



Arthur D. Day

My Life in Sociology

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Abstract

Following on an article in Bennett Berger (1990), *Authors of Their Own Lives*, titled “From Socialism to Sociology,” in which I and other sociologists describe how we came to sociology, I continue with my academic and public career as a sociologist at the University of California–Berkeley (1963–1969) and at Harvard subsequently, in the Graduate School of Education and the Sociology Department. I describe my involvement in the formulation of urban policy in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and beyond, and my attempt to understand the student revolt at Berkeley, which spread throughout the United States and indeed much of the world. I further discuss my long involvement in the issue of affirmative action, on which I in time changed my views, originally based on a distinctive conception of the course of ethnicity and ethnic and racial groups in the United States, from critical opposition to acceptance, and my similar involvement in the debates over social policy in the United States, in which a complex point of view has too often been summarized under the term neoconservatism.

INTRODUCTION

About 25 years ago, Bennett M. Berger, who had been a colleague when I taught at the University of California–Berkeley in the 1960s, asked a number of sociologists to write essays about how they became sociologists. Many responded, and Berger (1990) published a volume of 20 such essays under the title *Authors of Their Own Lives: Intellectual Autobiographies of Twenty American Sociologists*. I was one of those who responded, and my essay appeared in the volume under the title “From Socialism to Sociology.” That progress (some would consider it regress) characterized a good number of sociologists at the time and characterizes some—but I believe fewer—today, when sociology has become a long-established and even somewhat stodgy discipline in almost every university and college.

The title I used I borrowed from a manuscript by Douglas G. Webb, a student at the University of Toronto who had come to interview me and who, in 1978, had sent me an impressive, long, but still incomplete version of his thesis. The manuscript was titled “From Socialism to Sociology: The Intellectual Careers of Philip Selznick, Seymour Martin Lipset, Nathan Glazer, and Daniel Bell (1932–1960)” (D.G. Webb, 1978 thesis draft),¹ and is as detailed an account of my early life and career as I have ever seen (pp. 334–442). It does as well for Daniel Bell (pp. 443–582), and I assume the same level of detailed research and good sense would be found in the two missing sections I do not have on Selznick and Lipset (pp. 30–313). The introduction explains the choice of these four sociologists—there were many others at the time who could have qualified under the heading “from socialism to sociology.” We four had all attended the City College of New York and were linked in other ways: by

our common participation as students in Alcove 1 of the City College underground lunchroom, the gathering place of the anti-Stalinists, who included dissident communists (Trotskyists and other breakaway sects), socialists, and anarchists of various persuasions (Kristol 1983, pp. 3–13); and by our friendships and intellectual linkages after college and graduate school. Lipset and I had been classmates; Selznick and Bell had preceded us at City College. For a while, three of us (all but Bell) were colleagues in the Department of Sociology at the University of California–Berkeley, and all but Selznick were colleagues in the Department of Sociology at Harvard University. Despite the differences in the sociology we pursued, all four careers were clearly marked by our early commitment to socialism and later divergence in various ways from it.

Webb called us the New York sociologists and noted others who might have been included with a very similar career line, all beginning at City College and Alcove 1: Peter Rossi, Morroe Berger, Harold Orlans, and Chester Rapkin (Orlans became by discipline an anthropologist and Rapkin an economist, but neither would have resisted the label of sociologist). I am not aware that anyone has followed Webb in discussion and analysis of the New York sociologists, but there was indeed a commonality that linked them, not the least of it the common involvement in Alcove 1: Anti-Stalinism, despite the sectarian and narrow flavor of the label, and the variety of groups and grouplets it included became the source and basis of a common and all-embracing ideological stance, that of a kind of liberalism, and that was indeed the common orientation of all those Webb, and I, listed.

BEFORE BERKELEY

My essay in Berger (1990) deals with my career up to about 1963 when, while I was working in Washington, DC, at the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), the predecessor of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, I accepted the offer of a tenured appointment in sociology at the University of

¹The thesis was either never completed or not accepted, because when I sought to examine the finished product, I discovered to my surprise there is no record of such a thesis at the University of Toronto, and inquiries as to what might have happened to a seemingly completed and publishable thesis, and to its author, have not yet received a reply from the Department of Sociology at the university.

California–Berkeley. There is little in that essay on my work in the subsequent decades, and it is those four decades or so following 1963 that I concentrate on here. But the earlier period is of course crucial in preluding the later, and I reprise a few elements from it to set the stage for my discussion of my career in sociology, 1963 to the present.

From a Jewish immigrant working-class family, the youngest of seven children, I attended the free (at that time) City College of New York (1940–1944). The five-cent subway fare, living at home, as all students did, and the distribution of free texts in some of the courses all made costs truly minimal. Majoring, in sequence, in history, economics, and public administration, I finally ended up with an undergraduate degree in sociology. But the shaping part of my education came from a left-wing student Zionist group, which was also one of the grouplets of Alcove 1. During the turbulent war years, I also became part of a program at the University of Pennsylvania to teach various languages that might be necessary for some soldiers to know in that all-embracing world war. An adult mentor of the student Zionist group, Zellig Harris (Barsky 2011), professor of linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania, brought me into the language program, which he directed. I participated as an instructor, with native informants in the Bengali and Moroccan Arabic teaching programs, conducted research on Swahili in case that should become necessary for the Army, and completed a master's thesis on the phonemics of Swahili (Harris 1951, pp. 97–124), while simultaneously taking courses in anthropology, a subject that was more congenial to me.

In 1944, with a bachelor's degree from City College and a master's from the University of Pennsylvania, I pondered whether I should accept a fellowship to pursue anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania or try my chances in New York. I chose the latter. A suggestion from Daniel Bell led me to become a reader for Max Horkheimer, head of the Institute for Social Research of Frankfurt, then in exile in the United States and directing for

the American Jewish Committee a program of research on anti-Semitism. That connection led to my employment as an editor at the *Contemporary Jewish Record*, a scholarly publication of the American Jewish Committee then being edited, surprisingly, by the art critic Clement Greenberg, and subsequently as an editor of *Commentary*, which was founded in 1945 as the successor to the *Contemporary Jewish Record*. The new editor of *Commentary*, Elliot Cohen, proposed that I write and edit a monthly column titled “The Study of Man.” The social sciences were then of great interest to the American Jewish Committee and other Jewish defense agencies, in view of the catastrophe that had just destroyed a good part of the Jewish people. This kept me in touch with parts of the social sciences and with many social scientists. As an editor at *Commentary*, I became part of a group also labeled by its New York location, the New York intellectuals, whose central organ was *Partisan Review* and who are by now the subject of a good number of books (see, among others, Wald 1987, Jumonville 1991).

But simultaneously, I was taking courses at night or in the afternoon in the Department of Sociology at Columbia. In those days, there was no commitment by the sociology departments at major research universities, as there would be in later years, to the support of a carefully selected, limited number of graduate students. As a result, I believe almost anyone could take graduate courses at Columbia if he or she was so inclined and could pay for it, and the cost then of taking a graduate course at Columbia was \$12.50 a credit, or \$37.50 for a three-credit course meeting for two hours a week. The Columbia sociology department of those days is wonderfully described in the contributions of James Coleman and Dennis Wrong to the Berger (1990) volume, *Authors of Their Own Lives*, and indeed it was then a wonder of a department. Robert Merton and Paul Lazarsfeld were the dominant figures. I took courses with them and with C. Wright Mills. S.M. Lipset, my old classmate at City College, returned to Columbia as a faculty member a few years after I began to take courses, and he taught a

year-long seminar with Robert Lynd, for which he recruited me as a student. I wrote my most substantial research papers for that seminar.

During those years, while working at *Commentary*, and later at Doubleday Anchor Books, I had the opportunity to work on a number of books. Having met David Riesman through Daniel Bell, when both were teaching in the undergraduate social science division at the University of Chicago, I was able to join David Riesman at Yale in the work that became *The Lonely Crowd* (Riesman et al. 1950) and *Faces in the Crowd* (Riesman & Glazer 1952). I wrote *American Judaism* (Glazer 1957), at the invitation of Daniel Boorstin, who was editing, for the University of Chicago Press, a major series of short books on American history, and that book became the first effort at a systematic and sociologically oriented history of the religion of American Jews, still in print after 55 years. I was able in a visiting year at Berkeley to get somewhat involved in a major project on segregation in American cities, and edited with Davis McEntire a book on developments in segregation of blacks in various cities (Glazer & McEntire 1960). I was also able to work on a large Ford Foundation-supported project on the history and influence of American Communism. Lipset was to do one of the books on the project (Bell was to do another), and when Lipset dropped out I replaced him to write *The Social Basis of Communism* (Glazer 1961), on the social groups to which Communism appealed. This I submitted as a published book for my thesis, making me, in 1962, at the age of 39, a full-fledged sociologist, if I wanted to be one. The book that is closest to my continuing interests over the years was one on the ethnic groups of New York City, for which I recruited Daniel P. Moynihan as a collaborator and which was published in 1963 as *Beyond the Melting Pot* (Glazer & Moynihan 1963 [1970]).

EARLY INTERESTS

So when I went to Berkeley in 1963, to become for the first time a professor of sociology, I had already developed and worked on a

number of topics on which I had some authority. I was an expert on American Jews, having written *American Judaism* (Glazer 1957), a long paper on the social characteristics of American Jews (Glazer 1955), and many articles. My overall interests had been shaped by my life and experiences in New York City. I was a “walker in the city,” steadily observing it from my earliest teens, and was interested in it in all its aspects, including the physical. I had published, in 1958, a critique of the huge expansion of high-rise, low-rent housing projects in New York, which was related to the urban renewal programs then reshaping American cities, in *Architectural Forum*, under the title “Why City Planning Is Obsolete” (Glazer 1958). One of the editors of *Architectural Forum* then was Jane Jacobs, with whom I had become acquainted and whose views on cities paralleled my own. I was meeting city planners and their critics and was publishing articles in the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* (Glazer 1959, 1964) as well as articles on urban issues generally. My interest in and views on New York inevitably expanded to encompass the problems of large American cities generally: ethnicity and race, which do so much to shape American cities, their promise and their problems; and social policy, in the fields of housing, welfare, education, health, and the like, on which cities are so dependent.

It was these interests, and my desire to be involved in the exciting projects that marked the presidency of John F. Kennedy, that had led to my work at the HHFA in 1962–1963. I had just spent a year in Japan. Returning, I felt the frustration of studying a society and a language I could never properly understand or master. Daniel P. Moynihan, my collaborator on *Beyond the Melting Pot*, then at the Department of Labor in Kennedy’s new administration, arranged some interviews for me that resulted in my employment at HHFA, working for its then administrator, Robert Weaver. My exact role and mission were never fully clear, but I was kept busy representing the agency in various projects that became a prelude to the poverty program. And I also pursued some of

my own interests, including the preservation of major buildings that were then being demolished by new development. I tried to interest Weaver in some public intervention to save the Pennsylvania Station in New York, but no means to do so were available in time, to my lasting regret and chagrin. The station was demolished in 1963. By the time I left the HHFA, I was given an occupational title: urban sociologist—the first, according to Moynihan, who kept up with such things, to be employed by the federal government (I wonder if there have been others since).

BERKELEY YEARS

The offer of a tenure appointment at Berkeley was in part owing—as so much in my life had been—to that network of associations that went back to Alcove 1 at City College. Lipset was then teaching at Berkeley. A creative dean at the university had decided that the engineering undergraduates needed a wider education and, at Lipset's suggestion, hired Lewis Feuer to create a social science course for them. This was labeled the Integrated Social Science Course, and engineering undergraduates were required to take it. Feuer had been a professor of philosophy at City College and, though a Communist then, had a particular empathy for his Trotskyist and non-Stalinist students and kept in touch with them after graduation. Feuer had long since left the Communist Party but remained friendly with Lipset, among others, and with Irving Kristol, another former denizen of Alcove 1, who had been my colleague at the new *Commentary*. Feuer created a course that introduced the engineering undergraduates to key issues in sociology, economics, and political science. His struggle was to recruit collaborators to teach with him in the course. But in those days, when the academy was flush with funds for research, social scientist colleagues would not bother to participate in innovative undergraduate courses. Someone whose appointment was predicated on including teaching and managing the social science integrated course (900 students! 20 teaching

assistants!) was necessary. Lipset proposed me, and I was offered the post, with an appointment in the sociology department. While I taught in sociology, my main teaching commitment at Berkeley was to the Social Science Integrated Course.

I had previously had one-year visiting appointments at Berkeley, Bennington College, and Smith College and had developed a small roster of courses, of which the best developed was urban sociology. Here I had the benefit of the excellent reader of Hatt & Reiss (1951 and later editions) and my own interest in and knowledge of the work of the University of Chicago urban sociologists. At Berkeley, I taught that and other courses, including one on American society with Lipset, and a graduate seminar whose main theme was a contrast between the view of American power in C. Wright Mills's (1956) *The Power Elite* and Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*, which was then on its way to becoming the greatest best seller in the history of American sociology (it passed a million copies in the early 1970s).

Long before coming to Berkeley, I had given up, as a central interest, the discipline of sociology per se. I respected Merton's ambition to turn sociology into a science—he was well aware how far it was from being one. But it was not an ambition in which I participated. To me, sociology was always more of a humanistic discipline, as I wrote in an early article that was skeptical of the heralding of *The American Soldier* as a major advance in developing sociology as a science (Glazer 1949). Christopher Jencks once described sociology as “slow journalism,” and that too well described for me my approach to sociology. While sociology pursued its ambition to become more technical, more statistically advanced, more professional, more sophisticated theoretically—all worthy objectives—my own interests were more in the subjects and issues sociology dealt with than in the theory or methods it used in dealing with them. To me, sociology, like journalism, told stories, interesting and important stories. It was often my advice to graduate students, who so commonly chose thesis topics based on their

lives and experiences and an interesting story they had to tell, to “tell the story!”, though I knew they also had to locate their stories within a theoretical framework. I wonder whether this was the best advice for them from the point of view of their future careers.

In my six years at Berkeley—I am surprised in retrospect that they were so few, because so much happened to me, and to Berkeley, while I was there—I pursued two main issues. The first was the continuation of my interests in the problems and future of the American city. The cities were shortly to explode in race riots. One had to ponder such matters as the direction and promise of the poverty program and other major social programs that were expanding at the time and the future of race relations in the wake of the historic civil rights legislation of 1964 and 1965. Beyond that, I thought of the larger problems posed by advanced and comprehensive social policy, the attempt to expand in the United States the welfare state on the model of the advanced countries of Western Europe, and the unexpected problems this expansion met in the United States. The second was the crisis in the American university initiated by the Free Speech movement at Berkeley and the spread of student protests throughout American universities and colleges in the later 1960s.

My writing during this period appeared principally in *Commentary*, then being edited by the liberal and somewhat left-leaning Norman Podhoretz; in articles in the *New York Times Magazine*; in columns I was writing for the British weekly of social policy, *New Society*; in articles in the British *Encounter* (which had been founded by Irving Kristol and was then being edited by another ex-denizen of Alcove 1, Melvin Lasky); and increasingly in the new journal *The Public Interest*, which had been founded in 1965 by Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell. In its first issue, I published an article, “Paradoxes of American Poverty” (Glazer 1965), originally prepared for a large conference on poverty at the University of California that on recent rereading seems to express some skepticism, even then, regarding the great hope

of eradicating American poverty or reducing it to Western European levels.

Berkeley in 1963, when I came, had just developed a remarkable concentration of experts on urban affairs. Martin Meyerson, whom I had met through David Riesman during work on the project that became *The Lonely Crowd*, had also just arrived in Berkeley, as the dean of its school of architecture and planning. Catherine Bauer Wurster, who as the young Catherine Bauer had brought to America in the 1930s the news of the programs of social housing in the advanced countries of Europe, was also at Berkeley. And there were others. As new urban programs and the poverty program were being formulated, in 1963 and 1964, interrupted by the assassination of John F. Kennedy but given renewed life under Lyndon Johnson, there were meetings in Washington, DC, in which I participated. After Johnson’s election to a full term in 1964, I participated in an urban affairs task force under Robert C. Wood, who was to become secretary of the new Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, to help formulate urban policies for the new administration. There were no less than three or four of us from Berkeley, as I recall, who were part of the task force and who regularly took the red-eye special to Washington, DC, for its meetings.

It was an age of optimism as to what could be done in urban affairs, and an age of equal optimism over what academic experts could contribute (Wood 1993). Our resources were not yet stretched by the Vietnam War, and the burst of legislation after Johnson’s great victory seemed to promise a new and more generous age in social policy. Paul Ylvisaker at the Ford Foundation had sponsored major urban programs that, while focused initially on juvenile delinquency, encompassed the whole range of possible interventions, and these served as one model for the federal government’s poverty program. At the HHFA, during my year there, a committee representing our various programs had met with a group representing the many programs of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to consider how to focus our programs, as an example of what might be done,

on the problems of one large housing project, Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, MO, which was exhibiting severe signs of distress (one-quarter of the units were unoccupied). Could the combination of all our resources deal with its problems? We made at least one trip to St. Louis; I urged our committee to spend a night in one of the unoccupied apartments, but we did not. We enlisted the sociologists of Washington University, principal among them Lee Rainwater, to see what combined programs and academic understanding could contribute to dealing with the problems of the project. (To look ahead, and as a sad verdict on what we were able to do, I note that the project was blown up in 1975, an event featured in journals of architecture and urban affairs around the world.)

Our task force in 1964–1965 proposed for the new administration, among other things, a model cities program in which all the resources of the federal government could be concentrated on one or a few cities to demonstrate what the new social programs could do to improve the lives of the poor and the quality of life in our cities. The Rand Corporation in Santa Monica, whose previous work had been in advising the armed forces, most dramatically on such issues as atomic warfare, got involved in domestic issues and recruited some domestic academic experts, I among them, to spend time in Santa Monica to advise them on how to get involved in social policy. I recall one dramatic moment at a meeting at which the young and brilliant Daniel Ellsberg, then working for Rand, appeared, announcing, “I have just come back from a burning Saigon, and landed in a burning Detroit.” The plane had arrived in the middle of the Detroit riots.

How much could any of us do, whether in understanding or in proposing policy, during such a period? My presence in all these and other meetings and consultations was exciting, but in retrospect it was all for me a matter of education on how complicated the issues were, how difficult it was for government agencies to work together, and how hard it was for government to intervene effectively. I was no strong advocate for what the social science disciplines

could accomplish or for one course or another. On the whole, I supported the shift of greater power to communities on local issues (a controversial tendency of the poverty program) and was against leaving decision making exclusively in the hands of bureaucrats and experts, but I was also aware of the problems in such a shift going too far. I thought the local people would know more, and after all they were directly affected (Glazer 1966, 1969a). I recall once that an advisor of the new Mayor Lindsay of New York City asked a few academics, including me and Margaret Mead, to meet with the mayor. He was late; a garbage strike was on, and a transit strike was threatened. We twiddled our thumbs; the mayor finally appeared, but what attention he could give us at that moment of crisis was clearly limited. I recall Margaret Mead, pressing the virtues of what disciplinary training in anthropology could provide for policy, saying that when our soldiers landed on a Pacific isle during World War II, anthropologists could tell them what to expect. I commented that this was because they had once been there: My point was that specific knowledge was more important than disciplinary understanding. Margaret Mead shook her stick in irritation. She believed in the discipline.

While disorders raged in the cities, disorders also raged at Berkeley. The civil rights movement had affected many undergraduates powerfully. A substantial group had participated in the dangerous Freedom Summer of 1964. On their return to Berkeley, they were active in promoting civil rights issues from tables on campus. There were rules at the time that said these tables should be off campus. The conflict was between university rules that seemed arbitrary and free speech for students. That was the way the student unrest began. It became more severe when the Vietnam War was expanded in 1965, when larger numbers were being drafted to fight, and the issues kept expanding to include research on campus related to the war, on-campus recruiting for the armed forces, the tactics that were legitimate in opposing them, and the like. At Berkeley, matters were further complicated because of the important role of

the state legislature in university financing and affairs.

Matters developed quickly, reminiscent of the French and Russian revolutions in which key interventions by one or another participant could turn the situation around in a moment. Events culminated in the occupation of the administration building by large numbers of students and their mass arrest by the police, a pattern duplicated in later years at Harvard and Columbia. My initial sympathies for the protesting students and their objectives became complicated when the question arose of legitimate tactics in pursuing them and was further complicated by sympathy for the problems faced by the administration, which was trying to balance some response to student demands against public and legislative reaction. Martin Meyerson became acting chancellor of the Berkeley campus when the chancellor had to resign. The president of the university was the liberal Clark Kerr, who was removed when Ronald Reagan won the governorship in 1964. We—I refer to myself, but also to Lipset, who was close to Kerr, and others—had to reconcile our sympathy for the student protestors' objectives with our understanding of the complexities that the administrators had to deal with. It was the same with liberal faculty members generally, at Berkeley and elsewhere. Selznick, another of the New York sociologists then at Berkeley, retained his sympathy with the student protestors longer. A few years later Bell had to face and respond to the same pattern of student revolt at Columbia.

One could not but be involved: We had all been radicals in our student youth: Lipset, Selznick, Feuer. Taking a stand was painful but inevitable, for one had to decide whether to cancel classes in response to various strikes, whether our teaching assistants could legitimately participate in a strike, and which attitude we should take, sympathy or discipline, and no stand was satisfying. We expressed our various positions in copious writing (Glazer 1970) and in debates (Selznick & Glazer 1965).

What it all meant, whether at Berkeley or elsewhere, has never been clear to me,

despite the great volume of writing that ensued (see Lipset & Wolin 1965 for writing on Berkeley specifically, and for a thesis by one of our graduate students, see Heirich 1971). At Berkeley, we felt the students were among the most fortunate in the world. On a beautiful campus, with still modest fees, what, we asked ourselves, were they complaining about? And if there were, indeed, grounds for protest—the condition of blacks, the threat of conscription in an unpopular war—how was the university the proper target? And whatever the conditions at Berkeley and other American universities, why should this have become a worldwide movement? I have not followed the literature on the student revolt, and perhaps somewhere there is a persuasive explanation, but one thing is clear: The hopes of student radicals, in the United States and later in many other countries, to transform the university, with a larger role played by students in curriculum, requirements, faculty recruitment, etc., faded rapidly. The university was, and remains, among the most conservative of institutions.

MOVING TO HARVARD

Although its connection to the Berkeley student revolt is tenuous, a movement of some Berkeley faculty to Harvard University began in the late 1960s. (Of course, one never really has to explain why one goes to Harvard.) In my case, it had little to do with the student revolt and its consequences, which included for a while a substantial student impact on the curriculum, as requirements shrank and more student choice was introduced. The Social Science Integrated Course became smaller, and different. But I felt all that was to the good.

At Harvard, Daniel P. Moynihan had become head of the Joint Center of Urban Studies, which had been founded by Martin Meyerson when he was at Harvard and by Lloyd Rodwin of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Moynihan was then conducting an exciting seminar on the implications of the James Coleman report on segregation in schools, southern and northern, and its effects

on education. Lipset had already moved to Harvard, and I followed in 1969. Moynihan had persuaded the Ford Foundation to give Harvard a substantial grant for a number of professorships for new faculty dealing with the urban crisis. One such was apportioned to the Harvard Graduate School of Education, which seemed an unlikely location for me, but I had been a close student of the course and impact of school integration in the North in the wake of the Supreme Court *Brown* decision of 1954, and I had followed the history and problems of New York City schools. I had been writing for some years on the problems of colleges and universities following the student revolt, and of course as a close student of race and ethnicity I dealt with issues that were at the heart of American education. Salary was higher, teaching requirements were less demanding, and a full-time secretary was promised. I accepted.

Sociology at Harvard was then part of the Department of Social Relations in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which had been created by Talcott Parsons, Clyde Kluckhohn, and Gordon Allport after World War II to herald and shape what they hoped would be a new and integrated social science. The department included social anthropologists and social psychologists as well as sociologists. Riesman and Lipset were members of the department. I hoped to be involved with it, but there was no such commitment in my appointment. When sociology broke away from the joint department shortly after I came, I was accepted as a member of that department, though I don't know whether there was any formal action on the matter. That was an expression of the degree of informality that has always been part of Harvard, though I suspect less now than in the past.

At Harvard, I organized a large course on urban social policy for undergraduates, which was among the diverse courses from which students could choose to get what was hoped would be a general education. A few years after I arrived, a new program of required undergraduate courses was created, a Core program, for which I developed and briefly taught a course on ethnicity. The Core program has in the last

few years been replaced by yet another program of requirements for undergraduates. The university has not been able to solve effectively the problem of which requirements should be imposed on undergraduates, but progressive administrators keep trying, hedged in by the claims of various departments to some part of student attention.

This faculty conservatism was one of the issues I dealt with in a course on the sociology of higher education that I developed for the Graduate School of Education. Issues in higher education in the wake of the student revolt were exciting, and remained so: the recruitment of minority students (against the historical background of discrimination, in the past, against black but also against Jewish students, a subject then receiving good scholarly attention), the social background of faculty and the recruitment of minority faculty, changes in university organization under the impact of rising government regulation and requirements, and the like. Riesman had shifted his remarkable powers from the broad sweep of American society, as in *The Lonely Crowd*, to the study of higher education, and on occasion we taught courses on higher education together. I also developed a course that focused on the public schools of New York City, where so many of the ethnic and racial conflicts of the period were being played out dramatically.

I pondered developing a role in the Graduate School of Design because of my interests in architecture and urban design but decided that my commitment to the Graduate School of Education—which paid my salary—and my interest in maintaining a role in sociology precluded connection with another professional school, a decision that in retrospect I regret. But for some years I taught a course, jointly listed in the Graduate School of Design and in the Graduate School of Education, together with an accomplished planner, on physical facilities for higher education.

In later years, I developed a commitment to the undergraduate program in Social Studies, which had been created in the 1950s as a response to the professionalization of the social

sciences. Social Studies was marked by a rigorous introductory tutorial on the classics—Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Tocqueville, Weber, and the like. I taught a junior tutorial with Martin Peretz, who as a graduate student had been one of the founders of Social Studies many years before. Our students were indeed remarkable; in one case I published a paper by a student, just about unchanged, on the origins and meaning of the Kwanzaa holiday in *The Public Interest*, of which I had become coeditor, joining Irving Kristol upon Daniel Bell's retirement from that post. Once, responding to the college's interest in better connecting the undergraduate student houses to the academic curriculum, I taught a house course on the sociology of Jews: 70 students signed up for it. There are so many interesting issues in the subject, and so many able sociologists have devoted some attention to the sociology of the Jews, that it could well be part of a regular program in sociology.

CONTROVERSIES

Much of my writing and research in the 1970s and beyond reflected my involvement in two major controversies, the first over affirmative action and the second over how American social policy was evolving in the wake of the major reforms of the Johnson administration and their further development under the following administrations. This is not the place to review the complicated history of the civil rights revolution. But the hope, if it was held at all, that the elimination of legal segregation in the South and discrimination against blacks generally, largely accomplished by Supreme Court decisions and by historic legislation on voting rights and civil rights in 1964 and 1965, would rapidly create a full equality for black Americans, unraveled in the later 1960s and 1970s. The Supreme Court decision against school segregation in 1954 met dogged resistance in the South, while in the North, in the large cities, a de facto segregation resulted in almost as sharp a separation between blacks and whites as de jure segregation had in the South. It was in the Northern situation that I was most

involved: The Southern situation required political force, finally applied in the late 1960s, to achieve a substantial degree of desegregation. But what could political determination do in the North, where in the large cities black students were rapidly becoming the majority? And could or should the busing to achieve a mix of white and black students that was increasingly being required by judicial action in the cities of the South be imposed on the cities of the North? I did testify in court cases on busing in the North for parties objecting to it in Cleveland and Brooklyn, and I also wrote about the issue.

In 1974, giving the Cook lectures at the law school of the University of Michigan, I put together three areas of policy as representing the same kind of expansion of civil rights policy to emphasize statistical targets as a test of an effective end to discrimination: schools, employment, and housing. I discussed school busing in the North, the rising tide of affirmative action in public and private employment under federal administrative and judicial pressure, and the more moderate measures that were being proposed to achieve a mix of white and black in the suburbs. In all three cases, the measure of success was becoming not the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race (admittedly difficult, because of the covert forms it could take), but the achievement of some statistical measure that indicated what administrators or judges considered parity or, in other words, what should have happened in the absence of discrimination. I published the lectures, with some additional material, in the provocatively titled *Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy* (Glazer 1975a), and spent a good part of the next few decades arguing, defending, developing, and modifying the positions I took there.

Affirmative action took many forms in these decades, including school busing, employment targets for federal contractors, and preference in admissions to selective institutions of higher education. Supreme Court decisions were generally announced at the end of its sessions each year and were eagerly awaited; although pronounced in one area, they were interpreted as a

guide to what the Court would accept in other areas. Over time, the issue of racial factors in admission to selective institutions of higher education became, and would remain, the most contested area.

My position on all these issues was based, first, on what I conceived to be the national consensus of the 1960s as realized in the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act and my sense that this consensus was being broken by the advocates of a governmentally imposed effort to achieve statistical parity; second, by my own sociological understanding of how ethnic and racial groups advance in the United States and my expectation that groups would differ in this progress independent of discrimination; and third, by my skepticism over the practical effect of the forceful measures being imposed, such as judicially required busing of school children and the requirements on government contractors to achieve some statistical goal in employment of minorities.

Regarding the national consensus, I subtitled my chapter on affirmative action in employment in the book *Affirmative Discrimination*, “From Equal Opportunity to Statistical Parity” (Glazer 1975a), and that seemed to me what was happening in the early 1970s under the Nixon administration. I noted in the chapter the dismay of northern liberal congressmen over developments in their districts in school assignments and in employment. The Civil Rights Act was explicit: “Nothing contained in this title shall be interpreted to require any employer...to grant preferential treatment to any individual or to any group because of the race, color, religion, sex, or national origin of such individual or group on account of an imbalance which may exist...” And “professionally developed” tests that showed differential results by race were also legitimate. The act thus explicitly banned quotas and specifically protected tests presumably not developed for reasons of racial discrimination that nevertheless showed differential results. Yet because of the actions taken on the basis of such tests by responsible government agencies that interpreted differential results—and any

variation from a parity they assumed should be expected on the basis of nondiscrimination—as evidence of discrimination, government contractors, operating under an Executive Order calling for affirmative action (originally interpreted as a requirement to advertise and make available jobs to persons of any race), were under pressure to employ blacks whom they believed to be unqualified or in many cases were simply not available.

To my mind a national agreement that race should no longer be the basis of employment or school assignment was being broken by government agencies that should have been bound by law. Inevitably, injured parties or those who saw themselves injured—employers under pressure, employees who had not gained promotions, and parents whose children were being assigned to distant schools—felt aggrieved, and an expected harmonious world of no discrimination was being replaced by one in which race was indeed a significant factor, to the benefit of some and the harm of others. Opponents of these developments in affirmative action, whatever their previous support of civil rights for blacks, were dubbed conservative or worse. In the 1970s and 1980s, I often seemed to be the only person at Harvard willing to argue on these issues in favor of what I believed to be the original intent and understanding of the civil rights movement.

But the larger ground of my opposition to these developments stemmed from my general sociological view of how racial and ethnic groups progressed in America. The United States, whatever the crimes and derelictions of the past and their residue in the present, was evolving as a country in which all groups were acceptable and all, over time, were assimilated as full participants. Many groups met various degrees of discrimination, their progress was made at different rates owing not only to the degree of discrimination they faced but also to many other factors, and the expectation of a universal parity in which there were no group effects on employment or degree of educational success was sociologically naive. (My views were undoubtedly affected by the Jewish experience: Jews, despite discrimination, which was

severe in the 1930s and 1940s, had made great economic progress. Various Asian groups, in the 1970s and beyond, were showing the same pattern.) I argued that if one disassembled the group of “whites” into the various ethnic groups that were incorporated in that category, one would find that the difference between the worst achieving groups and blacks was not a chasm but part of a spectrum of differential achievement (Glazer 1971a). I also feared the development of governmentally determined, rigid racial and ethnic group categories in America, threatening to turn a country and a society that was overcoming the blight of such legal categorization into a Lebanon or a Belgium or another unhappily divided society. Our civil rights legislation, just like our Constitution and its amendments, never referred to the specific racial group that was the cause and subject of concern. This was a virtue, but it opened the way to the development, for purposes of record-keeping at least, of specific categories of minorities, each of which had problems very different from that of the black group, some of which had no serious problems at all, but all of which, if they received benefits, threatened to become permanent, legally defined groups. I did not think this was good for America or that it characterized our distinctive capacity to integrate different ethnic and racial groups into a common society.

I now believe this view was overly influenced by my shaping experience in New York City, where blacks, when I was growing up and later when I was writing *Beyond the Melting Pot*, were just one of the major groups that made up the city, equal legally but different in their degree of economic and political power. To one growing up in the low-income areas of New York, blacks were as much abusers as the abused, and this undoubtedly affected one’s perspective. This was naive and insufficiently recognized the significance of the basic caste status of blacks in the United States, despite my reading of many of the books that demonstrated how distinctive and demeaning this status was throughout American history, making blacks quite different from immigrant groups or indeed

nonimmigrant native groups with a very different history.

With increasing recognition of this fundamentally exceptional position of blacks in the United States, my views on affirmative action changed. I had never opposed voluntary affirmative action, by employers, perhaps out of enlightened views or from practical considerations on the value of matching their clientele with suitable employees, or by educational institutions. It seemed to me normal, for example, that a sociology department would want to have some black sociologists. It was the involvement of government and its heavy hand that I opposed. It was unfortunate that a rigid legal requirement of color blindness could make benign or practical voluntary measures of preference of the kind to which I have referred legally questionable, as litigable as discrimination against blacks. In time I accepted a more general preference to make up for the enormous disadvantages that blacks had faced and still face to some degree and to ensure for purposes of domestic stability a larger presence of a key element of the American population in its economy and political life. My writing and positions changed, to the dismay of many who had agreed with me in the conflicts over affirmative action. I recorded the development of my views and listed much of my writing on the issue in an article in the *Du Bois Review*, “Thirty Years with Affirmative Action” (Glazer 2005).

On the second great area of controversy in which I was involved, in the Harvard years and beyond: I had always looked forward to a European-style completion of the inadequate American welfare state. Nevertheless, the efforts in the 1960s to expand the reach of social policy began to raise questions in my mind as to the effectiveness of the new policies and the capacity of government to implement them. Government, we know, could efficiently administer a large program of benefits for the aged, or of unemployment insurance, though of course there were problems even in these areas. But as it expanded in the Johnson years to create multipronged efforts to attack the overall issue of poverty, some issues developed that disturbed

a number of longtime liberals, and particularly the group associated with *The Public Interest*. The new journal began very much in the spirit of Daniel Bell's (1960) *The End of Ideology*. It did not label itself, but it was liberal in the American sense of the term. The editors believed pragmatic scientific investigation in the spirit of the burgeoning social sciences would give government better guidance in the development of effective policies than overall ideology. The journal reflected in its origins the generally liberal outlook of social scientists, and in particular sociologists. And its early issues did nothing to disassociate it from this perspective. But in the course of the later 1960s, a more restrained view of the great expansion of policies to address poverty and the condition of blacks began to emerge.

For example, the large role given in the poverty program to community action, that is, the use of community groups to press local government for programs and action, and for these groups to directly administer programs for their benefit, struck the editors and some of the writers for *The Public Interest* as a left-ideological tour de force that would do little to advance the conditions of the poor and a good deal to make government less effective. Daniel P. Moynihan, who wrote regularly for *The Public Interest* from its very first issue and served on its editorial board, wrote his first book, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action in the War on Poverty* (Moynihan 1969), criticizing this approach. Daniel Bell, with Virginia Held, wrote a magisterial article indicating all the problems with greater community participation, including the problem of defining a community in the large cities (Held & Bell 1969). My own views on community action were initially more favorable (Glazer 1966), reflecting among other things my opposition to urban renewal as it was being practiced at the time, but in time I saw the problems that a fuller measure of community control created for larger social objectives and necessities (Glazer 1969b).

My views on the new developments in social policy were affected by my study of the course of welfare policy in New York City (Glazer

1969a). How had it come about, I wondered, that in a period of relatively low unemployment there had been an enormous explosion of welfare in New York City—a tripling in the course of the 1960s—and how could even the best thinking about welfare reform change the situation? I wrote and then italicized in a 1969 article, “the heart of the crisis is a massive change in values which makes various kinds of work that used to support families undesirable to large numbers of potential workers today” (Glazer 1969a, p. 120). I was pondering how the poor had survived in earlier decades in New York—they were certainly numerous enough—in the absence of major public programs, and what had been the effect of new expanded public programs on their lives and prospects. The past was not all bad, nor the present all good. I was deeply influenced by Tocqueville’s “Memoir on Pauperism,” just recently made available by Seymour Drescher (1968), which emphasized the negative effects of English poor law, then the most advanced in Europe. I developed these views further in an article in *Commentary* titled “The Limits of Social Policy” (Glazer 1971b), one of a series of Saposnekow lectures I gave at City College in New York, and I used that title for a book in which I collected some of my writings in the 1970s and 1980s on developments in social policy in the United States (Glazer 1988, pp. 1–27). That concern with a change in values reflected the influence of the basic sociological enterprise, which documents the effect of the great transformation from traditional to modern society (secularism, individualism, urbanism, change in family structure, etc.), the bread and butter of contemporary sociology, on every aspect of social life.

I became interested in the expanding role of the federal courts in various agencies providing government services—mental hospitals, schools, prisons, youth services, and the like. Unquestionably, there were many failures and inequities in these areas. But could the courts deal effectively with them? I studied in detail the role of judicial intervention in administering a large state mental hospital, Willowbrook in New York, and saw how difficult it was for

the courts, together with the complainants and court-appointed officials, to deal with the complicated administrative problems such institutions raised. Many questions on contemporary social policy were raised by this rising judicial role, and I gave the Jefferson lectures at the University of California–Berkeley on this subject, hoping to write a book, but in the end produced only a few articles. I attended and spoke at a few judicial conferences, where I did learn a great deal about the federal judiciary (Glazer 1975b, 1977, 1978).

In various ways, the group around *The Public Interest* was shifting in the later 1960s and the 1970s in a more conservative direction. The student revolution, and the fact that all of us sooner or later turned against it, had moved us in that direction. The rise of the New Left, the radical revolution in values it advocated and in part was able to implement, along, of course, with the help of the mass media, and our discovery of some virtues in the traditional values of the past also played a role. Our study of the policies of the Great Society and the difficulties that hobbled its efforts to deal with poverty was of course influential. Divisions thus arose within what had once been a common group of New York intellectuals, all of whom had evolved from youthful socialism and some of whom still adhered to it in various forms. The latter group concentrated around the journal *Dissent*, and it was perhaps there that the term neoconservative was first used to describe the group around *The Public Interest*. The first book so labeling them was by Peter Steinfels (1979). The most authoritative in describing the evolution of the positions of the various individuals so labeled is *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement*, by Justin Vaisse (2010). Of the four persons who feature in the Steinfels book, Daniel Bell always rejected the label of neoconservative; Daniel P. Moynihan had to distance himself from it when he ran for the US Senate from New York in 1976; I was no enthusiast for it and considered (and still consider) myself a liberal; only Irving Kristol fully embraced the label. In later years, neoconservatism, first applied to a line of thinking about domestic

social policy, was extended to cover a position in foreign policy, which none of the four originally labeled neoconservatives ever embraced.

I was just over the age that would have permitted me, in 1993, under the Age Discrimination Act, to stay on at Harvard teaching if I wished to, and I accepted retirement, continuing to write and publish in a variety of fields. I became involved, in the late 1980s and 1990s, in the controversy over multiculturalism in education and served on a New York State committee to develop a policy for New York in this area, a committee appointed to make up for the damage caused by an earlier too radical report. The committee included Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who early in his service on the committee published a sharp critique of multiculturalism in his *The Disuniting of America* (Schlesinger 1991), which may have been his most widely read book. I was bemused by the attack on the Western canon and the effort to bring into college teaching the experience of minority and non-Western groups and into the elementary and secondary school curriculum what were presumed to be the perspectives of minority and non-Western groups—all of which seemed to me legitimate, even though the demands to do so were often intemperate and extreme. I knew that this “Western canon” had been in use only since the end of World War II, had already changed, and would continue to evolve. I recognized that a simple Americanizing perspective would no longer serve in elementary and secondary school education. So once again I disappointed those engaged in the struggle against multiculturalism by recognizing that some such development was inevitable. I did not see it as a threat to American unity, and so wrote in my book *We Are All Multiculturalists Now* (Glazer 1997).

I continued to pursue my interests in architecture and planning, and published a collection of my writing in 2007 under the title, *From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City* (Glazer 2007). For a few years I was involved in considering the problems raised by the crowding of monuments on the National Mall, and in 2008

I edited, with Cynthia Field, a book on the National Mall in Washington, DC (Glazer & Field 2008). I continue to write and to review books in various fields and, occasionally, to lecture. I was happy to be asked to give in 2009 the Seymour Martin Lipset lecture on Democracy in the World at the University of Toronto and the Canadian Embassy in Washington (Glazer 2010). Lipset died in 2006, Philip Selznick in 2010, and Daniel Bell in 2011. Most of the others referred to in Douglas Webb's *From Socialism to Sociology* as part of the group he called the New York sociologists are also now gone.

Writing an essay of this type, one of course thinks of what one might have done and didn't. Early in my life as a sociologist, I wrote an extensive essay, based on a good deal of research, titled "Ethnic Groups in America: From National Culture to Ideology" (in Berger

et al. 1954, pp. 158–73), which foreshadowed much that has been written on ethnicity in America since. For many years I thought it and my other writings on ethnicity could serve as the basis for a substantial book, which I titled in my mind "America's Ethnic Pattern." I never wrote the book, but my regret at not doing so is tempered by the fact that this field of research and discussion has so grown that anything I might have said has already been said, any insights I might have expressed have already been expressed, though perhaps there is a further nuance or two I could have contributed. The field to which I devoted the best part of my scholarly efforts has been so expanded that the world can do well enough without the more extensive contribution I could have made, and I am content to devote my latter years to other things.

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