

1

Classical Sociological Theory

ALAN SICA

DEFINING “THE CLASSICAL”

What is meant today by “classical theory”? Scholarly interests in the current period, like so much else in cultural life, are undergoing rapid change owing to the world-wide computerization of knowledge. Whereas nineteenth century theorists, writing mostly in German or French, might have expected reading audiences to number in the hundreds, perhaps a few thousand, today’s potential “market” for sociological ideas is limitless, spanning much of the globe in English or another modern translation. Whereas early European theorists had to content themselves with a vague notion of what was being written in North and South America or Asia that might have influenced their thinking, daily interaction now among globalized scholarly groupings has become expected, even routinized. Though sometimes confusing the issues at hand, this cross-fertilization has often deepened and broadened notions of “the classical.” Given all that, one would imagine that the canon long recognized as “classical theory” might have changed in fundamental ways over the last 20 years or so, as access to computerized knowledge proceeded apace.

An exact metric reflecting this historic change in globalized enlightenment could conceivably be constructed using big data sources, but until that is done systematically, other, more traditional means of measuring scholars’ enthusiasms might be used. Take, for instance, a British serial founded in 2001 called *The Journal of Classical Sociology*. Thus far, it has dealt far more with theory than with the actual historiography of sociology as an institutionalized discipline in universities (recalling that it was only named as such by Auguste Comte on April 27, 1839). Not surprisingly, many articles have appeared in recent issues of this journal that deal exclusively with the generally recognized founders of social theory: Karl Marx, Emile

Durkheim, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel. This continued veneration of a rather few thinkers, among dozens of possible contenders, has become standard practice among theory specialists and their readers for generations, and shows no signs, at least among this group of writers, of waning.

Special issues of *JCS*, such as “Durkheim in Germany,” “Weber/Simmel Antagonisms,” “Marx and Marxism,” “New Durkheim Scholarship,” and “Special Issue on Georg Simmel,” have been published in the last several years as well. Yet within the last two years, articles have also found a home in this journal that attempt to resuscitate interest in a range of other classical thinkers who were at one time quite well known but are no longer included in course syllabi or reading lists for doctoral comprehensive exams – the standard site of canon-formation. These rediscoveries include Raymond Aron, Reinhard Bendix, Raymond Boudon, Patrick Geddes, Arnold van Gennep, Maurice Halbwachs, Leonard Hobhouse, Johan Huizinga, Robert K. Merton, Gunnar Myrdal, Talcott Parsons, Adam Smith, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart-Glennie, and Thorstein Veblen. Some of these thinkers have died in the last several decades (Aron, Bendix, Boudon, Merton, Myrdal, and Parsons), whereas most of the others did their important work in the early twentieth century. And yet for all these refreshed efforts, mostly among younger scholars, to “mine the classics” (or *Restoring the Classic in Sociology* [How 2016]), the four uniquely creative and noninterchangeable theorists around whom the majority of archaeological analyses still revolves remains unchanged since World War II: Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel. (Simmel’s ideas had been vigorously pursued between 1894 and about 1935 in English translation, then resurfaced about 1990 as part of the “postmodernism debate.”) There are voices that bemoan this situation, but they as yet remain small when compared with the loud volume of orthodox commentary.

Along similar lines, ever since 2000 *Max Weber Studies* has showered its dedicated audience with hundreds of articles and book reviews pertaining to Weber’s work or extensions of his ideas into our world. The latest issue bears the inscription “Special Issue: *Hinduism and Buddhism: Reflections on a Sociological Classic 100 Years On, Part One*,” and occupies 180 pages. Senior and junior international experts vie for the attention of their Weberian colleagues with articles about Indian religion and politics, comparative legal traditions, Hinduism and other worldviews, Weber’s rationalism when applied to India, and so on.

It’s worth recalling that Weber wrote *The Religion of India* over 100 years ago, regretting that he did not read Sanskrit, and surely believing then that the book would be superseded long before a century had elapsed. And yet experts continue to debate its significance vigorously. Perhaps it’s unsurprising that there also exists another journal, *Durkheimian Studies*, now in its twenty-fourth year, as well as *Simmel Studies*, begun in 1990 as the *Simmel Newsletter*. Both these outlets feature articles in German, French, and English. Meanwhile as well, work on Marx and his tradition of socio-economic analysis is booming, particularly after the global economic crisis of 2008.

In addition to this continuing fascination with classical European theorists, a new path has recently been carved into the forest of our theoretical ancestors by scholars who argue that W.E.B. Du Bois and what they call “The Atlanta School” have not been given their due as co-founders of American sociology. This follows a still-earlier effort to enshrine female theorists into the canon, which, though honored and

appreciated among its politically motivated adherents, has not changed textbook writers' listing of "who's who" among essential theorists. (See Lengermann and Niebrugge [1998, 2007] for treatments of and excerpts from Harriet Martineau, Jane Addams, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Anna Julia Cooper, Marianne Weber, Beatrice Potter Webb, and others.) It now goes without saying that omitting all female theorists from the history of sociological thought is indefensible, yet they remain largely unread and undiscussed on campus because so few courses make room for them in the typical college curriculum, even at the graduate level. That none of them offered a comprehensive theoretical program has also detracted from their perceived appeal and contemporary applicability.

But the case of Du Bois is more recent and contentious. While it has become obvious that women's roles must be acknowledged, it is less clearly the case that African-American sociologists, whose numbers were relatively small until the 1970s, offered a distinct mode of sociological research and thinking that could seriously compete with what was offered by Caucasian scholars at the same time. Most specifically, the "Chicago School" headed by Albion Small, W. I. Thomas, Robert Ezra Park, and Ernest Y. Burgess between about 1894 and 1935, has been criticized for its alleged racist tendencies and allied refusal to acknowledge Du Bois as an intellectual leader within the sociological camp.

Park's strong relationship with Booker T. Washington – who became Du Bois's political nemesis after 1903 – is particularly objectionable to those who currently champion the latter's role in early American sociology. Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro* was indeed an astonishing ethnographic performance for a young, underfunded, and isolated scholar to create. And the research about African-Americans that he and his students did at the Atlanta University between 1897 and 1910 was pioneering as well.

Yet it is difficult to argue persuasively that Du Bois's sociological theorizing per se constitutes a separate universe of discourse, equally valuable to others writing at the time in the United States and abroad, and that he was consciously sidestepped as a "founding father" of sociology by his white peers (see Morris 2015, for the case in favor this interpretation). The fact that he and Max Weber shared a brief relationship adds to the complexity of the question: Who influenced whom, and how? (For a wisely pertinent appraisal of intergenerational understandings of scholarship, see Momigliano 1965.)

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN EVALUATING "THE CLASSICAL"

Thus, it can readily be seen that the precise definition of which bodies of writing should constitute "classical" social theory regularly changes, reflecting alterations in the intellectual and political goals of those who create theory, as well as those who teach it. Only quite recently has it become the case that the Holy Trinity: Marx-Weber-Durkheim, is widely viewed as a convenient surrogate for "classical theory" in toto, even serving as the title to some theory textbooks.

That these three titans are essential to this tradition is undebatable, but the supposition that they adequately represent "everything still worth knowing" from the history of sociological theory is unsupportable. When Pitirim Sorokin, the first

sociologist ever hired by Harvard University, published his *Contemporary Sociological Theories* in 1928 (two years before he left Minnesota for Harvard), his index names over 1000 scholars whom he showed had contributed to its development. Other important textbooks of the period were similarly generous in their portrayal of who should be included in theory's past and its consequent present (e.g. Becker and Barnes 1938; Bogardus 1940).

In a field often organized for pedagogical purposes around "great thinkers," favored names come and go with almost seasonal predictability. For example, during the Great Depression, major US publishers reissued the works of Karl Marx in student editions, while during the 1950s, it was dangerous to teach his work in US colleges for fear of becoming subject to politically motivated punishment. Similarly, the Italian economist and political theorist, Vilfredo Pareto, was widely known to the literate public in the 1930s, and regarded as an indispensable social theorist for scholars who worked in this area. Yet following the Second World War, after his name had been incorrectly linked to Benito Mussolini's, he was promptly and permanently banished from "the canon." The Italian fascist dictator was portrayed as Pareto's "student," whereas in fact he had only attended a few of Pareto's lectures on economics around 1900, encouraged to do so by his Russian lover, Angelica Balbanoff (Mussolini 1928, p. 14).

The case of Georg Simmel was less subject to gross political forces, yet his reputation waxed, waned, and waxed again in what has become a familiar pattern. He was interjected into US sociology during the 1890s by his American student Albion Small, editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*, and for the next 20 years became the most often translated European theorist of his generation (Levine et al. 1976). His ideas played an essential role in the creation of social psychology, exchange theory, and urban sociology, yet from the 1930s through the 1970s, he took a back seat to other theorists.

When Talcott Parsons set about reshaping sociology's theoretical foundation in the 1930s, he omitted a chapter on Simmel, already written, when assembling his transformative book, *The Structure of Social Action*. He realized that Simmel was incommensurable with the other figures he chose to analyze, that his way of theorizing did not mesh well with the story Parsons wished to tell regarding an alleged "convergence" among Weber, Durkheim, Pareto, and Alfred Marshall, the economist (Levine 1957; Parsons 1937). Although important textbooks continued to include chapters on Simmel (e.g. Ashley and Orenstein 1985; Ritzer 1988), he was not generally viewed as a member of that small group of theorists who were indispensable to an understanding of the discipline's legacy. Only in the 1990s with the rise of postmodernism as a school and methodology was he rediscovered, in some ways redefined, and now seems again as "contemporary" as ever (among many, see Frisby and Featherstone 1997).

Examples of this kind abound, of course, since styles change in the academic world just as they do in any other human endeavor. History shows that genuine permanency is impossible to maintain in any sphere of human learning or the arts; it is worth remembering that Plato, Shakespeare, Bach, and Vivaldi were all neglected for long periods of cultural history, and other iconic presences in our own time will surely fall from view before the end of our century. Someday music by the Beatles will likely become a small footnote to cultural history, and the novels of Kurt

Vonnegut will seem as old-fashioned and unreadable as today do dozens of Victorian novelists who were household names in their time, yet now wholly forgotten.

Not only has the theoretical pantheon seen significant repositionings regarding its personnel during the last half-century, but the range of learning that scholars agree to identify as “social theory” has also undergone continual refashioning. Unlike today, between the two World Wars a US college student might well have been introduced to social theory of the classical mode by examining the ancient Egyptians, Persians, or Greeks (e.g. Becker and Barnes 1938; Bogardus 1940; Ellwood 1938; Hertzler 1936). For instance, consider Joyce Hertzler’s unique volume, *The Social Thought of the Ancient Civilizations*, published in 1936 by McGraw-Hill, still today a major source of sociology textbooks. This 400-page work, written by a Nebraska sociologist, begins with the Egyptians (“Imhotep and His Philosophy: ‘Eat, Drink and Be Merry’”), moves to Babylonian (now Iraqi) thought, then through Hittite, Persian, and Indian ideas, concluding with investigations of Chinese and Hebrew social analysis. Hertzler closes by providing the student with a summary of the lastingly important notions offered by proto-sociologists in these major civilizations, and argues that knowing about these systems of thought achieves two major goals.

First, it demonstrates that “there is nothing new under the sun” when it comes to the most critical matters facing humans in social groups: how to control misbehavior and encourage normatively approved behavior, how to distribute goods and services fairly, how to maintain stable, satisfying families, how to encourage social cohesion rather than dispersion, how to use supernatural events and sentiments, and so on. Second, the proverbs and morality tales that circulated among all ancient civilizations, the purpose of which was always to transmit “social theory” to ordinary people, were far more entertaining and provocative than modern social science and sociological theory. This is in part why they were so well-regarded, even cherished, for so many centuries in ways that today’s social science arguments seldom are. If one compares the contents, say, of the King James Bible or the *Bhagavad-Gita* with current articles in any social science journal, substantive parallels can surely be drawn, yet these “holy books” inspire people with emotionally satisfying narratives in ways that “bloodless” social science cannot. The rhetoric of storytelling and moralizing, the creation of appealing parables, shares very little with the “objective” language adopted during the twentieth century by social scientists in their effort to emulate the imagined “objectivity” of the natural sciences, and the technology they made possible. Hertzler was surely correct in these claims, and he wrote the book in part to substantiate them, probably reflecting his own broad educational and cultural background that no longer characterizes sociological “training.”

The well-known sociologist, Emory Bogardus, offered the first edition of *The Development of Social Thought* a few years later, in 1940. After racing through the same historical texts and personalities in a few pages that Hertzler had required an entire book to traverse, he launches into the sociological ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Aurelius, early Christian thinkers, the Middle Ages, and then shifts into what we now regard as the “early modern period.” He writes about Thomas More’s *Utopia* (the predecessor to Orwell’s 1984, Huxley’s *Brave New World*, plus dozens of other dystopian novels), the Enlightenment *Philosophes*, and Thomas Malthus (founder of demography), consuming a third of his long book before arriving at Auguste Comte – who invented the term *sociologie* in 1839 (Pickering 1993, p. 615). From

here, Bogardus pursues a long list of thinkers who no longer appear in any textbooks of “classical” social theory, but who were at that time still regarded as vital figures in the history of societal analysis. After an obligatory chapter on Marx (whose place in the pantheon remains secure despite political events since 1989), he allocates chapters to “[Henry] Buckle and Geographic Social Thought,” Herbert Spencer, Lester Frank Ward (first president of the American Sociological Society in 1905), William Graham Sumner (first teacher of sociology at Yale), Francis Galton and eugenics, now entirely repudiated in sociological circles, Ludwig Gumpłowicz, and conflict theory, Peter Kropotkin on cooperation and anarchism, Gabriel Tarde on imitation, the indispensable Emile Durkheim, and the founder of Chicago Sociology, Albion Small. Bogardus then produced chapter-length treatments of Franklin Giddings, Georg Simmel, Max Weber, Charles Horton Cooley, Vilfredo Pareto, Edward A. Ross, W. I. Thomas, Robert E. Park, Charles Ellwood, Karl Mannheim, Howard Odum, and Radhakamal Mukerjee.

With the solid exceptions of Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel, none of these thinkers is any longer considered critically necessary for inclusion in the basic sociological theory course taught in every US sociology department, and even specialists in the field likely know little about them. There are niche enthusiasms for Cooley and Thomas, honorable memorialization of Comte and Sumner, occasional textual reference to Tarde and Mannheim. Yet 90% of Bogardus’s textbook treatment (which went through four editions in the next 20 years) has been sloughed off in today’s “marketplace of ideas.” The reasons for this diluting of theory’s past are many, some obvious, some not. Yet it is undeniably true that a very great deal of serious thinking about social life, individual or collective, has been thrown into the “dustbin of history” (Marx’s phrase) without benefit of scholarly scrutiny.

It is surely comforting, if delusory, to believe that sociological theory, like physics or chemistry, has “moved beyond” its founders’ plethora of notions, hunches, hypotheses, and arguments – that we no longer should study their writings, any more than today’s astronomers need to master Copernicus’s work before advancing their field. Were this true, it would surely ease the labors required to become expert in the study of social theory. Those who adhere to a natural science model of sociology make exactly this claim, and have been doing so at least since the days of the “social physicist,” George Lundberg, in the 1930s (Lundberg 1939; also Lundberg 1947). In fact, the lineage of this belief-system goes back to the seventeenth century and exploded in the 19th – that earnest longing to launch social science into the same high regard the natural sciences have enjoyed since the seventeenth century when Newton showed the way. Sorokin’s treatment of what he calls “the mechanistic school” begins with the philosophers Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Grotius, Malebranche and others, all of whom aimed during the seventeenth century to create a “social mechanics” (Sorokin 1928, pp.2–62).

The social physicists of the seventeenth century tried to do the same as the physicists themselves. In the first place they constructed the conception of a *moral or social space* in which social, and moral, and political movements go on. It was a kind of space analogous to physical space and superposed [sic] upon it. To the *position* of a material object in physical space, there corresponded, in social space, the conception of *status*, as of sex, age, occupation, freedom, religion, citizenship, and so on. In this

way, they constructed a system of social coordinates, which defined the position of man in this moral space as exactly as the system of geometrical coordinates defines the position of a material object in physical space. Physical mechanics explains the motions, also, of physical objects by the principles of inertia and gravitation. Similarly, social mechanics regarded the social processes as a result of the gravitation and inertia of human beings or groups.... The social power and authority were interpreted as resultants of the pressures of “social atoms” (individuals) and “social molecules” (groups). (Sorokin 1928, pp. 8–9)

This mode of analysis continued into the eighteenth century with the philosopher George Berkeley and others. It blossomed in the nineteenth century in the work of H.C. Carey, whose *Principles of Social Science* (1858) preceded the more celebrated writings of Herbert Spencer (*First Principles*, 1862), and claimed that “the laws which govern matter in all its forms, whether that of coal, clay, iron, pebble stones, trees, oxen, horses, or men” are the same; “man is the molecule of society”; and social interaction operates under the “great law of molecular gravitation” (Carey 1858, pp. 62, 41–42; cited in Sorokin 1928, p. 13). These were heady arguments in the mid-nineteenth century, and Carey was not alone in proposing programs of social analysis built on them. But in the end, as Sorokin points out, these “childish mechanical analogies” (p. 39) did not pan out since the built-in irrationalities of human life are impossible to model, even with sophisticated math.

THE FRENCH MODE OF CLASSICAL THEORIZING

There were other, competing approaches to the problem of dealing with human action in somewhat less “childish” ways, less tied to the belief that *Homo sapiens* could be understood by means of mechanical or molecular imagery. A few examples from a large pool of possible instances might illustrate how eager were gifted thinkers to make use of scientific reasoning, even if physics was not their preferred model. Marquis de Condorcet (1743–1794) came up with a “jury theorem” in 1785 based on simple probability reasoning, which shows, given strict assumptions, the likelihood of a small group arriving at a “correct” decision. He also invented Condorcet’s paradox (or voting paradox), which demonstrates that majority preferences can be undone under certain conditions involving what is now called *nontransitivity*, so that the “correct” outcome is impossible to attain (Baker 1975, pp. 197–263).

In the same era, Henri Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Comte’s mentor and competitor, even while developing a so-called “new religion” in the 1820s, nevertheless concurred that social life could be organized around indubitable laws of industrial life. He persuaded his followers that correct analysis of social processes would allow society at large to avoid the many miseries that inspired Marx and Engels to create their emancipatory theories (as in Engels 1987 [1845]). Like the Marxists, but much earlier, he believed that through scientific reorganization and management of industrialization, the poor could be protected from the ravages of factory life, proposing that the welfare of the weakest should be a society’s highest goal. (A similar argument was considered “new” in 1971 when John Rawls published his *Theory of Justice*, long after Saint-Simon had been forgotten.)

Very unlike Marx and Engels, though, Saint-Simon thought that industrial “managers” could combine their technical administrative skills with high moral reasoning, thereby emancipating the working class from the chains that Marx claimed were the unavoidable accompaniment to industrial life. For all their differences, they agreed that *science* as a slogan and practice was the road to societal salvation, one that sidestepped the ideological and spiritual battles that always seemed to surround religiously motivated programs for social change.

The most scientifically accomplished of these early proto-sociologists was Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874), a gifted mathematician and official Belgian astronomer. He invented the body-mass index measurement still used as an indicator of healthy body weight. While compiling statistics and observations relating to shooting stars, celestial movement, and seasonal vegetation changes, Quetelet found time to propose “social physics” in 1835 (as well as the first scientific criminology; Quetelet 1835) that Lundberg and other twentieth-century theorists regarded as the foundation of their positivism. By using a statistical construct that he called the “average man,” he was able to employ Dutch and Belgian data to show that certain human behaviors followed recognizable patterns, and deviated more or less predictably from what we now call “the normal curve.” He was particularly successful in correlating certain social characteristics with particular types of criminal behavior, coming up with 17 statements that summarized his findings, e.g. “1. Age is without contradiction the cause which acts with the most energy to develop or moderate the propensity for crime” (Quetelet 1984, in Sica 2005: pp. 166–68). From this work Durkheim and subsequent researchers took their lead when studying what has since come to be called *deviance*.

For example, in his most successful demonstration of “empirical” sociology, *On Suicide* (1897), Durkheim notes:

When Quetelet directed the attention of philosophers to the surprising regularity with which certain social phenomena are repeated in identical periods of time, he thought that he could explain it by his theory of the “ordinary man,” which has in fact remained the only systematic explanation of this remarkable feature of societies. According to him, there is a definite type in each society which the majority of individuals reproduce more or less exactly, with only a minority deviating from it under the influence of disruptive force. (Durkheim 2006, pp. 332–333)

After mentioning Quetelet’s name in the body of his text, Durkheim added a knowing footnote:

Notably in his two works, *Sur l’homme de la développement de ses facultés ou Essai de physique sociale*, 2 vols., Paris, 1835, and *Du système social et des lois qui le régissent*, Paris, 1848. While Quetelet was the first to try to explain this regularity in a scientific manner, he was not the first to observe it. The real founder of moral statistics was Pastor Süssenlich, in his work *Die Göttliche Ordnung in den Veränderungen des menschlichen Geschlechts, aus der Geburt, dem Tode und der Fortpflanzung desselben erwiesen*, 3 vols, 1742.

Nowadays no one remembers nor reads Pastor Süssenlich, who lives on only in Durkheim’s footnote. But it is instructive to realize that a search for precursors – or

adumbrationists, as Pitirim Sorokin named them in his classic work – seldom fails to find someone who thought of a technique of analysis or an illuminating idea before those who are currently most often credited with a specific intellectual “discovery.”

These early proponents of a scientific sociology – Condorcet, Saint-Simon, and Quetelet – were the best known exemplars of what more recently has been named “humanothermodynamics.” The central tenet of this field is that people can be portrayed for analytic purposes as “molecules” in a vast social system, and therefore studied in the same way physicists explore the subatomic world. Naively perceived, it makes sense to some optimistic thinkers that human action should be “modelable” in ways similar to techniques of analysis so successful in chemistry and physics.

The goal, of course, ever since the eighteenth century, has been to *predict* human action in order to propel people into behavior which strengthens rather than endangers social order, or to provide them with more pleasurable individual lives by helping them avoid pathological conditions of their own making. The idea behind this is always the same: Social life is difficult to interpret, so scientific reduction is necessary in order to clarify the consequences of various actions or lack of actions. “Laws” of social life have thus been sought ever since the *Philosophes* saw what the natural sciences had achieved after they determined how the “laws of nature” functioned (Mirowski 1989; Urry 2004).

A famous modern example of this tendency came from Charles Darwin’s grandson, C. G. Darwin, who published *The Next Million Years* in 1952, where he proposed that “statistical mechanics” be used to study human behavior by conceiving of individuals as “human molecules” in a “conservative dynamical system” (Darwin 1952). More alarmingly, he predicted that humans would run out of food by 2000. Even though this school of thinking has found few followers within the ranks of American sociologists, the latent notion – that social laws ought to be discoverable through quantitative investigation and the application of probability – runs deep among many social researchers, even in unspoken form. Almost all quantitative research clings to this “domain assumption” (Gouldner 1970) in an unquestioning, unstated way, since without it there would be little justification in carrying out thousands of studies each year that portray human behavior as meaningfully reducible to correlation coefficients.

SCOTLAND’S CLASSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Another vital inspiration for classical social theory came from Scotland during the mid-eighteenth century, where a talented, interpersonally connected group of men composed literate, even entertaining, treatises that shared very little with the French *philosophes’* view of human society, and their utopian recommendations for its restructuring along modern lines.

Inspired in part by the philosophy of Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), including his *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions with Illustrations of the Moral Sense* (1728), the so-called “Scottish moralists” wrote clear prose about socially important issues that give their work continuing importance (see Broadie 1997). Those who participated in what has been called “the Scottish Enlightenment” (Camic 1983) included Adam Smith (1723–1790), Adam Ferguson (1723–1816), John Millar (1735–1801), and others like Millar’s friend, the great philosopher David Hume (1711–1776).

Millar, a law professor, was more a sociologist than a philosopher, writing about what we now call social stratification (*The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, 1771), one part of which was “Of the Rank and Condition of Women in Different Ages.” He also managed to anticipate Emile Durkheim’s famous dissertation (Durkheim 1893) by more than a century with “Social Consequences of the Division of Labour” (Millar 1806). His observations gave rise to what is now called *comparative sociology*, as in this passage from his 1771 book:

In the most rude and barbarous ages, little or no property can be acquired by particular persons; and consequently, there are no differences of rank to interrupt the free intercourse of the sexes. The pride of family, as well as the insolence of wealth, is unknown; and there are no distinctions among individuals, but those which arise from their age and experience, from their strength, courage, and other personal qualities. The members of different families, being all nearly upon a level, maintain the most familiar intercourse with one another, and when impelled by natural instinct, give way to their mutual desires without hesitation or reluctance. They are unacquainted with those refinements which create a strong preference of particular objects, and with those artificial rules of decency and decorum which might lay a restraint upon their conduct (Millar 1806; in Sica 2005, p. 55)

A common thread through all the Scottish moralists’ writings was an overriding concern for the ways that industrialization, beginning to interject itself into quiet rural Scotland, was threatening to corrode interpersonal trust and the many societal virtues associated with it. Millar clearly argues in this passage that an “arcanian” condition of tranquility preceded modern, capitalist interactions, likely a reflection of comparing his life in Glasgow with work on his 30-acre farm. From this basic idea he adumbrates Thorstein Veblen’s *The Theory of the Leisure Class* by 130 years in pointing out that “preference of particular objects” – what Veblen called “conspicuous consumption” (Veblen 1899, pp. 68–101) – would also work to destabilize that “familiar intercourse with one another” which in preindustrial, preurbanized societies promoted harmonious interactions. He is not, like Rousseau or Hobbes, offering a utopian or dystopian vision of humankind’s imagined history, but instead is simply reporting what he has seen in historical documents as well as everyday life in Scotland. It was this “common sense” philosophy that endeared Millar (the most popular law professor of the era) and his confederates to generations of readers.

The most famous of the Scots was Adam Smith, whose *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) has formed the backbone of what Marx called “bourgeois economics” ever since it was published. But for social theorists, his more important book was *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). It is difficult for some readers to reconcile the dog-eat-dog ethics that today’s economists claim they see in Smith’s book on wealth creation with the soft-hearted portrait of humankind he champions in his moral theory, though surely for Smith they were all of a piece. Smith’s professor at Glasgow University, Francis Hutcheson, gave him the philosophic tools to consider the fundamental nature of humans as they interact. Anticipating Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), who inspired Max Weber and Georg Simmel, Smith proposed that sympathy and empathy for another person’s suffering

or experiences are the hallmark of humanity's peculiar and unique condition of being. He opens the book with this famous paragraph:

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature which interest him in the fortune of others and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others when we either see it or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. (Smith 1761, p. 1)

These observations, basic to Smith's worldview, are worlds removed from the fierce "survival of the fittest" ethic that pervades modern capitalism in the global economy, where no quarter is given to one's competition, and their suffering is a source of joy – and profits!

According to Smith, and contrary to raw capitalist motivations, in order for civilized society to function properly, its citizens must be able to judge the "propriety or impropriety" of one another's actions. This capacity turns around correct appraisals of gratitude, resentment, and other typical responses to social action, and Smith believed that a key measure of societal sophistication lay in being able to interpret accurately the interactional repertoire of responses people give to one another, and which are witnessed by others. When today people sometimes say about a given event or condition, "It may be legal, but it's just not *right*!" – say, regarding Wall Street salaries compared with those of factory workers or teachers – they are registering exactly the emotions and analyses that Smith felt compelled to analyze in 1759. Not surprisingly, the book has been continuously in print ever since, and has served as a beacon of sanity among competing ideologies, each trying to explain or justify the modern world.

AUGUSTE COMTE INVENTS "SOCIOLOGIE"

Auguste Comte created and noted the word *sociologie* in his notebooks on Saturday, April 27, 1839, because others had coined the expression "social physics" and he wished to distinguish himself from all his predecessors, including especially his former friend and employer, Saint-Simon (Pickering 1993, p. 615); with the recent completion of Pickering's monumental biography of Comte, more information is now accessible concerning him and his setting than for any other classical social theorist except for Marx. There is no equivalently detailed work for Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, nor any other social theorist of note). Comte embodied all the sterling qualities of early "social science" and in equal measure all its foibles. A precocious and gifted mathematician who tutored in this field when young, he turned his back on math to embrace history and philosophy as he created his multi-volume works, *The Positive Polity* (6 volumes, 1830–1842) and *The System of Positive Polity* (4 volumes, 1951–1854). In this he imitated Turgot, Condorcet, and other *philosophes* who believed that history, carefully studied, revealed patterns of rise and fall, stasis and change, which could be systematized and turned into roadmaps for the human future. Comte loathed the Catholic Church's hierarchy, patriarchalism, and medievalism in the France of his day, yet he understood the centrality of belief-systems for

human populations generally, and the role that unthinking acceptance of dogma played in controlling large groups. His hope was to link science with a particular reading of the historical record so that societies which in the past had been ruled by authoritarian violence could be guided instead by “sociological priests.” Their authority would be linked in the popular mind with specialized knowledge of how societies can and should operate, that is, from the *sociologie* he proposed.

The story of Comte’s following in Britain and the United States is a long tale, which includes heroic translating labors by the novelist and travel-writer, Harriet Martineau, and earnest propagandizing from the world-class philosopher, John Stuart Mill. A sense for this cult can be gained from a pamphlet published in New York in 1856, the year before Comte’s death, called *A Book for the Times: To exterminate Political Vermin and Moral Quacks. Social Physics; From the Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*. This is actually a retitled excerpt (pp. 399–440) from Comte’s *Positive Philosophy*. The title page quotes Comte:

By including social science in the scientific hierarchy, the positive spirit admits to success in this study only well-prepared and disciplined minds, so trained in the preceding department of knowledge as to be fit for the complex problems of the last. The long and difficult preliminary elaboration must disgust and deter vulgar and ill-prepared minds, and subdue the most rebellious. This consideration, if there were no other, would prove the eminently organic tendency of the new political philosophy. (*Positive Philosophy*, p. 434)

All this for a mere 25 cents (\$6.63 today). Comte’s characterization of the past was not charitable, and his hope for a positivist future of his own design must seem from our vantage point deliriously optimistic. Yet he proposed with endless energy and repetition a program of planned social change that he thought would eliminate most of humanity’s discomforts, political and otherwise, and would bring human behavior into line with the latest scientific achievements and ways of thinking.

As he explained:

The theories of social science are still, even in the midst of the best thinkers, completely implicated with the theologico-metaphysical philosophy... The philosophical procedure which I have undertaken to carry through becomes more difficult and bold, from this point onward, without at all changing its nature or object; and it must so far present a new character as it must henceforth be employed in creating a wholly new order of scientific conceptions, instead of judging, arranging, and improving such as already existed... In its scientific connection with the rest of this work, all that I can hope to do is to exhibit the general considerations of the case, so as to resolve the intellectual anarchy which is the main source of our moral anarchy first, and then of the political... I propose to state, first, how the institution of a science of Social Physics bears upon the principal needs and grievances of society, in its present deplorable state of anarchy... [thus] society is preserved from chimerical and mischievous schemes... there is a deep and widely-spread anarchy of the whole intellectual system, which has been in this state of disturbance during the long interregnum, resulting from the decline of theological-metaphysical philosophy. At the present time, the old philosophy is in a state of imbecility... we shall see the necessity of introducing an entirely new spirit into the organization of society, by which the useless and passionate struggles may be put

an end to, and society led out of the revolutionary state in which it has been tossed about for three centuries past. (pp. 399–400)

This fiery rhetoric, so remote from the calmly measured tones that typify today's social science writing, is nevertheless the direct progenitor of all the social sciences that have followed. In his detailed attack on the "theological-metaphysical" ways of thinking – by which he meant in short the ancient and medieval worldviews – and his protracted celebration of positivism (the "scientific method" still universally taught as good), he laid a broad path for sociology that has never been questioned. The unspoken assumption of all modern Comteans, even those who know nothing of his work, is that "objective" appraisal of society, however it is carried out or defined, will "naturally" lead to improved social life once its denizens recognize the folly of their ways. Comte assigned to sociologically alert priests the task of persuading, not forcing, the masses to obey "laws" of social behavior which their research had unearthed. It was an article of faith for him that the "modern mind" would respond with alacrity to intellectual arguments based on scientifically gleaned findings. Growing up in the shadow of the French Revolution, he knew, of course, that "the madness of crowds" was a real danger to social order, yet he thought his system could end wanton violence and the terrors it brings. He also believed that in the modern world the condition of women would be vastly improved, and in this one notion, at least for women in the richest societies, his hopes have been well founded. Yet very little of the history of humanity's last century supports his most cherished beliefs, yet they live on, just as Comte thought they should, in the unexamined hearts of social scientists everywhere. Like it or not, know it or not, they are all Comteans.

THE LASTING CLASSICAL VOICES

We arrive at five thinkers whose claim to "permanent" residence in the pantheon of social theory is as firm as can be imagined given current norms of intellectual lineage-formation: Karl Marx (1818–1883), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), Georg Simmel (1858–1918), and Max Weber (1864–1920). Without each of their unique visions of how industrialized society functioned in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, we could hardly speak a line of modern sociology, since they gave us a vocabulary that remains indispensable. Many of their ideas have steadily migrated from the lecture hall to newspapers and then into common parlance, e.g. rationalization, division of labor, anomie, marginality, survival of the fittest, class warfare, the Protestant ethic, charisma, and so on.

The literature on Marx has for decades operated within an international frame of reference that continues, even after official communism's apparent demise, to produce thousands of new entries per annum. Not long ago, the venerable British firm Routledge published *Karl Marx's Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy 150 Years Later* (Musto 2010), a collection of 32 Marxological studies that probe a compendium of working papers from 1857 to 1858 preparatory to *Das Kapital* that Marx never published. It remained unknown until 1939, when a German edition was published in Russia, and was unavailable in English until the 1970s. The clothbound version of this new commentary sold well enough to justify a paperback

edition. This is roughly equivalent to a book being offered today that at length and with utmost seriousness would investigate unpublished working drafts of Brahms' symphonies from the 1870s. Yet the Marx volume "still sells," whereas the imagined Brahms volume would surely not. So long as contemporary societies produce conditions of "alienation" and "reification," operate through "the cash nexus" and "commodification," "immisserate" laborers while capitalists flourish, destroy the global environment in pursuit of profits, and subordinate broad groups of people to elite control, Marx and Engels' works will be studied, taught, and elaborated.

The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (1844) of the youthful Marx, the "Communist Manifesto" (1848), and *The German Ideology* (1845–1846) advance insights and arguments that have played well in existential philosophy and psychology as well as literature and drama. They capture graphically and with memorable rhetoric the powerless and hopeless sensations experienced by that great majority of humanity who work for capital but do not own it – who have nothing to sell but their "labor power." The "late Marx" of *Theories of Surplus Value* (3 vols., 1861–1863), *Capital* (vol. 1, 1867), and *The Civil War in France* (1871), to name but a few, are works that speak more to political-economic and governmental issues, and exhibit more utility when analyzing global trade, war, and the systematic exploitation of labor, both domestic and international. Marx's proudest analytic achievement, the "Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall" (*Capital*, Vol. 3, Book III, Part 3) and its associated labor theory of value, continues to fascinate analysts who are not mesmerized by the limiting parameters of "capitalist logic." And without Marx's notion of "commodity fetishism," students of consumer culture would lack a fundamental analytic tool. Sociologically, Marxist ideas have become the bedrock of research in social stratification, gender relations, political sociology, and other subfields, even including the sociology of culture. The works that Marx and Engels created during their 40-year partnership, and that Engels continued alone for another 12 years, will continue to inform, correct, and inspire social theory until such time that a post-exploitative utopia can be formed, or until people no longer care to interpret the meaning of social relations that function within the strictures of "private property."

Herbert Spencer was born two years after Marx, but into an entirely different intellectual and political orbit – as shy about public appearances as Marx was bold, as afraid of familial complications as Marx was intrepid. Spencer was invited to New York City's Delmonico's Steak House for a grand dinner on November 8, 1882, where Andrew Carnegie and a host of politicians, religious leaders, intellectuals, and businessmen feted him, to his astonishment and discomfort. They ate a 12-course dinner with a dozen wines that began at 6:00 and ended at 9:30 with cigars, followed by speeches about Spencer's greatness – they called him "the Aristotle of our age" – and their own, which his ideas, so they thought, explained and justified (Werth 2009, pp. 276–295). In "The Theory of Population" (1852), he invented the phrase "survival of the fittest," seven years prior to Darwin's *Origin of Species*, and thus became a favorite of the robber barons, especially Carnegie, since it seemed to justify their plutocratic control of the American economy during the late nineteenth century. They comforted themselves with this denatured Spencerianism: since they had all the money and power, they must ipso facto be "the best." Yet Spencer emphasized in his *Principles of Biology* (1872) that "fittest" did

not mean best or most desirable in moral or societal terms. As in Darwin, it simply denoted creatures who, given their environment, were most likely to survive. That this situation when applied to human arrangements can result in some of the “worst” people thriving – consider heartless marauders during war – was perfectly obvious to Spencer, but much less so to the capitalists of his period for whom any governmental regulating of their activities was anathema, and any labor organizing a destabilizing force to be destroyed at once.

Without realizing it while he created his “organic analogy” between the physical and social bodies, he became the intellectual symbol for laissez-faire government. Yet his *Principles of Sociology* (1896) offered far more than a simple-minded legitimization of “Wild West Capitalism” of the kind typified by Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, and their peers. Spencer was first of all a dedicated scientist who studied as much natural history as he failed to study human history (which separates him distinctly from Comte, Marx, and Weber), or literature, art, music, and philosophy. His forté was careful observation, not scholarly analysis of previous authors’ works. By drawing careful, even exhausting, analogies between the structure of the human body and the various social institutions and social structures of all the societies he could find, he believed he had discovered the same “laws” of social organization that Comte and Marx had pursued by other means.

Spencer was not a moralist; in fact, his closest associates often remarked on his “total lack of sensuality” and “lack of emotional depth” (Collier in Royce 1904, p. 188). British capitalist society, from which he was insulated in his study, did not offend him, as it did Marx and Engels, due to its systematic oppression of workers, and the cyclical collapses of its finances. Instead, he was keen to understand what central principle organized all natural life, human included, and he decided that “evolution” was the correct answer, a set of immutable forces that must be left free to do its worst or best without any governmental intrusion. During the late twentieth century Spencer’s name was dusted off from library neglect and inserted, often incorrectly, into debates about “socio-biology.” But as with Comte, for all the curt references to his name in this literature, very few scholars bothered to read Spencer to find out what he was truly doing. If his multivolume studies of biology and psychology were out of date even before they appeared, his three fat books called *The Principles of Sociology* (1876–1896) showed Spencer at his best, along with his *The Study of Sociology* (1873). He not only argued strenuously for the legitimacy of this newfangled field, but also showed in enormous detail that an evolutionary theory of societal development could make sense of the anthropological record as it was then known. Using information systematically compiled and organized by three research assistants whom he hired (who over 20 years and at great cost produced the 12-volume *Descriptive Sociology*), he decided that societies went through periods of increased differentiation of functions as they “matured,” and that military societies necessarily gave way to industrial societies. The former are authoritarian, brutal, hold women in low esteem, and do not invite innovation, whereas the latter tend toward democracy, the equalization of gender roles, the rich economic fruits of peace rather than war, and an opportunity for continued positive development. It was for arguments like these that Spencer’s books were used as required textbooks in sociology courses throughout England and the United States well into the twentieth century.

About Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel, a very great deal has been written in all the major languages; entire scholarly journals are dedicated now to each of them separately, and hundreds of monographs, textbooks, and summaries of their work are readily available. Analyzing their works and lives has become an academic “industry”; one recent bibliography concerning Weber lists nearly 5000 items in English alone (Sica 2004). There are interesting links and differences among them, particularly in view of the fact that their lives almost perfectly overlapped. Durkheim wrote an unflattering review of a book written by Marianne Weber, Max Weber’s wife and intellectual partner, but otherwise never referred to Weber himself in his own works. Durkheim’s nephew, the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, testified that Weber had in his personal library a complete set of scholarly journals that Durkheim founded and edited, yet he never cited Durkheim’s work in any of his own. Simmel did not refer to Durkheim, but was a frequent houseguest of Weber’s, and a recipient of Weber’s personal and professional kindness. Simmel, an unorthodox scholar and talented lecturer, was not offered a professorship in Germany, in part due to anti-Semitism, despite Weber’s vigorous sponsorship, and the fame Simmel enjoyed at Berlin University. Yet Durkheim’s profoundly Jewish identity did not stop him from creating French sociology from nothing, rising to the top academic position in the nation, even in a society with deeply anti-Semitic tendencies (witness the Dreyfus Affair).

Durkheim seldom invoked historical data in his work, but wrote a long book about aboriginal religion in Australia called *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1911), which has become a classic. He did no fieldwork, instead relying on others’ reports. Weber was formally educated both as an attorney and an historian (ancient as well as medieval), and once spent a summer in a relative’s textile mill carrying out a “time and motion study.” His major work, posthumously titled by his wife as *Economy and Society*, reflects the centrality that economic relationships always had in Weber’s sociology. Simmel did no fieldwork in a formal sense, but so keenly studied Berlin society, where he was a lifelong resident, that he was able to formulate the principles of social psychology without access to a lab for experiments. From Durkheim we get a solidly “sociologistic” worldview, where “personality” is an illusion and social organization dictates the structures and functions of human life, individually and collectively. He also wrote the first manual on sociological methods, the most important study of suicide by a sociologist, and propelled Spencer into continuous use by including his ideas in his dissertation, *The Division of Labor in Society* (Durkheim 1984 [1893]). Weber’s sociology (a term he refused to use until very late in life) comprised sociologies of law, of music, of ancient and modern economic institutions, of bureaucracy, of comparative religions, or political power, and many more ingredients, surely the broadest and most encompassing portrayal of what sociology could accomplish when in the right hands.

Simmel helped Americans, especially at Chicago, legitimate sociology as a new field in the 1890s through translations of his essays. More importantly, his social psychological perceptions linked young Marx’s understanding of alienation and reification with recent postmodern “interventions” regarding identity, sexuality, and marginality. None of the other classical theorists shared Simmel’s philosophically astute rendering of private consciousness as it tries to negotiate the difficulties as well as the opportunities of the modern metropole.

Taken together, these classical theorists, and their predecessors, set a high standard of insights and ideas for their sociological descendents, which, some would argue, has not yet been surpassed. Yet with fresh biographies of Max and Marianne Weber now available (Meurer 2010; Radkau 2009), a recent Durkheim biography in French (Fournier 2007), a now complete translation of Simmel's *Soziologie* (1908) finally available (Simmel 2009), and the Marx/Engels *Collected Works* completed (Marx/Engels 1975–2010), perhaps the time will soon come when contemporary sociologists will be able to come to terms with their past in a more complete and satisfactory way.

References

- Ashley, D. and Orenstein, D.M. (1985). *Sociological Theory: Classical Statements*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Baker, K.M. (1975). *Condorcet: From Natural Philosophy to Social Mathematics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Becker, Howard P. and Harry Elmer Barnes (eds. and comps) (1938). *Social Thought from Lore to Science*. New York: D. C. Heath and Co.
- Bogardus, E. (1940). *The Development of Social Thought*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Broadie, A. (ed.) (1997). *The Scottish Enlightenment: An Anthology*. Edinburgh, Scotland: Canongate Books.
- Camic, C. (1983). *Experience and Enlightenment: Socialization for Cultural Change in Eighteenth Century Scotland*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Carey, H.C. (1858–1859). *Principles of social science*. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott.
- Comte, A. (1856). *Social Physics from the Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*. New York: Calvin Blanchard.
- Darwin, C.G. (1952). *The Next Million Years*. London: Rupert Hart-Davis.
- Durkheim, E. (1951 [1897]). *On Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (trans. John A. Spaulding and George Simpson). New York: Free Press (Originally published in France).
- Durkheim, E. (1984 [1893]). *The Division of Labor in Society*. (With an introduction by Lewis A. Coser; trans W. D. Halls). New York: Free Press.
- Durkheim, E. (2006). *On Suicide*. Tr. by Robin Buss. Intro. by Richard Sennett and notes by Alexander Riley. London, UK: Penguin Books.
- Ellwood, C. (1938). *A History of Social Philosophy*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Engels, F. (1987 [1845]). *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. New York: Penguin Books. Originally published as *Die Lage der Arbeitenden Klasse in England*. Leipzig: Otto Wigand.
- Fournier, M. (2007). *Emile Durkheim: 1858–1917*. Paris: Fayard.
- Frisby, D. and Featherstone, M. (eds.) (1997). *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*. London: Sage Publications.
- Gouldner, A. (1970). *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Hertzler, J. (1936). *The Social Thought of the Ancient Civilizations*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- How, A. (2016). *Restoring the Classic in Sociology: Traditions, Texts and the Canon*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lengermann, P.M. and Niebrugge, G. (1998). *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830–1930: A Text/Reader*. New York: McGraw-Hill, reissued by Waveland Press, Long Grove, IL 2007.

- Levine, D. (1980 [1957]). *Simmel and Parsons: Two Approaches to the Study of Society*. New York: Arno Press.
- Levine, D., Carter, E.B., and Gorman, E.M. (1976). Simmel's influence on American sociology. *American Journal of Sociology* 81: 813–845; 1112–32.
- Lundberg, G. (1939). *Foundations of Sociology*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.
- Lundberg, G. (1947). *Can Science Save Us?* New York: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1975–2010). *Collected Works (51 Volumes)*. New York: International Publishers.
- Meurer, B. (2010). *Marianne Weber: Leben und Werk*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Millar, J. (1806). *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks or, An Inquiry into the Circumstances Which Give Rise to Influence and Authority in the Different Members of Society*, 4e. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme.
- Mirowski, P. (1989). *More Heat than Light: Economics as Social Physics, Physics as Nature's Economics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. 1965. Review of A.H.M. Jones' *The Later Roman Empire 284–602*. *The Oxford Magazine*, March 4, p. 264. Reprinted in Momigliano's *Quarto contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*. Rome: Edizioni di storia de letteratura, 1969, pp. 645–647.
- Morris, A.D. (2015). *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Mussolini, B. (1928). *My Autobiography*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Musto, M. (ed.) (2010). *Karl Marx's Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy 150 Years Later*. London: Routledge.
- Parsons, T. (1937). *The Structure of Social Action*. New York: McGraw-Hill Pubs.
- Pickering, Mary 2009 [1993]: *Auguste Comte: An Intellectual Biography*, Volume 1; Vol. 2 (2009), Vol. 3 (2009). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Quetelet, A. (1835). *Sur l'homme et le Développement de ses Faculties, ou Essai de Physique Sociale*, vol. 2. Paris: Imprimeur-Libraire.
- Quetelet, A. (1984). *Adolphe Quetelet's Research on the Propensity for Crime at Different Ages* (trans. Sawyer Sylvester). New York: Anderson Publishing Company.
- Radkau, J. (2009). *Max Weber: A Biography* (trans. Patrick Camiller). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Ritzer, G. (1988). *Sociological Theory*, 2e. New York: Knopf.
- Royce, J. (ed.) (1904). *Herbert Spencer: An Estimate and Review, Together with a Chapter of Personal Reminiscences* (James Collier [his Secretary]). New York: Fox, Duffield, and Co.
- Sica, A. (2004). *Max Weber: A Comprehensive Bibliography*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Sica, A. (ed.) (2005). *Social Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Present*. Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Simmel, G. (2009). *Sociology: Inquiries into the Construction of Social Forms, Vols. 1 and 2* (trans. Anthony Blasi et al. Boston: Brill.
- Smith, A. (1761). *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 2e. London: A. Millar, in the Strand; and A. Kincaid and J. Bell, in Edinburgh.
- Sorokin, P. (1928). *Contemporary Sociological Theories*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Urry, J. (2004). Small worlds and the new 'Social physics'. *Global Networks* 4 (2): 109–130.
- Veblen, T. (1899). *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Werth, B. (2009). *Banquet at Delmonico's: Great Minds, the Gilded Age, and the Triumph of Evolution in America*. New York: Random House.