Amadiume and Oyèwùmí demonstrated across the spectrum of social, occupational, political, and economic ordering in both contexts that “biology [did not and does not] determine social position” (Oyèwùmí 1997, p. 17). Both have inspired other African scholars to explore other cultural contexts. Beyond scholarship, these works are valuable for women’s rights struggles. Much of the androcentric power plays and diminution of women that is often claimed in the name of “tradition” is not traditional.

SEE ALSO African Studies; Sociology, Third World

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sociology, American

American sociology is generally viewed through the prism of accomplishments made by native-born white males at predominately white institutions in theory, methodology, and various substantive areas of research. The history of American sociology often begins by noting that William Graham Sumner (1840–1910), during the 1872 to 1873 academic year, taught the first sociology course in this nation, Principles of Sociology (Bernard 1948). Further investigation into the history of the discipline highlights Arthur B. Woodford, who, in 1885 at Indiana University, became the first faculty member in the United States to have the word sociology in his official title (Himes 1949). While the first named department of sociology was established at the University of Kansas in 1889, it is generally accepted that American sociology began in earnest upon
the emergence of the Chicago school of sociology, the moniker bestowed on scholars led by Robert Park (1864–1944) and Ernest W. Burgess (1886–1966), who were engaged in sociological activity at the University of Chicago between 1915 and 1930. Parallel with the origin of the sociology department at the University of Chicago in 1892 was the strengthening of the social gospel movement in the United States. The social gospel movement placed the salvation and uplift of American society above the salvation of one's individual soul. While proponents of the social gospel were interested in ameliorating urban problems, early American sociologists were interested in studying the demographic transition from rural to urban society through scientific inquiry and practical sociology, as practiced at Hull House in Chicago by Jane Addams (1860–1935) and by the antilynching activity of Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862–1931). It was a common interest in issues such as the expanding urban population that led to the group of like-minded sociologists to organize their own professional association.

The American Sociological Society (now called the American Sociological Association) was established in 1905 with Lester F. Ward (1841–1913) as its first president. Seeking to separate itself from closely related disciplines, men such as E. A. Ross, Albion Small (1854–1926), and C. W. A. Veditz (1872–1926) spearheaded the founding of this organization. While the accomplishments of early Chicago sociologists such as Park and Burgess and notable early American sociologists such as Ward, Small, Sumner, Ross, and Franklin H. Giddins are laudable as they helped define this emerging field during its infancy in the United States, few are aware that there existed during this era a parallel world of unacknowledged sociologists whose contributions to the discipline were equally, if not more, significant than those traditionally revered as the fathers of the American brand of sociology.

The teaching of sociology at black institutions began in 1894 at Morgan State University. It is provident that the emergence of this discipline in America coincided with the birth of black colleges that, in many respects, were borne from black Americans’ attempts to improve their condition in this nation. According to L. L. Bernard, “Sociology [in America] was first accepted by the smaller institutions of the South and by the Negro colleges. The reasons for the Negro interest is, I think, sufficiently evident in the fact that a minority group was trying honestly to understand the social situation in which it found itself” (1948, p. 14). Ultimately, black American scholars viewed sociology as a tool with which to challenge their second-class citizenship through the establishment of research programs designed to formulate strategies to ameliorate the social, economic, and physical conditions uncovered through objective scientific research. Foremost among the institutions that established research programs on the “Negro problem” were Tuskegee University, Howard University, Fisk University, and Atlanta University.

Tuskegee University established the Department of Records and Research, under the direction of Monroe N. Work between 1904 and 1945, for the purpose of conducting research on black Americans. Foremost among Work's accomplishments as the director of this program was the publication of the *Negro Yearbook*. This pamphlet periodically detailed the horrific and gruesome practice of lynching and other forms of violence against black Americans and was instrumental in the eventual demise of the barbaric practice. At Howard University, where Kelly Miller (1863–1939) taught the institution's first sociology course in 1895, the leadership of E. Franklin Frazier (1894–1964) during the 1930s was the driving force behind the “Howard school of thought.” This concept refers to the school’s “transitional [theory] that broke away from the dominant biological/genetic [racial theory] paradigm” (Henry 1995, p. 49) that was influential in introducing a multiculturalist perspective on race relations. Inquiry into the substantive area of race was also undertaken at Fisk University during the United States’s Jim Crow era. Under the direction of Charles S. Johnson (1893–1956), the Race Relations Department was established to develop effective strategies by which relations between blacks and whites could be strengthened. It was at the annual institutes held at Fisk that, for one of the first times in the South, black and white Americans were able to intelligibly discuss the “Negro problem” in a safe environment, where action plans directed at bettering relations between blacks and whites were developed and implemented. While the research programs established at Tuskegee, Howard, and Fisk deserve increased attention from contemporary sociologists analyzing significant contributions to the discipline by early American sociologists, to a growing number of scholars Atlanta University stands alone as the most significant and important research center, regardless of race, during the early years of American sociology. In 1895 Atlanta University initiated a program of research, directed by W. E. B. Du Bois between 1897 and 1914, into the social, economic, and physical condition of black Americans. According to Earl Wright II (2002), the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory, the name bestowed on the group of scholars engaged in sociological activity at Atlanta University between 1895 and 1924, rightfully deserves the distinction of the first American school of sociology and birthplace of urban sociological inquiry, given that the establishment of the Atlanta school and its institutionalized program of urban sociological inquiry predates the Chicago school by almost twenty years.

In addition to serving as a resource in the struggle for human rights in the United States, black colleges were often the destination, and salvation, for many Jewish scholars forced into exile upon Adolf Hitler’s ascension to power in Germany in the early 1930s. Scapegoated for
Germany's problems, Jewish sociologists such as Ernst Borinski (Tougaloo College), John Herz (Howard University), Viktor Lowenfeld (Hampton Institute), Ernst Manasse (North Carolina Central University), Fritz Pappenheim (Talladega College), and Donald Rasmussen (Talladega College) obtained positions at black colleges where their experience as minorities was an educational asset in their professional and personal interactions with black college students, faculty, and the community (Cunnigen 2003).

The history of sociology has traditionally minimized the contributions of people of color, women, gays and lesbians, and other minorities. Consequently, it is of manifest importance that contemporary and future sociologists utilize alternative theoretical frames to support the recognition and canonization of marginalized scholars. Repudiation and revision of the traditional means of canonizing sociologists will result in the overdue and deserved recognition of the contributions of scholars who, by virtue of their race, sex or gender, or sexual preference, existed as “outsiders within” their own profession.

SEE ALSO Chicago School; Du Bois, W. E. B.; Sociology

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EARLIER PERSPECTIVES
While both ES and economics study the economy in its multiple expressions, they are at variance with each other. At the risk of oversimplification, the starting point for economics is the isolated rational economic actor; whereas for ES, actors always operate in social, thus relational, contexts and do so reflexively.

SOCIOLOGY, ECONOMIC
Economic sociology (ES) forms a specific sociological subfield. As with sociology—its genus—itself a multiparadigm discipline, there is some disagreement about what exactly falls under ES’s rubric. To counter this difficulty ES has been defined broadly as “the sociological perspective applied to economic phenomena” (Smelser and Swedberg 2005, p. 3).