregame press conference. His ensuing comments revealed what was most likely going through his mind that night in February. On Trump, Pop said, "He is in charge of our country. That's disgusting." There was a silence in the room. Then, uncharacteristically, Popovich expounded at length. "I'm a rich white guy and I'm sick to my stomach thinking about it. I can't imagine being a Muslim right now or a woman or an African-American, Hispanic, a handicapped person. How disenfranchised they might feel. For anyone in those groups that voted for him, it's just beyond my comprehension how they ignore all that."

Pop clarified, "Not basically because the Republicans won or anything, but the disgusting tenure and tone and all the comments that have been xenophobic, homophobic, racist, misogynistic. I live in that country where half the people ignored all that to elect someone [like that]. That's the scariest part of the whole thing to me." Pop shook his head, fielded a few more questions, and departed to play the Detroit Pistons.

Notes

1. http://espnmediazone.com/

Ballet and Bourdieu: Making Sense of *The Nutcracker* in Popular Culture

Briana Pocratsky

Over the 2016 holiday season, I decided to try something different and purchased a ticket to see the Washington Ballet's matinee performance of *The Nutcracker* at Warner Theatre. I have never been one to frequent performance theatres, choosing movie theaters instead. I grew up reading tabloid journalism about celebrities and watching campy horror films. The closest I ever came to ballet throughout my life was *Black Swan*, and the closest I ever came to *The Nutcracker* proper was *Barbie in the Nutcracker*.

I did not have a serious interest in what some might call high culture, simply never coming into contact with or outright avoiding cultural products such as operas, contemporary art, and caviar. Although *The Nutcracker* is in many ways a "popular" cultural product, the association with ballet ties it to elite culture as well.

A Brief History of The Nutcracker

Given its prevalence in popular culture, I thought *The Nutcracker* would be a good first step into ballet culture. *The Nutcracker* ballet, as we know it, is based on E.T.A. Hoffmann's story "Nutcracker and Mouse King" (1816) and Alexandre Dumas' adaptation titled "The Tale of the Nutcracker" (1845). Eventually, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed the score for a two act ballet. The first performance of *The Nutcracker*, which was not well-received at the time, occurred in 1892 at Imperial Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia. The annual performances in the U.S., which are often adaptations or revisions of the original libretto by Ivan Vsevolozhsky and Marius Petipa, began in 1944 by the San Francisco Ballet.

Interestingly, Hoffmann was dissatisfied "with the neatly trimmed bourgeois conventions of his time and the overly rational and disciplinary way in which children were being raised. Indeed, it is ironic that 'Nutcracker and Mouse King' has now been fully appropriated in another culture as a conventional if not 'exquisite' American ballet and ritual by the middle class, drained of its irony and satirical barbs" (Zipes 2007). Hoffmann used a fanciful story to challenge the rigidity of privileged childhood and ignite the imagination. The class criticisms within the story have been diluted or eliminated from contemporary retellings of the tale.

Source: pixabay.com

Bourdieu's Distinction

I was familiar with the plotline of *The Nutcracker* (thanks to Barbie), and I attended the performance with a former ballet dancer. I felt prepared to attend the show but was still hesitant (and not really excited) about it. One way to make sense of my uneasiness is through Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of taste in society. Bourdieu analyzes the relationship between taste and social hierarchy in France in the 1960s in his book *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* ([1979]1984).

Bourdieu ([1979]1984) explains that taste is used to categorize individuals into classes; he finds that cultural preferences and practices are not "natural" and "legitimate" but constructed categories that are used to perpetuate systems of domination in French society: "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier" (p. 6). The dominant group's lifestyle is different from and believed to be superior to the rest of society, and art is used as part of this process of distinction.

Cultural products often signify negotiated or contradictory messages and disrupt seemingly rigid status categorizations.

Spectacle and Meaning

When I arrived at Warner Theatre, I was surprised to see how many children were in attendance, some munching on popcorn and others fidgeting in their seats. One child, who was sitting beside me, fell asleep about halfway through Act I. The production was so dreamlike, full of velvety blue

costumes, gentle snowfall, and glistening tiaras, that I too found myself drifting off. I tried to understand the techniques of the dance routines, but I had no clue if the dancers were *good* or not. When I tried to pay attention to form or even the score, I found myself more interested in the bells and whistles that produced a holiday sentiment.

Although it is associated with the ballet, *The Nutcracker*, in many ways, relies on function more than form; it is about collectivity, tradition, and sentiment…

During the intermission, I asked my friend for guidance deeper than visual aesthetics. According to Bourdieu, the ability to decipher a work of art is a result of possessing an accumulation of the necessary forms of capital (cultural, social, and economic). Therefore, different tastes are a result of access to various forms of capital.

Source: pixabay.com

The person who possesses cultural competence is able to "properly" decode meanings from cultural objects, such as works of art, while the person who "lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colours and lines, without rhyme or reason" (Bourdieu [1979]1984: 2).

In *"Nutcracker" Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World*, Jennifer Fisher (2003:55) recognizes that ballet in general carries Bourdieu's notions of capital and cultural competence as a result of its ties to "European royalty" and "museumlike venues."

Despite the prevalence of *The Nutcracker* outside of elite settings, "it retains an association with the swank milieu of ballet" (Fisher 2003: 55). In addition to class, Fisher addresses the ethnocentric, stereotypical portrayals of race, ethnicity and gender associated with *The Nutcracker*; she explains that traditional versions of *The Nutcracker* are negotiated, subverted, or rejected by some ballet companies for more progressive adaptations. While Bourdieu's *Distinction* is helpful in making sense of the operation of taste in society, it does not fully account for the complexity of *The Nutcracker* specifically in contemporary U.S. culture.

Cultural products often signify negotiated or contradictory messages and disrupt seemingly rigid status categorizations. Fisher (2003:6) describes the popularity of the ballet in North America: "The spectacular elements comprise only one level of the ballet's existence in North America; on other levels—that of Christmas celebration, a rite of passage, community solidarity, for instance—the meaning of life for *The Nutcracker* becomes very rich…" *The Nutcracker* continues to interest audiences of various backgrounds because it is saturated with meaning for many audience members.

Although it is associated with the ballet, *The Nutcracker*, in many ways, relies on function more than form*;* it is about collectivity, tradition, and sentiment, which have little to do with a ballet dancer's successful completion of *pirouettes* or *fouettés*. Rather, audiences are more interested in what *The Nutcracker* signifies.

Ballet or Barbie?

Variations and myriad adaptations of *The Nutcracker* (perhaps to Hoffmann's chagrin) remain a seasonal fixture in American popular culture as professional dance companies and local schools perform the ballet, stimulating imaginations of audiences (perhaps to Hoffmann's delight).

As for me, I don't know if I would experience the "real deal" a second time, but I wouldn't mind watching *Barbie in the Nutcracker* again.

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Now that the Election is Over: The Future of Criminal Justice Reform

Maria Valdovinos

In the remaining weeks of the Obama Administration, Barack Obama's legacy as our 44th President was the subject of much reflection and deliberation. Recently, *The Washington Post* compiled an interactive piece, a "virtual museum" documenting his legacy and various initiatives with experts weighing in on the successes and failures of his time in office.

Throughout his tenure, President Obama tackled many "broken" systems for reform including our healthcare, economy, immigration, and criminal justice; no doubt a herculean order for two four-year terms. The conversations about successes and failures raise important questions about the meaning of reform. What does meaningful reform entail?

The facts on mass incarceration

Across four decades, the prison population in America has increased exponentially, from approximately 350,000 in 1970 to over 2 million presently (Travis, Western, and Redburn 2014:33). Currently, America's prison population comprises 25 percent of the world's prison population in any given year (Walmsley 2009; Weiss and MacKenzie 2010: 269).

Described as "the era of mass imprisonment" (Chesney-Lind and Mauer 2003; Garland 2001), the origins of over-incarceration in the U.S. are routinely traced back to the 1970s, a period marked by extremely punitive national drug policy. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986[1] is widely credited with accelerating the rate at which individuals were incarcerated because of its extensive criminalization of drugs and drug related offenses.

The statistics reveal that incarceration is disproportionately experienced by minorities and men, especially young African American men, Hispanics, and increasingly, women (Swavola, Riley, and Subramanian 2016; Travis, Western, and Redburn 2014) and that it takes place through legal, civil, and administrative pathways (Beckett and Murakawa 2012).

Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform under the Obama Administration

In July 2015, President Barack Obama became the first sitting president to set foot in a federal prison, a symbolic move solidifying criminal justice and sentencing reform as one of his defining legacies (Horwitz and Lowery 2016). With his visit to the El Reno Federal Correctional Institution, Obama brought national attention to the conversation on mass incarceration and a hopeful vision for fixing our "broken" criminal justice system (Baker 2015).

Largely touted as one of the Obama Administration's successes, among the criminal justice and sentencing reform efforts undertaken were a series of commutations totaling more than the last 11 presidents combined (Shear 2016), ending contracts with private prisons for federal inmates (Savage 2016), and several varied sentencing reform measures, such as those aimed at reducing a stark sentencing disparity for crack and powder cocaine offenses (Abrams 2010). Indeed, it was under the Obama Administration that we witnessed the first decline in U.S. prison populations in more than three decades (Goode 2013).

The work articulating legal hybrid pathways to incarceration has largely employed mixed methods designs.

"Crimmigration": A new iteration of our Criminal Justice System?

According to 2011 data from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the number of immigrants held in detention facilities comprised 450,000 of those newly jailed (Hickey 2013). This "enmeshment" and blurring of institutional boundaries between "immigration and local criminal enforcement apparatuses" (Beckett and Evans 2015: 245) is referred to by legal scholars as "crimmigration" and it signals the development of another potential co-existing pathway to incarceration (Stumpf 2006). Among many different mechanisms to detention and/or incarceration in the U.S., the criminalization of previously civil immigration-related offenses is on the rise; so much so that in Ava DuVernay's recent documentary "13th" scholars wonder whether it might be one of several new iterations of social control for specific groups of people.

While criminal justice and sentencing reforms are generally believed to be one of the Obama Administration's more visible successes, in 2006, legal scholar Juliet Stumpf penned a dystopian scenario in the form of a memo to the incoming Administration identifying the "crimmigration crisis"

as the defining issue of the President-Elect's Administration (Stumpf 2006). On the heels of our most recent election and the rhetoric of the incoming Administration on issues related to immigration, this memo may not seem surprising at first except that Stumpf penned this scenario in 2006.

Acknowledgement of methodological divide

The emergence of a body of work on legal hybridity overlaps greatly with the ideological transformation and methodological expansion that has begun to take place concurrently within criminal justice studies and criminology fields. The work articulating legal hybrid pathways to incarceration has largely employed mixed methods designs. Whereas quantitative methods have been instrumental in establishing the scope and magnitude of certain phenomena, the integration of qualitative methods into the methodological design has been instrumental in identifying pathways and mechanisms.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice

Comprehensive and meaningful criminal justice system reform will need to recognize the interconnected entities leading to incarceration. The empirical evidence on recidivism and reentry increasingly suggests that for many, incarceration takes place through "invisible" pathways. To address research questions pertaining to criminal justice reform, key methodological debates need to be revisited. Given the complexity of the criminal justice system, we need to move beyond the quantitative/qualitative methodological divide or default, to embrace mixed methods and a more feminist perspective if we are to study the criminal justice system in its entirety.

This type of methodological approach is important because as Lin, Grattet, and Petersilia (2010: 761) argue, we seldom examine how institutional and structural changes, such as the emergence of mass incarceration, can be linked to "micro-sociological decisions," or in other words, "the everyday practices of situated actors." Meaningful criminal justice reform undoubtedly requires the embrace of research methods that allow researchers to access experience situated at the micro-level in order to explore how it is linked to experience manifested at the macro-level, such as mass incarceration. Efforts to overhaul "broken" institutional systems are herculean endeavors. While they are not impossible, they must be explored within the appropriate historical, genealogical, social and institutional frameworks. In an increasingly globalized world, these efforts must also be complemented by a comparative perspective.

Notes

1. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-570, 100 Stat. 3207) was the legislative culmination to the "War on Drugs" declared by Nixon in the 1970s. It contains several harsh and unbalanced sentencing provisions for drug related offenses.

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What Public Housing Can Teach Us: Lessons Learned from *Grassroots DC*

Emily McDonald

In the summer of 2016, I interned with Grassroots DC, a media organization providing computer/media training to low-income Washington, DC residents and media coverage to issues affecting underserved communities. This nonprofit organization is located in the Potomac Gardens community in Southeast Washington, DC where residents are able to access computers and receive basic computer training. Public housing is one of Grassroots DC's main areas of focus and a major concern of low-income residents in an increasingly unaffordable District of Columbia. This paper is based on my interview with Grassroots DC President Liane Scott and my research of public housing in the District of Columbia.

In their article about public administration, Baimenov and Everest-Phillips argue that frustration with bureaucratic red tape and government idleness has existed since the dawn of modern, organized government. Yet, "efforts to undermine the motivation and morale of effective and efficient public officials working for the common good have advanced" in recent decades (2016: 389). The authors describe a transnational ideology that public service is by its nature incompetent, thus leaving government officials politically benefitting from a self-reinforcing "permanent revolution of ceaseless reforms" that do little to bring about lasting change (2016:389).

My summer as a volunteer intern consisted of reviewing the budget of the District of Columbia local government to understand how funding for public housing has changed over time. Reading the article by Baimenov and Everest-Phillips confirmed my observations, and, admittedly, frustrations, while I navigated the complicated world of public housing for the first time. In sorting through local and national archives, public housing is certainly in a permanent state of "ceaseless reforms."

As DC Fiscal Policy Institute's Claire Zippel makes clear, there is "chronic federal underfunding," putting public housing at risk (Zippel 2016:1). While this came with little surprise to a sociologist concerned with the shrinking public space, the most striking realization in looking through the Council of the District of Columbia and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) archives was the ever-constant change in agreements between federal and local government, each promising to maintain a more efficient, effective environment for public housing residents. This included public/private partnering in the name of better services, short-lived revitalization projects, and a renewed call on local government by city officials to fill in the gaps where the federal had fallen short (Council of the District of Columbia 2016). Programs like "Moving to Work" give local housing authorities more flexibility in how they spend their budgets mandated by HUD without the recognition that a large majority of residents are the elderly and disabled, most of whom do in fact "work" or have worked but live on an income insufficient for this area (Rivers 2016).

Shuffling in the System

As one Potomac Gardens resident described to me, living in public housing and receiving public service felt like a constant "shuffling" in a disjointed system, with "one program over here, one new program over there, and you just don't know where to go to get what you need." Rather than making a commitment to maintain public housing, new programs seem to develop for a short amount of time, only to go back to the same shortfalls in the overall federal budget to maintain consistent operation and maintenance.

"With the addition of computer training to Grassroots DC's programs, participants have the option of pursuing employment in any number of fields…"

After gaining an understanding of the system that funnels funding to public housing, I sat down with Liane Scott, President of Grassroots DC, to gain a better understanding of how her organization came to be, her connections with public housing residents through both Potomac Gardens and her career, and how she sees the future of public housing and the activism to support it.

Her organization began as a media project connected with Empower DC, then took on its own incorporation. As she describes it: "In its new incarnation as Grassroots DC, participants continue to create media that tells how low-income, working-class District of Columbia residents are affected by

public policy, giving them a forum to voice their individual needs and vital community concerns. These skills are marketable not only within the media industry but in any field that requires basic literacy and computer competence."

"These programs…are all built on the premise…that government has no responsibility to control the cost of housing provided by private industry. It's not fixable so long as you accept those premises."

To connect herself with her new community in Potomac Gardens and ensure that more people are able to participate in media production, Scott added basic computer training to her list of services: "In the past, students with limited financial resources, who can only commit the hours necessary to learn media production if it leads to an immediate income, were unable to participate fully in our training program. Because media production also requires basic computer skills, potential students who are not computer literate were also left out."

"With the addition of computer training to Grassroots DC's programs, participants have the option of pursuing employment in any number of fields as well as the ability to take advantage of our more advanced media production classes. As a result, we are able to serve far more students from low-income communities. … [In addition] Grassroots DC provides the Potomac Gardens community with a service. I make a few, very old computers available to members of the community on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays."

"When I can find a volunteer or find the time myself, we offer basic computer classes to the residents. I help residents with resumes, with job searches, with flyers for community activities, etc."

Beyond her official duties as President of Grassroots DC, Scott recognizes her connections to residents here is much more than helping link them to resources. The struggle for affordable housing in the District reaches far and wide. Scott does not consider herself separate from public housing residents: "Years ago I applied for public housing, but as the list was so long, my name never reached the top. So, I could easily be a Potomac Gardens resident. I relate more than I'd like to the struggle for housing and the fear of losing it." So often in conversations regarding the future and fate of public housing, those who live there are put into a class of their own. What I found through conversations about public housing was a clear distancing between residents of the District and public housing residents of the District. Scott seemed to agree with my observation.

The Class Split

The clear lack of connection between those who can afford private market housing and those who cannot is what she highlights as a problem: "I started working with housing activists regularly about a decade ago. One of the first things I learned was that there's actually a class split within the housing activist community that I think many don't acknowledge. Housing is so expensive in the District that you really have to be well-off not to worry about it. So, it's no surprise that many folks who come to the District for school or for a job with the government, end up also fighting for housing."

"The thing is, they end up fighting for things like getting money into the Housing Production Trust Fund, which benefits mainly folks who are looking to buy housing in the District. Public housing residents don't fall into that category but really, it's the loss of public housing stock and the lack of affordable housing that in another city would come from commercial real estate, that's really the most pressing need in the District of Columbia."

This class divide along with a system in a constant state of flux leads to political organizing around public housing. Scott said that: "Just as I've learned to accept that my offices will always be subject to occasional flooding, I've also had to accept that only a revolution in budget priorities will fix existing housing stock and/or begin to provide enough housing for those in need. These programs that they keep coming up with every decade or so, HOPE VI, New Communities, the Rental Assistance Demonstration Programs are all built on the premise that government need not be universally responsible for providing housing to those who can't afford market-rate housing and that government has no responsibility to control the cost of housing provided by private industry. It's not fixable so long as you accept those premises."

This observation led Scott to connect the issue of public housing in the District to a much broader societal issue, one which we continue to fail to recognize: "It's really impossible to talk about justice for public housing residents without talking about justice for everybody. If, beyond economic status, our society, as represented by our government, were to ensure that everyone's human rights were

granted then we'd have justice for public housing residents."

In a city that leans left of the political spectrum, why does a public commitment to maintain affordable housing for the elderly, disabled, and economically vulnerable remain unmade?

"In other words, if everyone had not only a right to housing but the housing itself; if everyone had not only a right to an education but the education itself; if everyone had a right not only to healthcare but also the healthcare itself, then there would be justice.… But this is an agency, a government and a nation that doesn't believe homelessness is unacceptable, indeed expects that the problem can only be mitigated never entirely eliminated. And so, my office will continue to be flooded every other month and there will never be anywhere near enough affordable housing for District residents."

The Richest Communities

In an immensely expensive city with a highly competitive job market, the struggle to pay for adequate housing is not a far stretch for many. As we ask with so many other issues, why is there not more consensus among citizens to demand better? In a city that leans left of the political spectrum, why does a public commitment to maintain affordable housing for the elderly, disabled, and economically vulnerable remain unmade? As Scott describes: "American-style capitalism operates on the premise that everyone should pay their own way, pretty much regardless of circumstance. If you are unable to pay your own way, we will only grudgingly provide for you because we are far more likely to believe that the poor deserve to be poor than that there is any such thing as the deserving poor.

What our American- style capitalism fails to recognize is that the injustice visited upon the poor may not result in physical deprivation but will almost certainly result in moral depravity." Unfortunately, it seems the same answer suffices for many other social ills: a lack of consciousness against a backdrop of classism, racism, sexism and ageism, and rugged individualist American ideology allows for little solidarity among the vast number of citizens

Potomac Gardens. Source: Emily McDonald

concerned with housing affordability in the District. Public housing provides a stark example of the broader issues of interest to social thinkers, researchers, and citizens alike.

Perhaps the most important lesson I learned from my public housing research this summer is that the lack of society-wide support is not to say that the community is not fostered at all. One needs only to walk through the iron gates of Potomac Gardens. A host of residents taking shifts keeping eyes on the streets and sidewalks will greet you, reminding visitors that it is often the less economically privileged who create the richest communities. Such communities are iconic to cities like Washington, DC.

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