

✂️📖 THIS COMMONPLACE BOOK WAS CATALYZED BY MATERIALS REFERENCED IN "LOGICS OF SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY" TAUGHT BY PROF. C. SHAWN MCGUFFEY IN TWO THOUSAND FOURTEEN AT THE BOSTON COLLEGE SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM. THIS BOOK LEAVES SPACE FOR NOTES, THOUGHTS, DIAGRAMS, OTHER QUOTES, REMINDERS. IT IS INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN IN, DISAGREED ON, DISCUSSED, REREAD, SHARED, RECEIVED, CHANGED, IMPROVED. THE INTENT WAS NOT TO BE COMPLETE BUT RATHER TO CATALYZE THOUGHT AND ACTION. REPRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION IS ENCOURAGED, GRANTED THAT ALL SOURCES WITHIN REMAIN ACCURATELY AND COMPLETELY CITED. THE PDF FILE FOR THIS COMMONPLACE BOOK CAN BE FOUND AT THE WEB HOME OF THE COMPILER: GHOSTSAFE.COM. QUESTIONS AND ANY OTHER SENTENCES CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE EMAIL OF THE COMPILER: ELISELARGESSE@GMAIL.COM. THIS IS THE FIRST EDITION OF A PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY CATALYST, PRINTED AND ASSEMBLED IN MARCH OF TWO THOUSAND FOURTEEN.

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CATALYST for a PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY



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CATALYST for a PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY



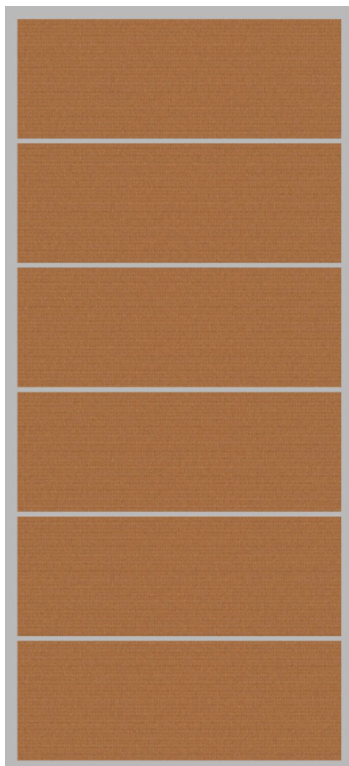
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Compiled/Published by Elise Largesse, 2014

WRITE IN THIS BOOK

This commonplace book is meant to be altered. It is not a reference book. Rather, its intention is to CATALYZE THOUGHT AND ACTION, to cause a brainstorm in your calm mental climate, to make you think of your world sociologically, to think of your sociology as advocacy and activism, and to direct your activism through the insights you gain from sociology. You can start by writing your insights all over this book.



Prison Uniforms, 2007 // 10 by 23 feet in six vertical panels // artist Chris Jordan

Depicts 2.3 million folded prison uniforms, equal to the number of Americans incarcerated in 2005. The U.S. has the largest prison population of any country in the world.

“A heap see, but a few know.”

Patricia Hill Collins quoting Carolyn Chase, “a thirty-one year old inner city Black woman,” who is quoting her aunt. 1989. “The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought.” *Signs* 14(4): 758.

Sociology:

The study of human social behavior: from its beginnings, throughout its developments, and into its current forms, organizations, and institutions.

Public Sociology:

A form of sociology that focuses on community issues that are relevant to the present, sometimes advocating for a marginalized community's rights, sometimes calling the general public's attention to their struggle, sometimes working within that community to cooperatively research and problem-solve.

Public sociologists aren't only seeking knowledge; they are developing knowledge to *improve the quality of life within communities* and to *better the social situation at large*.

"The independent artist and intellectual are among the few remaining personalities equipped to resist and to fight the stereotyping and consequent death of genuinely lively things. Fresh perception now involves the capacity continually to unmask and to smash the stereotypes of vision and intellect with which modern communications swamp us. These worlds of mass-art and mass-thought are increasingly geared to the demands of politics. That is why it is in politics that intellectual solidarity and effort must be centered. If the thinker does not relate himself to the value of truth in political struggle, he cannot responsibly cope with the whole of live experience."

C. Wright Mills in "The Social Role of the Intellectual"

ed. Summers, John, 2008.
The Politics of Truth Selected Writings of C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press. p.19

NOTES

"Now that many of us are over the idea that "Truth" is somehow waiting to be discovered, we realize that to exist well on this planet we need to live easefully alongside the many truths in play. In this context, the search for abstract theories that add to the "body of knowledge" seem far less urgent in comparison to generating greater understanding of how people can transform their particular life situation for the better."

Bill Genat, 2009. "Building Emergent Situated Knowledges in Participatory Action Research." *Action Research* 7:108.

...At minimum, public sociologists do not accept the professional proposition that the production and/or consumption of knowledge should be restricted to the credentialed. The public sociologist's vocation is to construct a public knowledge base, one expansive enough to threaten the definition of professionalism itself."

Charles Derber: *Public Sociology as a Vocation*. 2004. "Public Sociologies: A Symposium from Boston College." *Social Problems* 51(1): 120.

The rule that governs all communication must not be forgotten: write so that both insiders and outsiders can understand it.

Sherry Cable, Donald Hastings and Tamara Mix. 2002. "Different Voices, Different Venues: Environmental Racism Claims by Activists, Researchers and Lawyers." *Human Ecology Review* 9(1):37.

TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY:

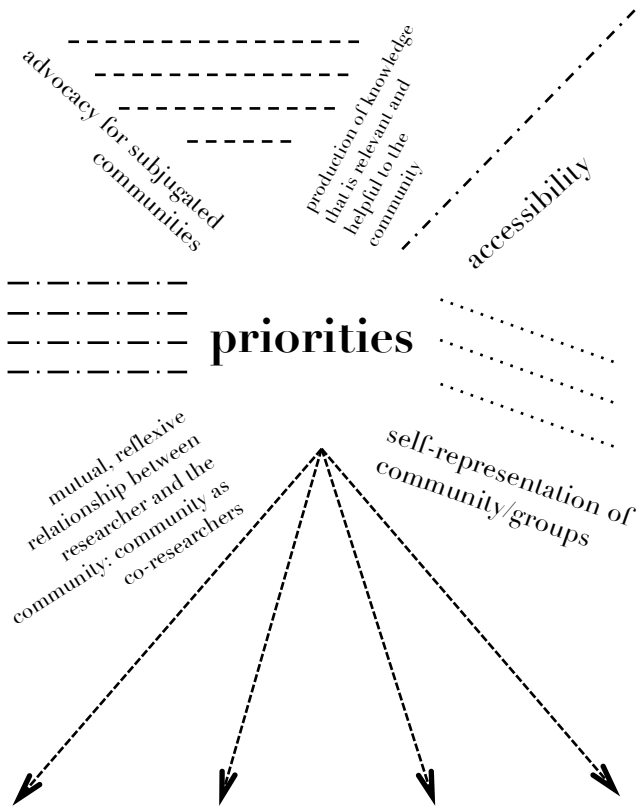
Opinion pages of newspapers, "popular" literature (books not written only for a scholarly audience), typically writings from a distance, addressing a mainstream public

ORGANIC PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY:

Research and writing that takes place "on the ground," within populations that are local and organized (possibly already constituting a "movement") with a reflexive, mutual relationship between the sociologist and the public being researched, and a primary interest in advocating for that public

"If the standpoint of economics is the market and its expansion, and the standpoint of political science is the state and the guarantee of political stability, then the standpoint of sociology is civil society and the defense of the social. In times of market tyranny and state despotism, sociology – and in particular its public face – defends the interests of humanity."

Michael Burowoy, 2005.
"For Public Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 70(1): 24.



Truth and truths

“When sociologists reserve theorizing as the proper function of academics, we deny the publics we serve access to a source of power and pleasure thinking.”

Charlotte Ryan: *Can We Be Compañeros?* 2004. “Public Sociologies: A Symposium from Boston College.” *Social Problems* 51(1): 11.

The multitudes have answers to questions which have not yet been posed, and they have the capacity to outlive the walls.

The questions are not yet asked because to do so requires words and concepts to ring true, and those currently being used to name events have been rendered meaningless: Democracy, Liberty, Productivity, etc.

With new concepts the questions will soon be posed, for history involves precisely such a process of questioning. Soon? Within a generation.

Meanwhile, the answers abound in the multitudes’ multiple ingenuities for getting by, their refusal of frontiers, their search for holes in walls, their adoration of children, their readiness when necessary to become martyrs, their belief in continuity, their recurring acknowledgement that life’s gifts are small and priceless.

Trace with a finger tonight her (his) hairline before sleep.

John Berger, #10 from “Ten Dispatches About Endurance.” 2007. *Hold Everything Dear*. New York: Vintage International. p.106.