The Sociology of Intellectuals

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■ **Abstract**   The sociology of intellectuals has adopted three fundamentally distinct
approaches to its subject. The Dreyfusards, Julien Benda, "new class" theorists, and
Pierre Bourdieu treated intellectuals as potentially a class-in-themselves, that is, as
having interests that distinguish them from other groups in society. Antonio Gram-
sci, Michel Foucault, and theorists of "authenticity" treated intellectuals as primarily
class-bound, that is, representatives of their group of origin. Karl Mannheim, Edward
Shils, and Randall Collins treated intellectuals as relatively class-less, that is, able to
transcend their group of origin to pursue their own ideals. These approaches divided
the field at its founding in the 1920s, during its mid-century peak, and in its late-century
revival.

INTRODUCTION

The sociology of intellectuals, like its subjects of study, has had a checkered history.
At times, the field seemed ready to emerge as a cohesive body of literature, just as its
subjects—variously defined in the literature as persons with advanced educations,
producers or transmitters of culture or ideas, or members of either category who
engage in public issues—sometimes gelled into a cohesive social group. At other
times, the field hardly existed and was subsumed into the sociology of professions,
the sociology of knowledge, the sociology of science, and other fields—just as
its subjects sometimes shunned the collective identity of intellectuals, preferring
professional, middle-class, ethnic, and other identities. The field's ebbs and flows
have not often matched those of its subjects, with the result that the sociology
of intellectuals is sometimes written in a normative key, attempting to call into
existence a group that no longer rallies to the name "intellectual."

Such was the field's founding moment, in the late 1920s, when three ap-
proaches to the subject emerged, treating intellectuals as a class-in-themselves,
as class-bound, or as class-less (see also the categorizations in Brym 1980:12–13,
1987, 2001; Gagnon 1987b:6–10, Szelényi & Martin 1988:649). These three ap-
proaches are reflected in the three editions of the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sci-
ences*: Michels (1932) adopting a class-in-itself approach, Shils (1968) adopting a

class-less approach, and Brym (2001) adopting a class-bound approach. Our review of the field, focusing primarily on the English-language literature, is organized around these three approaches, discussing the updating of each approach during three waves of interest in the subject, in the 1920s, the 1950s, and the 1990s.

The Founding of the Field

In contrast to the first decade of the twentieth century, when the Dreyfus Affair sparked a positive and almost messianic collective identity among intellectuals around the world (Kurzman 2003), intellectuals in the interwar period were characterized by disillusionment and de-identification. Roberto Michels, writing in 1932 on "Intellectuals" for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, characterized his subjects as "largely demoralized" and undergoing "an intense spiritual self-criticism" (Michels 1932:123–24). Theodor Adorno recalled the early 1920s as a period of "anti-intellectual intellectuals" seeking authenticity through religion (Adorno [1964] 1973:3–4). Édouard Berth, whose savage critique of intellectuals just before World War I as "the harshest, the most nefarious, the most ruinous of aristocracies," prefaced his second edition in 1926 with the pitiful image of "intellectual and moral prostration" beneath the plutocratic captains of industry (Berth 1926:74, p. 29). V. I. Lenin, who expressed high hopes before the war that bourgeois intellectuals would turn revolutionary and enlighten the working class (Lenin [1902] 1975:24–25), now called them "not [the nation's] brains but its shit" (Koenker & Bachman 1997:229). Leftist intellectuals in China adopted the slogan, "Down with the intellectual class" (Schwarcz 1986:186). "Intellectuals of all countries, unite!" wrote Roger Lévy (1931:164). "Unite because the war [World War I], which decimated you, has reduced the survivors to the wages of misery; unite because, among other workers, your brothers, you [survivors] dare to speak of the material conditions of your miserable lives, which are brightened only by the will to learn or teach."

At this low point in the collective history of the intellectuals, the sociology of intellectuals emerged out of the long tradition of speculation on the subject (Plato [360 B.C.] 2000, Campanella [1602] 1981, Bacon [1627] 1989, Fichte [1794] 1988, Comte [1822] 1969, Bakunin [1870] 1950, Makhaïski [1899] 1979; see also Boggs 1993:15–27). Three approaches developed at this time, each distinguished by its consideration of intellectuals as a class: one, pioneered by Antonio Gramsci, viewed intellectuals as bound to their class of origin; a second, associated with Karl Mannheim, treated intellectuals as potentially class-less; a third, popularized by Julien Benda, proposed that intellectuals form a class in themselves.

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-IN-THEMSELVES   Dreyfusard intellectuals claimed that they formed a class:

> We alumni and alumnae of the colleges are the only permanent presence that corresponds to the aristocracy in older countries. We have continuous

traditions, as they have; our motto, too, is *noblesse oblige*; and unlike them, we stand for ideal interests solely, for we have no corporate selfishness and wield no power of corruption. We sought to have our own class consciousness. "*Les intellectuels*!" What prouder club name could there be than this one. (James 1912:319)

This class was not based on its relation to the means of production, as in most Marxist images of class at the time, but rather on its *lack* of relation to the means of production. That is, intellectuals considered their interests to be coterminous with the interests of society as a whole, precisely because they were free from the narrowing of interest that the occupation of any particular position in the economy entailed.

[H]ere is an entire phalanx of people who not only conceive of general ideas, but for whom ideas determine the corresponding emotions, which in turn determine their acts, which are, much of the time, directly opposed to the immediate interest of the individual. Here is a lieutenant-colonel [Georges Picquart] who, through devotion to an abstaction, ruins his career, accepts three months of detention; a novelist [Émile Zola] who confronts the savagery of the crowds; thousands of young men who sign manifestos that may compromise their future, perhaps even their security. . . . (Benda 1900:309)

The author of this paean to the intellectual anti-class, Julien Benda, later wrote what we take to be the founding document of the sociology of intellectuals, *La Trahison des clercs*, translated into English as *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (Benda [1927] 1928). This work may be little known today but was influential at the time, going through more than 50 editions in 20 years. The author defined his subjects as "all those whose activity essentially is *not* in the pursuit of practical aims, all those who seek their joy in the practice of an art or a science or metaphysical speculation, in short in the possession of non-material advantages, and hence in a certain manner say: 'My kingdom is not of this world'" (p. 43). Benda contrasted this group with "'the laymen,' whose function consists essentially in the pursuit of material interests" (p. 43).

The treason in Benda's title referred to the failure of contemporary intellectuals to uphold their anti-class. The Dreyfusard phalanx that Benda optimistically described in 1900 had succumbed to base "political passions" (p. 45), by which Benda meant material interests. "The modern 'clerk' has entirely ceased to let the layman alone descend to the market place," he asserted (p. 46), and in descending they have "betrayed their duty, which is precisely to set up a corporation whose sole cult is that of justice and of truth" (p. 57). Benda repeatedly listed three sets of interests that intellectuals were duty-bound to avoid: nation, class, and race. He identified nationalism, predating the outbreak of World War I but accelerating thereafter, as particularly pernicious. Contemporary intellectuals, he wrote, "declare that their thought cannot be good, that it cannot bear good fruit, unless they remain rooted on their native soil, unless they are not 'uprooted'" (p. 64). Benda

worried that the break-up of the intellectual class might be permanent. "It is hard to imagine a body of men of letters (for corporative action becomes more and more important) attempting to withstand the bourgeois classes instead of flattering them. It is still harder to imagine them turning against the tide of their intellectual decadence and ceasing to think that they display a lofty culture when they sneer at rational morality and fall on their knees before history" (p. 194).

Despite its literary flavor and apocalyptic tone, Benda's book encapsulates many of the themes of the class-in-itself approach to the sociology of intellectuals: Intellectuals can develop common interests that set them apart from other groups in society. Intellectuals can organize around these interests sometimes and reject such organization at other times.

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-BOUND   Antonio Gramsci, the Italian communist, criticized Benda's famous book for ignoring "the function of the intellectuals in the life of the state" (Gramsci [1932] 1995:470). Gramsci's approach to the subject of intellectuals began with a questioning of the Dreyfusard ideal: "Are intellectuals an autonomous and independent social group, or does every social group have its own particular specialised category of intellectuals?" (Gramsci [1932] 1971:5). He quickly selected the second option:

> Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. (p. 5)

The bourgeoisie produced its intellectuals, and the proletariat produced its own. Both sets of intellectuals were "organic" to the extent that there was a "relationship between the intellectuals and the world of production" (p. 12). Gramsci contrasted "organic" intellectuals with "traditional" intellectuals, exemplified by Catholic clerics, who "put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group" (p. 7). This self-conception was delusional—a "social utopia by which the [traditional] intellectuals think of themselves as 'independent'" (p. 8)—but the bourgeoisie sought to eliminate even this fictional autonomy through "its struggle to assimilate and to conquer 'ideologically' the traditional intellectuals," a process "made quicker and more efficacious the more the group in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own organic intellectuals" (p. 10). The vagaries of the intellectuals' relations with the classes that produced them are the subject of numerous scattered references throughout Gramsci's prison notebooks (Gramsci [1929–1935] 1971).

Gramsci's writings on intellectuals only became well-known a decade after his death, when his prison notebooks were published. From the mid-twentieth century onward, while Benda was largely forgotten, Gramsci's reputation has steadily spread, and not only among Marxists. His work is commonly cited as an exemplar of the class-bound approach to the sociology of intellectuals: Intellectuals cannot

form a single group, but are divided into subsets that emerge from and serve other social groups.

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-LESS   Karl Mannheim, an exiled Hungarian social-democrat, also distanced his sociology of intellectuals from Benda's approach. Benda, he wrote, was "mistaken" in clinging to the "traditional cult of the exclusively self-oriented, self-sufficient intelligentsia"; the danger Benda saw in politicization lay rather in "the encapsulation of free thought under the constraint of church, state or class organization" (Mannheim [1932] 1993:79).

Mannheim's primary statement on the sociology of intellectuals, a section of his famous book *Ideology and Utopia*, defined its subject by the ability to avoid such fetters: intellectuals were "not too firmly situated in the social order," an "unanchored, *relatively* class-less stratum," and "socially unattached" (Mannheim [1929] 1985:154–55), drawing on recent work by Max Weber (M. Weber [1919] 1946) and Alfred Weber (A. Weber [1923] 1999). Mannheim rejected the view that "intellectuals constitute either a class or at least an appendage to a class" (p. 155)—the Dreyfusard and Marxist approaches, respectively. Rather, intellectuals transcended class, at least to a certain degree. Their education exposed them to "opposing tendencies in social reality, while the person who is not oriented toward the whole through his education, but rather participates directly in the social process of production, merely tends to absorb the *Weltanschauung* [worldview] of that particular group" (p. 156). Education allowed intellectuals "to attach themselves to classes to which they originally did not belong," as "they and they alone were in a position to choose their affiliation" (p. 158). As a result,

> . . .unattached intellectuals are to be found in the course of history in all camps. Thus they always furnished the theorists for the conservatives who themselves because of their own social stability could only with difficulty be brought to theoretical self-consciousness. They likewise furnished the theorists for the proletariat which, because of its social conditions, lacked the prerequisites for the acquisition of the knowledge necessary for modern political conflict. Their affiliation with the liberal bourgeoisie has already been discussed. (Mannheim [1929] 1985, p. 158)

Affiliation did not imply utter subservience, Mannheim continued. Because of their "need for total orientation and synthesis," their "broader point of view," and their "interest in seeing the whole of the social and political structure," intellectuals had a "mission" to encourage mutual understanding among classes and to "create a form outside of the party schools in which the perspective of and the interest in the whole is safeguarded" (pp. 161–62). In later work, Mannheim worried that this mission was in jeopardy, and that "the decline of a relatively free intelligentsia" in the twentieth century threatened "the comparative and critical approach which an atmosphere of multi-polar viewpoints stimulates" (Mannheim 1956:166).

These three approaches to the sociology of intellectuals may be summarized as follows (Table 1):

TABLE 1

	Class-in-itself	Class-bound	Class-less
Founding figure:	Benda	Gramsci	Mannheim
Do intellectuals sometimes form a distinct class?	Yes	No	No
Do intellectuals generally transcend their class of origin?	Yes	No	Yes

These three approaches have continued to shape the field during subsequent waves of interest in the subject.[1]

Mid-Century Attention

Scattered works on the sociology of intellectuals continued to appear in the 1940s, but the field surged in the late 1950s, as evidenced by the anthologies published soon thereafter (de Huszar 1960, Rieff 1969). "Intellectuals are in fashion," a French author noted (Bodin 1962:5, quoted in Nichols 1978:1). This wave coincided with a rise in the fortunes of intellectuals in many regions of the world. In the United States and Western Europe, the welfare state both expanded the intellectual class and hired it to solve society's problems (Bauman 1992, Bruce-Briggs 1979b). In Eastern Europe, intellectuals entered a "heroic age" (Shlapentokh 1990:105–48) of technocratic ascendancy (Konrád & Szelényi 1979). In many newly independent countries, intellectuals assumed leadership of the post-colonial state (Shils [1958] 1972). The global upswing in student movements drew additional attention to the role of intellectuals in social change (Katsiaficas 1987, Kraushaar 1998), and a number of studies emphasized the rise of educational attainment in contemporary stratification (Collins 1979, Sarfatti-Larson 1977, Young 1958).

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-LESS   This approach came to dominate the field in the 1950s. The structural-functionalist paradigm reserved a special role for intellectuals as "people specializing in cultural concerns and being, relatively speaking, relieved of responsibility for current societal functions"—that is, people concerned with the meaning of symbolic systems rather than with the interaction and contention of social groups (Parsons 1969:11). Intellectuals, in this view, do not form a class and are "necessarily *not* among the primary holders of political power or controllers of economic resources" (p. 23). Rather, they elaborate the symbolic system of all social groups—not as organic representatives of these groups, as in the class-bound perspective, but as occupants of a role that emphasizes "universalistic standards" (p. 14), "'non-material' factors of effective social action" (p. 21),

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[1]These categories suggest a fourth possibility, in which intellectuals form a distinct class and do not transcend their class of origin. Such an image of hereditary castes of intellectuals does not play a large part in the sociology of intellectuals.

and "the double imperatives of the maximal (though always imperfect) objectivity of science and of seeking general theoretical and empirical solutions of problems regardless of their bearing on the immediate problems of action" (p. 25).

Edward Shils, the leading figure in the field at this time, argued that the disjuncture in the intellectuals' role—between their universalistic ideals and society's more mundane concerns—led frequently to intellectuals' alienation. "It is practically given by the nature of the intellectuals' orientation that there should be some tension between the intellectuals and the value-orientations embodied in the actual institutions of any society" (Shils [1958] 1972:7). Other authors drew similar conclusions, likening intellectuals to explorers who "specialize, so to speak, in doing the unexpected" (Znaniecki 1940:165); or to court jesters and medieval fools, whose power "lies in [their] freedom with respect to the hierarchy of the social order" (Dahrendorf [1953] 1969:54). Still others emphasized intellectuals' rebelliousness (Aron [1955] 1957, Brinton [1938] 1965:39–49, Lipset & Dobson 1972, Schumpeter 1942)—a concern that long predated structural-functionalism. Since the early 1800s, certain scholars worried that educational opportunities were expanding faster than appropriate jobs, creating a malcontented "intellectual proletariat," detached by their education from their traditional station but unable to maintain the standard of living they believed they deserved (Barbagli [1974] 1982, Kotschnig 1937, O'Boyle 1970). Emile Durkheim blamed general education, among other things, for the rise of anomie in modern society (Durkheim [1893] 1984:307; but see his defense of Dreyfusard intellectuals, Durkheim [1898] 1973). Along similar lines, Seymour Martin Lipset (1959) noted that intellectuals could express anomic resentment even when their social status and employment opportunities were favorable, as in the United States of the 1950s. As he and a co-author put it in a later essay, "To gain the participation of the intellectuals, power must offer more than bread, it must allow access to a court of glory" (Lipset & Basu 1975:465).

In addition to their critical tendencies, Shils also emphasized the intellectuals' frequent access to such a "court of glory." In contrast with Parsons, Shils noted that intellectuals have at times "played a great historical role on the higher levels of state administration"—mandarins, civil services, even philosopher-kings (Shils [1958] 1972:8–9). Shils published an extended study of one such instance, the intellectuals who came to rule India after decolonization (Shils 1961). Shils viewed intellectuals in India, as in other decolonized states (Shils 1962:19–24), as the cadre necessary to bring modernity to traditional societies. Yet for all his appreciation of the talents and achievements of India's great intellectual-politicians and intellectual-bureaucrats, Shils feared that too much involvement in the state would undermine the intellectuals' true role, namely that of responsible critic (Shils 1961:116). Robert K. Merton made a similar point with regard to New Deal intellectuals in the United States: When intellectuals participated in government, they lost the autonomy—"whether real or spurious"—associated with the intellectual role (Merton [1945] 1968:276). Still others considered intellectuals' political participation to be a betrayal of the intellectual's duty to transcend partisan commitments (Kołakowski 1972, Molnar 1961).

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-BOUND   Various radical scholars viewed this call for intellectuals to be free of partisanship as a mystification of their role as spokespersons for the power elite. C. Wright Mills argued that intellectuals have succumbed to career pressures and "a fear which leads to self-intimidation . . . sometimes politely known as 'discretion,' 'good taste,' or 'balanced judgment.'" As a result, "The means of effective communication are being expropriated from the intellectual worker. The material basis of his initiative and intellectual freedom is no longer in his hands" (Mills [1944] 1963:297; see also Mills [1959] 1963). Arlene Kaplan Daniels called white male academics hardly "free of status bias" and therefore unable to claim Mannheimian class-lessness (Daniels 1975:343–44). Noam Chomsky described bourgeois intellectuals as offering ideological apologies and a veneer of legitimacy to the bourgeois state (Chomsky 1969, 1978).

Yet these critiques of class-lessness often aspired to class-lessness themselves. Mills juxtaposed the timidity of power-elite apologists with his own aspiration to "relate himself to the value of truth" and "responsibly cope with the whole of live experience" (Mills [1944] 1963:299). Daniels claimed for women and African-Americans the insightfulness of marginality that Mannheim had claimed for white male academics (Daniels 1975:344). Chomsky contrasted bourgeois intellectuals' subordination to the state with the "civilized norms" to which he presumably aspired (Chomsky 1969:72).

Michel Foucault, in his enigmatic fashion, offered a class-bound theory for the postmodern age. "The role of the intellectual is no longer to place himself a 'little ahead or a bit to the side' so as to speak the silent truth to all," he argued against class-lessness. "Rather, it is to struggle against the forms of power in relation to which he is both object and instrument: within the domain of 'knowledge,' 'truth,' 'consciousness,' and 'discourse'" (Foucault & Deleuze [1972] 1973:104). The difference, he elaborated in another interview, lay in the distinction between the "universal" intellectual, "a free subject . . . counterposed to the service of the State or Capital," versus "specific" intellectuals, grounded "within specific sectors, at the precise points where their own conditions of life and work situate them (housing, the hospital, the asylum, the laboratory, the university, family and sexual relations)." Specific intellectuals do not speak for truth in the abstract—Foucault broke here with the dominant French "universal" intellectual of the era, Jean-Paul Sartre—but only for the impact of general truth regimes in particular locations. As with Gramsci, Foucault considered such grounded intellectuals to be a potentially revolutionary force—not because they represent the oppressed, as with Gramsci, but because they operate cogs in the power/knowledge machine and thus may expose and disable it (Foucault [1977] 1984:67–69; see also Bové 1986, Radhakrishnan 1990).

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-IN-THEMSELVES   The heroic Dreyfusard image of the intellectual class-in-itself continued to dissipate at mid-century. Virtually the only exception to this trend was Lewis Coser, whose work was also exceptional in raising explicitly the central question for this approach: the circumstances under which "men of letters began to find conditions favorable to the emergence of a

self-conscious stratum of intellectuals with a peculiar ethos and sense of calling"
(Coser [1965] 1970:xi; see also Lasch 1965:x). Coser identified a variety of insti-
tutional settings that allowed intellectuals to gain class-like solidarity, including
salons, coffeehouses, scientific societies, and commercial publishing (Chaps. 2–7).
Yet an overabundance of institutional settings, too, could undermine solidarity, as
in the United States in the mid-twentieth century, where intellectuals were frag-
mented among universities, research institutes, government bureaucracies, mass-
culture industries, and foundations (Chaps. 21–25), though Coser felt the country
might be witnessing the emergence of "an official establishment culture" that
would reintegrate intellectuals while de-fanging their critical legacy (Chap. 26).

Coser noted that intellectuals' political ascendancy—he offered case studies of
the French Jacobins and the Russian Bolsheviks, in particular—turned out badly:
their "scientific millenarianism," their enthusiasm to remake society along "ratio-
nal" lines, involved monstrous abuses of power (Coser [1965] 1970:Chap. 13).
This critique dominated the mainstream of class-in-itself research during this pe-
riod: the related literatures on the intelligentsia (Pipes 1961) and the "new class"
(Djilas 1957) in state socialism. Both terms were coined in the mid-nineteenth
century, "intelligentsia" referring to Russia's most alienated, radical intellectuals
(Confino 1972, Nahirny 1983), and "new class" referring to the ruling class of a
future socialist state:

> It will be the reign of scientific intelligence, the most aristocratic, despotic,
> arrogant, and contemptuous of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new
> hierarchy of real and pretended scientists and scholars, and the world will
> be divided into a minority ruling in the name of knowledge and an immense
> ignorant majority. (Bakunin [1870] 1950:38, quoted in Szelényi & Martin
> 1988:647)

Although Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas, who popularized the term "new class"
in the 1950s, did not identify it with intellectuals, whom he considered just as
oppressed as other groups under state socialism (Djilas 1957:45, 130, 135), the
literatures on the intelligentsia and the "new class" merged, placing intellectuals
at the heart of the socialist administration (Gella 1976, Konrád & Szelényi 1979,
Szelényi 1982b).

The "new class" thesis migrated to the West in the 1960s and 1970s (Bruce-
Briggs 1979a; but see the precursor, Nomad 1937). Daniel Bell, for example,
though he considered the concept of the "new class" to be "muddled" (Bell 1979),
argued that socialist and capitalist societies are converging into a postindustrial
condition based on knowledge-work and ruled by highly educated planners. Bell
welcomed the "rise of the new elites based on skill," who "are not bound by a suf-
ficient common interest to make them a political class," but share "norms of pro-
fessionalism" that "could become the foundation of the new ethos for such a class"
(Bell [1973] 1976:362). Alvin Gouldner's optimism went further: The "new class,"
he wrote, is the new "universal class," albeit a flawed one, replacing the proletariat
(Gouldner 1979:83–85). This class is composed of two groups—critical intellectu-
als and technical intelligentsia—linked through common membership in a "culture

of critical discourse" that gains authority not through force but through the power of ideas, and that subverts "all establishments, social limits, and privileges, including its own" (p. 32). At the same time, this class has a special interest in rewarding its own form of cultural capital in an effort "to increase its own share of the national product; to produce and reproduce the special social conditions enabling them to appropriate privately larger shares of the incomes produced by the special cultures they possess; to control their work and their work settings; and to increase their political power partly to achieve the foregoing" (pp. 19–20). The new class is thus caught in tension between its universalistic aspirations and particularistic interests (Szelényi 1982a)—a tension that Gouldner explored in his posthumously published study of Marx and other Marxist intellectuals, documenting their privileged social backgrounds and their sometimes contemptuous treatment of their working-class co-conspirators, all in the name of socialist revolution (Gouldner 1985).

Gouldner's work was controversial. Some questioned whether the new class formed a class. Survey analyses found a distinct new class of young social and cultural workers in the Netherlands (Kriesi 1989), but it was debatable whether a distinct class could be discerned in U.S. data (Brint 1984, Lamont 1987a). A qualitative project comparing the United States and several West European countries concluded that the new class was difficult to distinguish from contemporary bourgeois culture (Kellner & Heuberger 1992). In a more hostile vein, Wrong ([1983] 1998) argued that classes in general were an anachronistic irrelevancy, and that Gouldner's conception of "new class," in particular, was not new, not a class, and not significant (see also Pryor 1981). Speaking from the perspective of intellectual class-lessness, Wrong argued that "the conception of 'intellectuals' or 'the intellectual community' as speaking out on most issues with a single voice, let alone forming a coherent class, even with purely self-serving political aims, is likely to pass from the scene" (Wrong 1998:129). Some questioned whether the new class was coming to power; in the words of one critic, "Its members are bit players who do not even choose their own lines" (Hacker 1979:167; also Fridjónsdóttir 1987). And some challenged the intellectuals' universalistic pretensions. Ehrenreich & Ehrenreich (1979), for example, argued that intellectuals form part of a new "professional-managerial class" whose "objective class interest" lies in challenging the capitalist class, although not necessarily to benefit the working class (see also the responses to this argument in Walker 1979). Etzioni-Halevy (1985) called them "prophets who failed," whose track record of societal improvement is not nearly so rosy as their self-interested claims (see also many of the essays in Bruce-Briggs 1979c, and Johnson 1988:342)—a sentiment pithily captured by the French neologism "intellocrates" (Hamon & Rotman 1981).

The "new class" concept faded in popularity, as Wrong predicted (Frentzel-Zagorska & Zagorska 1989). One of its most prominent proponents came to have second thoughts, backing away from the concept, suggesting that the muddle of previous theoretical formulations reflected the incompleteness and failure of the new class's political projects, and urging a reorientation of study around a "general theory of symbolic domination" (Martin & Szelényi 1987, Szelényi 1986–1987, Szelényi & Martin 1988).

Late-Century Developments

The sociology of intellectuals gained a new momentum in the last years of the twentieth century, as evidenced by numerous collected volumes (Ashraf 2001, Dennis 1997a, Eyerman et al. 1987, Fink et al. 1996, Gagnon 1987, Jennings & Kemp-Welch 1997, Kellner & Heuberger 1992, Lawrence & Döbler 1996, Lemert 1991, Maclean et al. 1990, Mohan 1987, Robbins 1990, Suny & Kennedy 1999), but intellectuals themselves did not. Bauman (1987) called their fate "the fall of the legislator"—the loss of intellectuals' confidence in their ability to discern and promulgate a rational vision for society. In the United States, longstanding anti-intellectualism (Hofstadter 1963) deepened in "culture wars" that called into question the intellectuals' right to engage in autonomous cultural production (McGowan 2002, Ross 1989). Britain, whose intellectuals had long been "absent" as a class (Anderson [1968] 1992, Turner 1994:154), entered "a distinct climate of anti-intellectualism" (Dominelli & Hoogvelt 1996:60). Even France, the birthplace of modern intellectual identity, witnessed "disenchantment" (Hourmant 1997) and the "flames of anti-intellectualism" (Bodin 1997:8). But this process was uneven. In some communities—we discuss African-Americans and the Middle East— intellectuals retained or even gained stature. The study of intellectuals in these communities often involved first-person implications, while other studies took third-person tacks, examining intellectuals in historical or foreign settings. Much of the literature thus achieved a measure of distance from its subjects. The three approaches to intellectuals with which we have organized this literature review became less hard-and-fast in this period, though still salient and useful.

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-LESS   Recent work in this approach has shifted from an emphasis on intellectuals' roles in society to their roles within the intellectual world. Ahmad Sadri (1992), for example, identified four ideal types of intellectuals, forming a 2×2 table: other-worldly versus this-worldly, and paradigm-founders versus paradigm-followers (Sadri 1992:109). Sadri derived this categorization from Max Weber's analyses of religion and politics, focusing on two premises: that intellectual life is relatively autonomous from its social context, and that ideas may feed back to affect the material "base" (pp. 58–59). Sadri transferred these insights from the world of ideas to intellectuals as the carriers and proponents of such ideas. In this way, Sadri continued the class-less approach pioneered by Mannheim, although he was at pains to distinguish his discussion of intellectual autonomy from Mannheim's, which he considered ideologically committed to the formation of an intellectual class (p. 150). Scott (1997), taking a similar position of intellectual class-lessness, inverted the theoretical legacy, claiming that Weber's understanding of intellectuals as "servants" was too narrow and class-bound, while Mannheim's understanding of intellectual freedom was not far off the mark.

Randall Collins' massive work on *The Sociology of Philosophies* (Collins 1998) also began from similar premises of intellectual autonomy. Intellectuals have a "detachment from ordinary concerns" (p. 19), and "intellectual discourse focuses implicitly on its autonomy from external concerns and its reflexive awareness of itself" (p. 26). This autonomy is not absolute: "External conditions rearrange

material bases for intellectual occupations, and these in turn lead to restructuring networks, generating new alliances and oppositions in the attention space" (p. 552). Yet Collins stressed that "One layer does not reduce to another; least of all do the contents of the philosophies"—the field on which Collins focused his study—"reduce to the outermost material and political conditions" (p. 622).

The contests that determine intellectual careers operate, Collins argued, according to patterns specific to intellectuals. In particular, Collins identified two overarching patterns: a "law of small numbers" that "limits how many positions can receive widespread attention" (pp. 38–40, 81–82), and a "clustering of contemporaneous creativity" in which "philosophers of a similar level of creative eminence" tend "to cluster in the same generations" (pp. 883–89). In the approximately 75 generations since philosophy began to be recorded in writing, Collins counted almost 2700 philosophers, but the greatest of these were not dispersed randomly throughout history. Collins identified hot spots in which three or more major or secondary figures within a given cultural tradition coincided in a single generation (pp. 57–58). Collins's analysis of these hot spots focuses on the importance of rivalry within intellectual networks and on the "emotional energy of creativity" that "is concentrated at the center of networks, in circles of persons encountering one another face to face. The hot periods of intellectual life, those tumultuous golden ages of simultaneous innovations, occur when several rival circles intersect at a few metropoles of intellectual attention and debate" (pp. 379–80). Unlike Merton's ([1961] 1973) analysis of simultaneous scientific discoveries, which emphasized consensus born of a shared social setting, Collins emphasized conflict—in keeping with his previous identity as propagator of "conflict theory" (Collins [1985] 1994).

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-BOUND   Radical scholars continued to draw on Gramsci's concept of organic intellectuals, dividing intellectuals by their class position and calling for a more activist role by those who represent the oppressed classes (Boggs 1984, Kellner 1997, Said 1994, Sassoon 2000, Strine 1991). Case studies included the literature on policy intellectuals, whose service to the state was viewed, in this approach, as legitimating bourgeois interests (Domhoff 1999, Lawrence 1996, Smith 1991; for contrasting views emphasizing policy intellectuals' potential class-lessness, see Gattone 2000, Ollauson 1996).

Three debates have advanced the class-bound approach in recent years: under what conditions do intellectuals aspire to organicity; what does it mean for an intellectual to be "organic" in a community; and can intellectuals construct the community in which they claim to be organic? Crucial cases for these debates have been the Middle East, the African-American community, and nationalism, respectively.

Several scholars adopting the class-bound approach raised the question: under what conditions do intellectuals aspire to organicity? Jerome Karabel proposed a series of conditions that make intellectuals more likely to align themselves with subordinate social groups, a list drawing on social-movement theory: organized and sharply defined allies, weak but repressive elites, high ratios of intellectuals "relatively unattached" to large-scale organizations, and well-grounded cultural repertoires of resistance to authority (Karabel 1996:211–14). Boggs (1993) argued

that the logic of capitalist rationalization generated its own dialectic opposition, the division between technocratic and critical intellectuals, which expressed itself in the new social movements of the 1960s and afterward. Other case studies included Boggs (1987), Pasquinelli (1995), and Salamini (1989) on Italy, Petras & Morley (1990) on Latin America, and Brym (1977, 1978, 1980, 1988) on Jewish Marxist intellectuals in the Russian empire in the early twentieth century. Brym elaborated his approach in a series of works over the past quarter century. Like Collins's sociology of intellectuals, Brym focused on networks (Brym 1980, 1987, 2001). However, Brym's networks lead outside of the group, while Collins's networks are internal to the group. In recent work, Brym emphasized the compatibility of Collins's approach (and Bourdieu's, which we cover under the class-in-itself approach) with his own (Brym 2001). Yet one might as easily emphasize the distinctions: whereas Collins emphasized the relative autonomy of intellectuals' networks, Brym emphasized intellectuals' embeddedness in the class system. Citing Gramsci against Mannheim, Brym examined in particular the case of Jewish Marxist intellectuals in the Russian empire in the early twentieth century, whose political positions were a function of their linkages with the working class (Brym 1977, 1978, 1980, 1988).

The Middle East has been the scene of considerable debate on this issue of intellectuals' becoming organic, though the Gramscian term itself is rarely used. The term most often used instead is "authenticity," which intellectuals in the region are said to have lost and regained over the past century. After World War II, and especially in the 1960s, Arab intellectuals turned to a "quasi-magical identification with the great period of classical Arabian culture," according to the famous critique of Abdallah Laroui ([1974] 1976:156; see also Charnay 1973, Milson 1972). In Iran, too, the turn to authenticity accelerated in the 1960s, when intellectuals rejected earlier Western-oriented ideologies and adopted slogans such as "*gharbzadegi* (the state of being struck by the West)" and "return to one's (original and authentic) self" (Gheissari 1998:88, 106). Mehrzad Boroujerdi refers to this movement as "the tormented triumph of nativism," whose call for "collective consciousness" appealed to Iranian intellectuals suffering from atomism and insecurity (Boroujerdi 1996:178). In Turkey, the process occurred a bit later, in the 1970s and 1980s, with prominent Muslim intellectuals rejecting the European-derived identity of *entelektüel* in favor of the more authentic identity of *aydın*, or enlightened one (Meeker 1991:202). The irony of these claims of authenticity, noted some time ago by Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1955) and repeated by later authors, is that their very expression is, in its own terms, inauthentic, being the product of contact with the West. Whether through competition with traditionally trained religious scholars, or increasing self-confidence, or changing global trends, many intellectuals in Iran (Ashraf 2001, Jahanbegloo 2000, Richard 1990) and elsewhere in the Islamic world (Federspiel 1998, Kurzman 1998, Sagiv 1995) have recently begun to downplay authenticity and emphasize global themes of democracy and rights.

What does it mean for an intellectual to be "organic"? Class-bound analyses worried about the relations between organic intellectuals and their class of origin (Karabel 1976, Said 1994, Sassoon 2000), and the issue has been central to African-American intellectual debates ever since W. E. B. Du Bois called for

a college-educated "talented tenth" of the African-American community to "be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people. . . . The Negro race, like all other races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men" (Du Bois 1903:75; see also Dennis 1997b). The talented tenth shared much of the culture and treatment that other African-Americans experienced, yet in recent years, some scholars have questioned Du Bois's conception of the relationship between "exceptional" intellectuals and the rest of the African-American community (Dennis 1997a). Some noted the marginal position that intellectuals occupy within the community, and the suspicion with which they are sometimes regarded (Watts 1994, West 1985). Others wrestled with the issue of celebrity (Young 1997; see also Debray [1979] 1981 on a similar issue in France), or charged that intellectuals had abandoned the African-American community in favor of career advancement (Rivers 1995). Others argued that certain African-Americans unfairly dominated intellectual practice—men, for example, according to black feminist critiques (Collins [1990] 2000, hooks & West 1990, James 1997). These interventions sought not to remove African-American intellectuals from prominence in the community, but to urge greater inclusiveness and representativeness. At the same time, as the number of African-American intellectuals grows, pressure for them to be spokespersons for the race may be decreasing, allowing them to speak to more individual experiences (Banks 1996).

Can intellectuals construct the group in which they are "organic"? If so, then Gramsci's formulation may be turned on its head: Instead of groups producing their own organic intellectuals, intellectuals may be producing their own organic groups. Eyerman (1994), for example, suggested that "movement intellectuals"— citing Gramsci, but generalizing from class movements to all social movements— help to "constitute" groups, sometimes "tragically or as farce, . . . projecting on to movements their own needs and fantasies," but sometimes helping "to uncover deep-seated needs and interests" (Eyerman 1994:198). This issue has been central to debates over nationalism. The scholarly literature on the subject has generally recognized intellectuals as the catalysts of nationalist ideologies and movements (Anderson [1985] 1991, Hobsbawm 1990, Smith 1971, Suny & Kennedy 1999). Yet the literature has disagreed over causality: whether nationalism emerges from pre-existing communities, with intellectuals playing only the role of midwife, or whether nationalism involves reconfigured communities that intellectuals have foisted upon the world. The latter view might be expressed in a positive tone—a "functioning intellectual group . . . is a vital condition for nation-building" (Alatas 1977:15)—but it has more often been expressed in critical terms. Giesen (1998), for example, suggested that intellectuals built German nationalism to gain political power commensurate with their culture and education, and only became organic once they had succeeded. Similarly, Dupay (1991) argued that Caribbean intellectuals framed independence movements in terms of fighting for "the people," then positioned themselves against the rest of the population once they came to power after decolonization. Such moves do not always succeed. In Nigeria, Williams (1998) proposed, intellectuals were coopted by the state, failed to gain real power,

and turned eventually to the pro-democracy opposition movement. Likewise in Romania, Palade (2000) argued, intellectuals' promotion of nationalism served to suppress movements in opposition to Communist rule, prolonging the intellectuals' own subservience to the state. In all of these cases, intellectuals appear to have generated their own organic collective identities.

INTELLECTUALS AS CLASS-IN-THEMSELVES   All of the class-bound approaches, Dick Pels (2000) has argued, involve the "metonymic fallacy of the intellectuals," that is, they succumb "to the universal danger that resides in the very logic of speaking for others: which is to disregard that inevitable hiatus between representers and represented, or the specific sociological 'strangeness' which separates spokespersons from the subjects or objects they claim to speak for" (p. x). Intellectuals, Pels wrote, are professional "strangers," whose class interest it is to protect their "estrangement" from the state, the market, and even—for some he called "Bohemians"—the university (Pels 1995, 1999, 2000). Echoing Benda, Pels suggested that these forms of estrangement grant intellectuals an authority needed in contemporary politics. In a similar vein, Goldfarb (1998) also focused on the structural position of intellectuals, arguing that intellectuals are particularly able to address the pressing need of democracies to deliberate over common problems, to cultivate civility in public life, and to promote the subversion of restrictive common sense. There is some evidence that intellectuals have at times served as the social basis of democratization, specifically in the first and last decades of the twentieth century (Kurzman & Leahey 2002), yet further empirical work is needed to evaluate this rosy scenario.

If intellectuals form, at least potentially, a class, when and how do they do so? Recent work has begun to tackle this central question. Disco (1987:62–68) approached the issue of class formation in theoretical terms, focusing on the process of "social closure" by which intellectuals may rally to set discrete group boundaries, allowing them to reap returns on their cultural or human capital (see also Aronowitz 1990, Aronowitz & DiFazio 1994, Bauman 1992, Murphy 1988:16–21; on social closure more generally, see Manza 1992, Murphy 1988). Brint's (1994) survey of leading intellectuals and periodicals in the United States in the late 1980s found that norms of professionalism—one form of social closure—were displacing norms of social change. The returns on closure may be valuable indeed. In a provocative book that might revive the "new class" thesis, Hodges (2000) estimated that "professionals' pelf," the feudal-style "tribute" that intellectuals extract by virtue of their claims to expertise" (p. 17), increased massively in the United States in the last quarter of the twentieth century and amounted to more than a trillion dollars in the mid-1990s—more than double the profits extracted from labor by capitalists (pp. 109–13). The intellectuals "have yet to formulate an ideology expressive of their unique class interests" (p. 162), but "the issues dividing them pale in comparison with the privileges they have in common and their underlying hostility toward labor as the chief threat to those privileges" (p. 174).

Several case studies of intellectuals' solidarity have attracted particular scholarly attention, including the "New York intellectuals" (Bloom 1986, Cooney 1986,

Jacoby 1987, Jumonville 1991, Laskin 2000, Teres 1996, Wald 1987) and intellectuals in post-Mao China (Calhoun 1994, Cherrington 1997, English-Lueck 1997, Hao 2002, Lin 1999, Liu 2001, Mok 1998). The most intensively studied case involved the collapse of state socialism and its aftermath in Eastern Europe. Rather than focus on the role of the "new class" in the socialist state, these authors emphasized the oppositional identity that intellectuals developed in Czechoslovakia (Karabel 1995), East Germany (Andrews 1998, Joppke 1995, Torpey 1995), Hungary (Machecewicz 1997, Bozóki 1994), Poland (Karabel 1993, Kennedy 1990), and the Soviet Union (Garcelon 1997, Kagarlitsky 1988). This identity fractured in the post-Communist era, according to a variety of studies, with some intellectuals adopting statist or professional identities that have undermined what solidarity existed at the transitional moment (Böröcz 1991, Eyal & Townsley 1995, Greenfield 1996, Kennedy 1992, Kurczewski 1997, Mokrzycki 1995; for a contrasting approach to this phenomenon, emphasizing post-Communist intellectuals' "free-floating" class-lessness, see Coser 1996).

With the work of Pierre Bourdieu, we return full circle to Benda's approach. Bourdieu expressed contempt for the sociology of intellectuals, which he called "very often the mere conversion of an interested and partial vision of the weaknesses of one's intellectual opponents into a discourse that has all the trappings of science" (Bourdieu 1989a:4); "neither the 'sociology of the intellectuals,' which is traditionally the business of 'right-wing intellectuals,' nor the critique of 'right-wing thought,' the traditional speciality of 'left-wing intellectuals,' is anything more than a series of symbolic aggressions which take on additional force when they dress themselves up in the impeccable neutrality of science." Each side, he argued, "fails to include the point of view from which it speaks and so fails to construct the game as a whole" (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:12). More specifically, Bourdieu distanced himself from the class-less and class-bound approaches to the subject. Notions of intellectual class-lessness, he wrote, are self-deluding: "The ideology of the utopian thinker, rootless and unattached, 'free-floating', without interests or profits, . . . scarcely inclines intellectuals to conceptualize the sense of social position, still less their own position" (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:472). Bourdieu was equally dismissive of the "myth of the 'organic intellectual'" (Bourdieu 1989b:109) and of intellectuals who have become "'fellow travelers'—not of the proletariat but of second-rate intellectuals claiming to speak on behalf of the proletariat" (Bourdieu 1989b:103).

Bourdieu's alternative approach was to describe the properties of the "intellectual field" as a whole (Bourdieu 1989a,b, 1990). The intellectual field is hardly unanimous and consensual, as it comprises numerous subfields, strict hierarchies, and virulent conflict—indeed, Bourdieu acknowledged "the tendency inscribed in the very logic of the intellectual field towards division and particularism" (Bourdieu 1989b:109), and his extended study of French humanities and social science faculties during the revolt of 1968 emphasized the political implications of different positions in the academic field (Bourdieu [1984] 1988). For Bourdieu-inspired surveys of intellectual fields, see Böröcz & Southworth (1996) on Hungary, Lamont (1987b,c, 1992) on France and the United States, McLaughlin

(1998) on the United States, Rahkonen & Roos (1993) on Finland, Ringer (1992) on France and Germany, circa 1890–1920, and Verdery (1991) on Romania.

Yet Bourdieu's concept of "field" also stressed the shared interests of actors in the field, however grave their disagreements. In place of a definition, Bourdieu gave the analogy of a game: "Players agree, by the mere fact of playing, and not by way of a 'contract,' that the game is worth playing, that it is 'worth the candle,' and this *collusion* is the very basis of their competition" (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:98). The value of the game lies in the appropriation and exploitation of specific forms of capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:108). In the case of intellectuals, this form is "cultural capital," perhaps Bourdieu's most influential contribution to world sociology, whose meaning may be approximated, if not defined, by Bourdieu's usage of the term to refer to familiarity with, appreciation of, and participation in high-culture art and science (Bourdieu [1979] 1984).[2]

The analogy of capital foregrounded intellectuals' material self-interest (Swartz 1998). Culture, in Bourdieu's scheme, is something one invests in and reaps profit from. Intellectuals with high levels of cultural capital and low levels of economic capital, for example, seek "maximum 'cultural profit' for minimum economic cost" by consuming inexpensive avant-garde art that only they understand, sneering at the philistine tastes of the wealthy (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:270, 282). Intellectuals also share an "invariable" interest in autonomy, Bourdieu later wrote, going so far as to define intellectuals in part through their membership in "an intellectually autonomous field, one independent of religious, political, economic or other powers" (Bourdieu 1989b:102, 99; see Sabour 1996).

Yet intellectuals' self-interest coincides, at least potentially, with universal interests. Intellectuals, according to Bourdieu, are the bearers of universal reason (Bourdieu 1975, 1991). He offered three reasons why this should be so: (*a*) because they are dominated by the wealthy, intellectuals "feel solidarity with any and all the dominated, despite the fact that, being in possession of one of the major means of domination, cultural capital, they partake of the dominant order;" (*b*) the intellectual field has traditionally rewarded "the defense of universal causes," so that "it is possible to rely on the symbolic profits associated with these actions to mobilize intellectuals in favor of the universal;" and (*c*) intellectuals have a "monopoly" on critical reflexivity, which allows them to examine their own "interest in disinterestedness," and thus to transcend their position of privilege through "struggle for the *universalization of the privileged conditions of existence* which render the pursuit of the universal possible" (Bourdieu 1989b:109–10; see also Bourdieu [1980] 1993).

According to Bourdieu, intellectuals comprise a class fraction—specifically, a dominated fraction of the dominant class. Yet this class fraction, despite its shared interests, does not often act collectively. Only at particular moments in history have intellectuals transcended the political pessimism of pure culture (class-lessness, in

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[2]While intellectuals are reliant upon cultural capital, they are not the only people with high levels of it, and Bourdieu's analysis of cultural capital in general may be distinct from his analysis of intellectuals.

our terms) and the political hypocrisy of engagement (class-boundness) to mobilize in defense of their own interests—most prominently, Bourdieu proposed, in the Dreyfus Affair (Bourdieu 1989b:99–101). Bourdieu called for a revival of intellectual solidarity—"an International of Intellectuals"—in defense of intellectuals' corporate interests. Only when these interests are protected, Bourdieu argued, will intellectuals be free to promote universal ideals (Bourdieu 1989b:97–99). One century after the Dreyfus Affair rallied intellectuals on behalf of a French Jew, Bourdieu founded an activist group, "Raisons d'Agir" (Reasons to Act), to rally intellectuals against neoliberal globalization. Borrowing language from Bourdieu's publications, the organization's web site described itself as "a small group of researchers [who] felt the need to give more social and political force to work, research, reflection, and analysis that contradicts dominant discourses, in particular the economic discourses broadcast daily on television" (Raisons d'Agir 2000a). "It is also the outline for an autonomous intellectual collective capable of intervening in the political field . . . [and] the collective invention of a new type of political engagement for intellectuals" (Raisons d'Agir 2000b).

Bourdieu's approach differed from the Dreyfusards, and from later class-in-itself approaches, in its open admission and defense of intellectuals' self-interest. Yet it recalled the Dreyfusard campaign in its self-conscious mobilization of intellectuals, and in its identification of intellectuals with universal ideals. At the end of the twentieth century, the sociology of intellectuals abounded with Benda-like complaints about other intellectuals' treasonous passivity and their lack of political responsibility (Maclean et al. 1990), in particular around the theme of the "public intellectual," whose demise was decried as a betrayal of intellectuals' ideals (Donatich 2001, Jacoby 1987, 1999).

The Twenty-First Century

We do not expect that the three approaches we have outlined in this essay will be consolidated or transcended, as they begin from distinct premises. Yet respectful cross-talk and cross-fertilization may be on the increase, as demonstrated, for example, by Collins's and Bourdieu's shared use of the concept of "cultural capital"—though the former has used it primarily to distinguish positions within the intellectual field, while the latter has used it also to distinguish intellectuals from others in society. In addition, the three approaches to the sociology of intellectuals face a series of common concerns. We wish to highlight four avenues for exploration.

CONTESTED DEFINITIONS   Readers may have noticed that this review essay does not expend much effort in defining "intellectuals"—an approach shared by Bourdieu (1989a:4), who suggested that cut-and-dried definitions end up "destroying a central property of the intellectual field, namely, that it is the site of struggles over who does and does not belong to it." We propose that defining intellectuals is less important than exploring how intellectuals define themselves, and are defined by others, in particular historical situations. Bauman (1987:8) has emphasized the special trait of such definitions, "which makes them also different from all other

definitions: they are all self-definitions," intended to create a boundary with the definer on the inside. Yet intellectual identity can also be ascribed by outsiders, and in hostile climates the label "intellectual" (or "egghead" or other synonyms) may damage a politician, a novelist, even an academic—as in the case of a historian who was denied tenure, according to a senior member of his department, in part because "he cared more about being an intellectual than about studying intellectual history."

MATERIAL CONDITIONS   The sociology of intellectuals has generated two images of intellectuals' material conditions: in one image, intellectuals are surplus-extractors and relatively autonomous; in another, they are proletarianized and subjugated to the logic of the market or the state. The polemics that surround these images have rarely confronted one another in empirical research. We propose that such a confrontation might fruitfully take a comparative approach: comparing intellectuals with other social groups, and comparing intellectuals in one setting (geographic, sectoral, or temporal) with intellectuals in another. Whether or not the intellectuals in these settings self-identify as such, one might examine—for example—how North American sociologists who study intellectuals today compare, in terms of control over their labor and remuneration, with those who did so a half-century ago.

CHANGING MEDIA   Much intellectual communication is mediated by the media, and changes in the media environment may disproportionately affect intellectuals. Coser ([1965] 1970) and others noted the importance of print technology for the emergence of public spheres associated with modern intellectual communities, and Kellner (1997) has suggested that ongoing revolution in electronic media may be creating similar opportunities. For example, the Internet offers intellectuals new lines of communication and opportunities to control their published output (Roberts 1999, Sosteric 1996). Yet new media present potential threats to intellectuals as well. Benjamin ([1955] 1969), for example, suggested that mechanical reproduction destroys the "aura" of art and intellectual work, and Bourdieu ([1996] 1998) has argued that television turns intellectuals' discursive advantage—sustained attention and nuanced analysis—into a disadvantage. The "information explosion" on the Internet may undermine intellectuals' claims of expertise. These and other issues relating to intellectuals in changing media contexts seem ripe for systematic and comparative study.

IDEOLOGICAL TENSIONS   Intellectuals often exhibit a tension between elitism and egalitarianism. On an ideological plane, this tension may take the form of arguments against human domination that aspire to discursive domination. In the political plane, the tension may mean gaining and using power in order to erase (other people's) power. Hostile observers dismiss the egalitarian element in view of the elitist element; sympathetic observers downplay the elitist in favor of the egalitarian, or argue—as Bourdieu has—that intellectuals' self-interest may even further egalitarian goals. Yet intellectuals' self-interest has not always played itself out so fortunately, and it strikes us as important to understand how elitism and

egalitarianism have been resolved, or remained unresolved, in particular historical junctures. The sociology of intellectuals has frequently taken a normative form, offering visions of how intellectuals ought to behave. We recognize the legitimacy of exhortatory tropes, and we have covered many such works in this review. Yet we wish to encourage the study of intellectuals' actual practice, as well.

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