

Sociology 190
Fall 1998
Thursday 2-4
144 Barrows

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The New Class

The idea of the “new class” haunts the social sciences from their inception. The main point is that knowledge and education constitute a form of social power equivalent to money-capital or political influence, and hence that at least certain groups of the educated public (variously, intellectuals, managers, technocrats, professionals, bureaucrats) constitute a separate social class with its own interests, power aspirations and projects. Such an idea always hovered on the margins of the social sciences, because it implied that they must examine themselves and their own involvement in social affairs. In short, for a social scientist to study the “new class” meant to be reflexive, and that is always a dangerous and painful business. Nonetheless, it is also an essential task for any sociologist. In ancient Greece, before one was to enter the temple of Apollo at Delphi, there seeking divine knowledge and advice, one read an inscription on the door - “know thyself”. The point is well-taken, knowledge of the outside world is useless (possibly even dangerous) without critical self-knowledge, without knowing where one stands in the world. In this seminar we will study theories about “the new class”, precisely so we can develop a systematic appreciation of the predicament of intellectuals, technocrats and even students at the turn of the century, i.e. our own predicament.

Readings

All the readings for this course are contained in the reader, available from Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way. There are no required books, but I have placed many relevant books in reserve at Moffitt library.

Course requirements and grading

The end result of this course should be a well-written, well-researched, original seminar paper. This means the following requirements: 1) on 10/15 you should submit to me a proposal (1-2 pages), and be ready to give a 5-10 minutes class presentation about it. The proposal should suggest a question, a problem to be answered in the actual paper, as well as the relevance of this problem to the topic of “the new class”, and the methods and materials you will use in order to answer the question; 2) during the last 3 weeks of the semester (11/12-12/3) you should submit to me a draft of the paper (of whatever length) and be ready to give a 20 minutes class presentation on your findings; 3) the completed paper (of whatever length) is due at the beginning of finals week (12/9). The paper is worth 75% of the course grade, and 25% are for class attendance, participation and performance (i.e. you have to do the readings before class, and come prepared to discuss them, this is what a seminar is all about).

Fall Semester Course Schedule

- 8/27 **Introduction to the idea of the new class.**
- 9/3 **Introduction to new class theories.**
B. Bruce-Briggs, "Introduction to the Idea of the New Class." Pp.1-18 in his *The New Class?* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1979). **Reader.**
- Ivan Szelenyi and Bill Martin, "Three Waves of New Class Theory," *Theory and Society*, Vol.17 (1988), pp.645-667. **Reader.**
- 9/10 **Managerialism.**
Henri De Saint-Simon, *Social Organization: The Science of Man, and Other Writings*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp.72-80. **Reader.**
- James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*. (New York: The John Day Co., 1941), pp.3-8, 58-111. **Reader.**
- 9/17 **The knowledge society.**
Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-industrial Society*. (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp.12-33, 112-119, 358-364. **Reader.**
- Jurgen Habermas, "Technology and Science as Ideology," pp.81-127 in his *Towards a Rational Society*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970). **Reader.**
- 9/24 **The problem of the Middle Classes in Neo-Marxist Theory.**
Eric Olin Wright, "Intellectuals and the Class Structure of Capitalist Society," pp.191-212 in Pat Walker (Ed) *Between Labor and Capital*. (Boston: South End Press, 1979). **Reader.**
- C. W. Mills, "The Status Panic," pp.239-258 in his *White Collar*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951). **Reader.**
- 10/1 **The new class in re-distributive systems.**
Gyorgy Konrad and Ivan Szelenyi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1979), pp.3-35, 133-153, 184-219. **Reader.**
- 10/8 **The new class as a cultural bourgeoisie.**
Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), pp.18-47. **Reader.**
- Randall Collins, *The Credential Society*. (New York: Academic Press, 1979), pp.22-72. **Reader.**

10/15 **Discussion of students' proposals.**

10/22 **Cultural capital and symbolic domination.**

Pierre Bourdieu, "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction," in Jerome Karabel (Ed), *Power and Ideology in Education*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). **Reader.**

Fred Block and Gene A. Burns, "Productivity as a Social Problem: The Uses and Misuses of Social Indicators," *ASR*, Vol.51 (1986), pp.757-780. **Reader.**

10/29 **Knowledge/Power.**

Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life," pp.135-159 in his *The History of Sexuality: an Introduction*. (London: Penguin Books, 1978), pp.135-159. **Reader.**

Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," pp.109-134 in Colin Gordon (Ed) *Power/Knowledge*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). **Reader.**

Irving Zola, "Healthism and Disabling Medicalization," pp.41-67 in Ivan Illich et al, *Disabling Professions*. (London: Marions Boyars, 1977). **Reader.**

11/5 **The crisis of the new class.**

Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*. (London: Polity Press, 1987), pp.110-148. **Reader.**

Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*. (New York: Doubleday, 1968), pp.1-41. **Reader.**

11/12 **Student presentations**

11/19 **Student Presentations**

12/3 **Student presentations**