1968 is a spectacular, plural year (like most years) that defies unitary accounting: it generates a multiplicity of stories. My aim in this paper is to weave together two stories (personal and public), one poem and a little bit of utopian dreaming.

One story will tell ‘1968’ as a symbolic spectacle with multiple meanings: as a year which means many different things to the world’s population of three and a half billion of that time. For a few, it is best known as the year of the student protest movement which largely failed in its stated plans but which nevertheless had a major impact in the shaping of a culture of plausible choices for the development of social movements. A second story – my own – is different: I provide a fragment of auto-ethnography between 1966-1970: coming out as gay, starting a PhD on gay life in London at the LSE, starting teaching at a soon-to-be Poly (Middlesex), and becoming a sociologist and a member of the National Deviancy Conference. I was not directly involved in the student politics of 1968, but was involved in gay reformism (at the Albany Trust) and then in 1970 with the LSE based Gay Liberation Front. Forty years on I will suggest it is a ‘world we have – partially, and mainly ‘in the West’ – won’.

As a multiple symbol, I suggest three key themes to this story. (1) the continuing western story of the transformation of body, identity and mind in a longer term process of deepening capitalism, informalization, and individualization – but one that takes more and more global dimensions; (2) the creation of a utopian baby boomer generation that carried utopian dreams; (3) and of subterranean traditions rising – whereby the long standing histories of dissent, deviant imaginations, and outsiders come increasingly into public view through the extension of marginal groups and social movements.

Sensing a utopian generation, it seems appropriate to end with a few global utopian dreamings. I raise three issues which flag some advance perhaps since the politics of 1968 (although all were present then in subterranean modes): the development of global human rights working with a human capabilities model; the transformation of our understanding of inequalities to incorporate a wider range of issues from gender and sexualities to ethnicity, age and disabilities on global scale and our desire for a world where such inequalities are taken seriously, weakened and reduced; and the search for a cosmopolitan attitude and the fostering of a humane approach to social life. Despite global problems of translation, these are all worth dreaming a little more about. Utopias will never arrive; but the world must keep on striving.

And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Contested. Contingent. And creatively striving.
Progressing. Regressing. And sometimes surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.
So this is the year that Enid Blyton had died.
The end of Noddy and the fabulous five.
Three and a half billion were struggling alive.
And as we looked back to the earth from the far side
We saw transplant surgery and the strength of Apartheid.
In Africa, as usual, the millions had died
Famine in Biafra and Asian Kenyans to flee
This was also the time of the new liberty.
And the cold war hung in the heat of the night
As the tanks poured into Prague to scare all in their sight
In Vietnam, many were killed in My Lai
While the Cultural Revolution led millions to die
The Pope told us all not to use contraception
But nudity in *Hair* won a world wide good reception
Warhol was shot, Martin Luther King Dead
Enoch Powell and Rivers in Red.
Yes, these are the horrors we make in our lives
Then, as now and throughout all the times.
 Humanity keeps moving along with its crimes.

These were also the times of the student protest
As marches and sit ins unleashed civil unrest
Universities grew and media pervaded
The Sorbonne and Berkeley and Essex invaded.
Across all the globe the students were rising
The stances they took were quite uncompromising
And just when I got my degree, to set us all free,
Discursive deconstruction came looking for me.

So these are the times and the tales of our lives.
Progressing. Regressing. And usually surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.
And the moments we might have as the futures unfold
And utopian hopes for the world if our visions are bold
The movements, the changes that never will end
The years that fly by and the moments we spend
The stories we tell and the memories we mend
These are the times and the tales of our live

**a little slice of auto/ethnography:**

Now, in 2008, I am a retired Professor of Sociology. For the past forty years I have been teaching, thinking and writing about the stories we tell of society- and especially our queer and sexual lives. I am what I call a critical humanist – which means I like to focus on real embodied human beings living their everyday lives through pain and joy. I am interested in embodied humanly made social worlds,
the interactive webs and negotiated orders we creatively weave them into, and their linkages with wider historical social patterns (structures). I believe that everything we do as humans (and sociologists) is saturated with creativity and action, language and materiality, ethics and power, ceaseless change and contingency, and multifarious plurality. Epistemologically, we can only ever have partial perspectives, stories, accounts of this world; but we need to make them as good as they can be. Human beings are always engaged in continuous permutations of action. I worry that sociology can be driven by too much form, too much method, too much theory, too much abstraction. And not enough precarious human social life.

So now go back forty years. To 1968. My life. Here is the start of an auto/ethnography. There is absolutely nothing straightforward about this, and it stands in a very odd relation to the ‘events of 1968’, most of which had no involvement with student lives, let alone ‘the student conflicts.’ I was 21 coming on 22. I was in the middle of my ‘coming out as gay’ stage of life. In the UK – and my story has to be primarily a UK story- 1968 was a year after the Sexual Offences Act which made homosexuality a little more legal than before; and 1968 was two years before the London Gay Liberation Front was formed at the LSE and where I was to be very involved. It may have been a harbinger of the Gay and Lesbian Movement, and one of the most critical moments of my life. But it did not exist in 1968. I had however, during Roy Jenkins’s significant tenure as Home Secretary, been released from being a criminal. (In 1973, I was also going to be pronounced as part of the non sick queer by the World Health Organisation! For the likes of me, it was a good time).

After graduating in 1967, I started work first a ‘Careers Officer; and then as a Community Service Volunteer in Ilkeston, Derbyshire. In October, I began my PhD (on gay life after the law change) at the LSE, teaching at Enfield College (soon to become Middlesex Polytechnic), and living at home with my mum and dad (but soon to rent a small flat in Marble Arch- where I also worked part time as an usher at the Odeon Marble Arch – home at that time of big screen blockbusters like Hello Dolly, West Side Story and the reworked Gone With the Wind!). I had come out into the gay scene and gay life in and around Soho and the trendy Carnaby Street of 1966 when I was 20. My first gay sex came through buying a porn magazine in Soho, writing to the publisher, meeting him and his friends and being taken to a gay bar – The A & B, in Wardour Street (later I learned it was more popularly known as the Arsehole and Buggery!). I volunteered and worked at the Homosexual Law Reform Society Office – the Albany Trust- at 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, where I met Anthony Grey and the early law reformers (Indeed, I did several small scale research studies with/for them).

My intellectual mentors at that time were limited. As an undergraduate I was taught by Stan Cohen, Roy Bailey, Jeanne Gregory, Adrienne Mead, Alf Holt, Tessa Blackstone, Rachel Parry and Jock Young- a lively group of renegades newly graduated from the LSE. I met Michael Schofield, a free lance researcher who had published three key texts on gay life during the 1950’s and 1960’s as well as a popular book of the time (1966) called The Sexual Behaviour of Young People. In 1968, I started my PhD with firstly David Downes and then primarily with Paul Rock, both of whom have recently retired from the LSE. I was on the edge of the National Deviancy Conference – which in the UK was the most radical group of sociological thinkers and activists at that time. Stan, Paul and Jock were my mentors and through them I was introduced to symbolic interactionism – especially in the work of Howard S.Becker, Erving Goffman, John Gagnon and Williams Simon, and Herbert Blumer (though his book Symbolic Interactionism was not published till 1969, when it made a huge and lasting impact on me).

Theatrically, this was the year of Hair, The Boys in the Band, and Hello Dolly. The Sound of Music topped the LP charts. It was the time of the Supremes, Motown, Simon and Garfunkel and Dusty
I never liked the Rolling Stones much but I did see the Beatles. I suppose I was fashion conscious, a bit of a trendy little mover with platform shoes, wide flairs, bright colours and very long curly hair. I guess I was a political liberal; my mates in the academic world were all members of the leftist groups, and I aspired to be one of them— but secretly I had my doubts. Marxism became my intellectual ghost in the cupboard— I have spent most of my life in fact wanting to be a Marxist, and not quite being able to make it: intellectually, politically or emotionally! Being gay made me a young engaged person and I was definitely on the side of all the liberal causes of that time with a very strong left leaning. (The appendix provides a listing of key cultural items in my life).

So as my story started, what were the stories of others at this time? What did these human beings— my species, three and half billion at that time (it is now nearly double that) - make of the year 1968? Many, many stories were told. As ever. There is never the unified story that some sociologists so desperately seek. It is easy to collapse into a narrative of student rebellion and the clichéd stories that have been published. As ever. But very different and multiple stories could be told. It was in fact the year that Enid Blyton died — she who had shaped the childhood worlds of millions of children with Noddy and the Famous Five, the sixth best selling author of all time with thousands of translations. In a way, the end of post war middle class suburban safety. For those in Sicily— it was the year of a major earthquake and Mount Etna doing its usual damage: hundreds died, thousands were injured and all lived daily in the glory and fear of the eruptions of Mount Etna. In Africa, war torn Biafra came into being in Southern Nigeria for a scant three years: probably a million died of something we now call genocide (but the word did not exist then) from starvation, war and neglect. Biafra became the byword for human suffering. And thousands of exiled Asian Kenyans from fled to England— to swim into Enoch Powell’s Rivers of Blood. It was the time of the cold war— of Capitalist Amerika and communist Russia and China. In Prague, some 165,000 soldiers and 4,600 Russian tanks rolled over the Czechs to stop ‘socialism with a human face’. In the USA, Martin Luther King was assassinated on my birthday; Robert Kennedy a month later: all the wailing and the weeping and the wondering. A few sociologists in England dressed up in Mao Tse Tung uniforms whilst in China, Mao pushed forward his Great Leaping Cultural Revolution purging and slaughtering the millions. For a few it meant that for the first time a life could be saved by what has come to be known as transplant surgery. For a few others it meant flying to the moon and photographing the earth. For most, everywhere, it meant the daily dangers, drudgery and joys of life: work, love and play. Maybe it was a special year with special stories? No: ‘history’ is like that: what of 1066? Or 1588? Or 1789? Or 1914? Or 1939? Or 1989? Or 2001? Or anytime? Time flies. Life moves. Stories are told. People come. People go. Nothing changes. Everything changes.

And what was 1968 not? I knew nothing of AIDS, Muslims, McDonalds, Chanel Four or colour TV. I did not buy a computer or a video till sixteen years later. I had not travelled outside of the UK - or been on a plane. My old school had been a second rate Grammar School— but it was about to become a comprehensive school; my old college was just about to become a new Polytechnic (which in turn would become a university in the late eighties). (see Eric Robinson The New Polytechnics: The People’s Universities,1968).

1968 — a symbolic, effervescent, boundary marking, transgressive spectacle — for some

And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Progressing. Regressing. And sometimes surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.
Yes this was the time of bourgeois ideology
And consensual nonsense that we called sociology
Parsonian drivel was mocked and then came the jeers.
Whilst Marxism rose up and was given three cheers.
Banned in China, the left was so right.
Denying again the darkness of night.
Banned in China, the West had it wrong
Wear Mao Tse Tung Uniforms and start to feel strong.
The culture and its Maoist revolution
Showed communism was no easy solution
We made Marx our hero and wore Maoist dress
A coming crisis was everyone’s guess.
And a paradigm shift to get out of the mess.
Mundane consensus became radical orthodoxy
A coming crisis in Western sociology
Consensus and conflicts, and action and structure
The clichés of a legitimation crisis.

So this was the march of the sixty eight dreamers.
Anarchistic believers and socialist schemers.
The calls that they made were stark and dead clear.
Post colonial anger began to appear.
End war. Kill Capitalism. And stop the technology.
And bring to an end bourgeois sociology.
The pedagogy of the oppressed was liberated here
The politics of experience was set into gear
The History Man and the NDC would appear

So here is a year overflowing with symbols,
effervescent and striking.
A world in the making, a world for our liking.

So these are the times and the tales of our lives.
Progressing. Regressing. And usually surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.
And the moments we might have as the futures unfold
And utopian hopes for the world if our visions are bold
The movements, the changes that never will end
The years that fly by and the moments we spend
The stories we tell and the memories we mend
These are the times and the tales of our live

1968 was a spectacularly symbolic year even if it is only one blip in the grand march of time. It was a year when the whole world was watching- as it does now all the time. For a few it has come to stand for an awful lot. In many ways it has become an overloaded symbol, fraught with multiple meanings and tensions. It has certainly been written about ad nauseam: when I came to do some research for this
Some historians think 1968 mattered; some do not. Dominic Sandbrook’s 2006 account of the 1960’s in Britain is very dismissive of the student troubles and calls them ‘parochial, small-scale events in Britain’: he devotes scant attention to them in a chapter called ‘Play Power’ (about 6 pages in a book of 950 pages!). Arthur Marwick’s earlier account gives it a chapter and devotes 60 pages - in a much wider history of what he calls a cultural revolution dating between 1958-1974 (exactly the time of my youth and that of all the other baby boomers). Some histories – like Mark Kurlansky see it as pivotal- The Year that Rocked the World. For him, it was the birth of the ‘post-modern media driven world’.

My own view is best caught by Gerard de Groot: ‘most of what happened in the 1960’s lacked coherent logic... (it is) a kaleidoscope.. arranged into myriad realities’(De Groot, 2008:3-4).

For sociologists we could see it as a moment of Durkheimian ‘effervescence’, as an Althusserian moment of ‘overdetermination’, as a Foucauldian spiral of deconstructive transgression, or even as moment of Weberian charisma! Perhaps a legitimation crisis? Does it herald the Coming Crisis of Western Sociology. Apocalypse now? Well forty years ago it might have. Nowadays, it is simply one of those many years which brought together a lot of symbolic issues and hence came to perform a major role in the collective memory –centrally for parts of that generation (and not for subsequent generations). It is not 1066, or 1914, or 1789, or even perhaps 1989 or 2001. And for every culture – like every life – there are different symbolic years.

Although 1968 is especially linked to the global student politics of that period, its symbolic nature is so much more. But it is indeed often a prime symbol for the age cohort who participated in it -even though most of that age cohort did not participate it in any of its more dramatic forms. (Indeed, in a world population at that time of three and a half billion, just how many could have been students and how many of those students protested?). It is also a key symbol for media – because indeed it was a hugely media event to start with. Its symbolic power touched on the following. ‘1968’ can be made to signify:

- not a year but a whole period (roughly the late 1950’s to the early 1980’s when significant social changes were settling in)
- The spread of global awareness largely through the mass media. More and more, as Todd Gitlin put it, the whole world was watching. Symbols had gone global.
- The massive expansion of higher education and the growth in the UK of the New Universities (York. Warwick, Essex. Lancaster, Sussex and Kent) and the creation of the Polytechnics. And across the world, education was an issue.
- The coming of age of the baby boomers, born just after the Holocaust and the Second World War. A new generation that was not like earlier ones, and one that became an early major self designated ‘youth culture’.
- A sense ‘in the air’ of something new coming- ‘the times they are a changin’ as Bob Dylan put it. Actually, the change was premised on quite a lot of hope and optimism. The world was ours to change. Utopian dreams were in the air.
- So with these, new times (postmodern) were in the making –of individualism, ‘ the impulsive self (Turner, 1976) and the ‘Me Decade’(Wolfe, 1976); of consumption and new markets; and of informalism (Wouters, 2007).
- The development of human rights since the United Nations declarations of 1948 – from the civil war movement and the women’s movement
• The war and international conflict – notably in Vietnam
• The dawn of the age of Aquarius and the growth of countercultural moments
• The simultaneous dawn and death of the Marxist world
• Above all: it was time for (very short lived) Utopian Dreams

These are very big themes. 1968, then, can be made into a spectacular and densely loaded symbol: globally it can be made to mean many different things. The student movement is one part of this, but only one part of this. Much else went on. Put in the stream of spectacular years of world change, it can soon be rendered mundane and routine. New generations may hear of it but hardly know the frisson it generated for a few at that time. Historians, with a wider range, note it but then put it in its place. All ‘years’ and ‘moments’ have their multiple stories to tell.

It is also important to recognise the massive multiplicities of meanings even across the student movement. There were profound differences across countries. The USA and France may have been symbolic leaders but their positions and issues were very different; Italy, Mexico, India or Brazil raised different battle grounds and had different styles. And even within a country there were real differences: Essex was not Warwick was not the LSE. The movements of 1968 were multiple, global and often in tensions with each other. The major strands connected either to a new left movement (which ranged from hard line left to liberation left) or to a countercultural movement (which ranged from romantic bohemianism and avant gardism to at various extremes a Nietzschean individualism and egoism, and a much tougher anarchism and situationalism). And many positions which bridged both. And cut across. And others – like gay liberation – were ignored. Depending on just where in the world you were, so issues varied. Social life is always multiply contested, and the positions available are multitudinous. Table 2 depicts the broadest contours of one divide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW LEFT CULTURES (Apollian, classical?)</th>
<th>COUNTERCULTURES (Dionysian, romantic?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materialist concerns – especially capitalism</td>
<td>‘Experience’ – anti technology and consumerism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual – Marxism and neo Marxism</td>
<td>Romantic strains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental – tougher, more male, slightly ‘macho’</td>
<td>Expressive – in dress, style, art, culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Revolution: capitalism ended</td>
<td>The Revolution: Play Power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An aside: 1968 and its claims

So the walls came down and capitalism spread
To lands where before it had been hopelessly dead
Vietnam may have ended but the wars kept on going.
The deaths of the millions kept flowing and flowing.
Our lap tops and i pods gave fodder to nourish
And through markets and audits, education would flourish.
Intellectual life now became just for the fools
As managers took over and run all our schools
We live with RAE and are all made professors
Leading lives run over by quality assessors.

And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Contested. Contingent. And creatively thriving.
Progressing. Regressing. And sometimes surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.

1968 as the year of student conflicts did make spectacular claims. To be clear: on any kind of audit list it did not do very well. In terms of almost all of its explicit goals, it could be hard to pin down. One web site makes accessible all the slogans used by French students: critical and hostile is the most general themes

Be realistic, demand the impossible
Under the cobblestones, the beach
The revolution is unbelievable because it’s real
Be young and shut up
Say it loud, I’m black and proud
They’re so old, we’re so young, long live Mao-Tse-tung
Silence is sometimes a disgrace
I have something to say but I am not sure what
When I think of revolution, I want to make love

Almost all objectives of almost any kind were never really met: in this sense, the student conflicts have to be seen as failure, and almost as farce. They were extremely idealistic utopian dreams that were being fought for – I suspect most of these student activists would now rather not be known for their youthful dreams as they have become more tempered with the banalities of everyday life. And on any kind of evaluation list, it can soon be shown that they failed – and in a big way. We were entering a new world and the dreamers were not going to have their way. Consider:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATED/SHOUTED GOALS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABOLISH WAR</td>
<td>Vietnam: partial success the war stopped in 1975, but the US withdrew in 1969: partial success (the war started in 1959) But in general war is still here: failure!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESROY CAPITALISM</td>
<td>Total failure: We have seen the growth and extension of capitalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELIMINATE TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>Total failure: There has been unrelenting growth- and new technologies have become ubiquitous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBERATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES</td>
<td>Total failure: Market growth, audit culture, mass higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The knowledge factory, academic capitalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACISM /COLONIALISM</td>
<td>Firmly on the agenda, but only partial success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIVIDUALISTIC VALUES</td>
<td>Postmodern - partial success? (but not anarchism or situationism)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**But: crucial (side) effects:**

Feminism and Women’s Movement         Post colonial Movements
Heterosexism and Gay Movement         Environmentalism and growth of Green Movement

**TABLE 3:**

A KIND OF AUDIT OF 1968 AND THE STUDENT GOALS: UTOPIA COLLAPSED
1968 as complexity, contingency, contestation and creativity.

1968 is perhaps best seen as one of those years which condenses a lot of issues to become a significant, symbolic spectacle – a critical moment of moral effervescence. The actual period it signifies is much broader – possibly the late 1950’s to the mid 1970’s; and in reality the year expiates endless multiplicities, complexities and harbours no internal unity or linear logic of the kinds that analysts might like to claim. Gerard de Groot’s view of the 1960’s as a kaleidoscope comes closest to mine. I am aware of the limitations of historicist and overly structural determinist accounts. The student politics of 1968 should then be seen both as one event in a stream of events; and as part of a much broader period of time – contested maybe, but taking in much of the 1960’s and the 1970’s (and often linked to the period 1958-1975:Marwick’s ‘cultural revolution’). 1968 is an overloaded, over-determined and maybe by now even over theorised symbol; but its events are so multiple and contingent that it is dangerous I think to look for any big story. My stance cautions me of grand theory and over generalisation. Sociology needs a better way to handle multiplicities.

I want to suggest that once we start to examine the range of meanings, structures, situations – the full range of micro, meso and macrostructures in which ‘1968’ was embedded, we have to notice at the very least the chaos behind it all. It is absolutely not cut from the same cloth. We need theory that has ambiguity, contingency, variability, plurality, complexity, contradiction, change, process and flow built into its heart at the local and the global levels. We need a theory of multiplicity and complexity (cf Urry, 2001, 2003). Sociology is good at picking up on themes, but it really has very weak tools for approaching the total as a multiplicity like that I have located above, and as examining one year in the world -1968 – has made me so aware. Long ago, William James said : ‘Damn Great Empires: give me people and their spheres of action’. This is a useful reminder for sociologists. As soon as we look at wholes we are in danger of missing the everydayness complexities that constitute social life. Let me suggest three spheres of action.

1968 and capitalism, informalism and individualism

Sociology is not short of accounts of contemporary social change. I suppose the question has to be asked as to which one fits the 1968 experience best and my hunch is that most have partial contributions to make and none are adequate on themselves. 1968 must be seen in these wider change processes and as part of world reconstruction after World War 2 and the Holocaust. Its major backdrop was the cold war. It hallmarks all the symbolic features I have listed above – from the rise of a new university generation, to new global form of communication. The notion of the global student conflicts taps into a lot of this; There is a re-organisation of collective behaviour and collective symbols, and the creation of new worlds of plausibilities driven by a kind of individualistic utopianism.

Whatever else ‘1968’ is, though, it is also partially a story of human bodies in transformation. When I look at photographs of students in the 1930’s or 1940’s, or indeed watch films of the 1940’s and the early 1950’s, the dominant formality of the body comes shining through. This was the time before Elvis Presley. By the time of the late 1960’s the body was starting to reorganise itself – the hippy mode especially announces this; but it can be seen in much greater flamboyancy of dress, the arrival of unisex outfits, the non wearing of ties, the popularisation of jeans, the greater levels of visibility of flesh, and most of all a general loosening up of body movements. We move from the waltz and the fox trot to the jive and the hippy-hippy shake. By 1972, we have Ziggy Stardust (Just match the bodies of Cary Grant and David Bowie on the You Tube!). This might be seen as a process of informalization. There is much talk by some sociologists of the regulation of bodies in this period, and
in some senses this might be true. But I think it is much more useful to see the modern body as becoming more and more informalised. We do need more evidence: but 1968 seems to me to visibly start to show how the body is being reconstructed.

In general, I am drawing from the work of Elias and Cas Wouters in suggesting a more recent stage of the civilization process in a cycle which they refer to as ‘formalization and informalization’. To them, ‘the 1960s and 1970s provided almost innumerable examples of challenged authority in combination with a critique of the ‘inauthenticity’, ‘superficiality’ and falsity of ‘icy old manners’ (Wouters, 2007:174). One of the things that 1968 students flag is the rise of the informalized society - everywhere the old rules of order start to become manifestly challenged: in forms of address, in body styles, in day to day interactions we start to see the informalization of everyday life.

**Generational Worlds: Migrants in Time.**

Migrants of time, generational divides
Holding on to their places, protecting their spaces,
defending their races. The ones before
they can hardly see. The ones to come will just disagree
Delinquent, declining and gone to the dogs
Each generation unique and then lost
Each generation is lost at its cost
As they bump and they jump and they thump on the new

And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.

Social life can be seen as being organised through generational cohorts and viewed perspectively through what might be called generational cultures. A group of people who lived through this period roughly correspond to the baby boomers, and their histories and fates can be studied as intertwined. This was a generation that had not been through the horrors of the first World War; had not been through the depression of the 1930’s; had no first hand experience of the Holocaust or World War 2. This was also a generation that was ignorant of and had to learn how to use computers, did not know of AIDS till they were well into their thirties etc. And above all, this was a generation that came rapidly to believe in the possibility of change – it was, after all, taking place all around them. That they could wish, and dream, and ponder their utopias became part of this generations world.

Their experiences as a cohort are manifestly not the same as other cohorts; but more than that - they are not even uniform within it. As Karl Mannheim recognised long ago: ‘Within any generation there can exist a number of differentiated antagonistic generation-units’ (1967 306-7). It is clear to me that this 1968 generation is riven with these antagonistic units and insufficient attention has really been given to this. As I have suggested, there is a massive difference between Marxist based hard line students who attacked bourgeois ideology and saw class war, and those countercultural hippy love makers who wanted a permanent individualistic love in: but both were very prominent at the same time. Other groups – like feminists and gays – were actually left out in the cold during this year. You will have to search hard to find gay liberation mentioned anywhere – it had not really been invented: that was the task of 1969 and 1970!. Feminism too was thin on the ground: tales of women making the
tea and rolling the gestentener abound. 1968 is partially animated by a horde of actions linked to
different definitions of the situation, different politics, different social worlds, difference: plurality and
contestation. Nor can we view baby boomers in any simple way: studies show huge differences
between those born just after the war (generally very fortunate) and those born in the 1950’s (much
less fortunate).(Demos, 2003:43).

Subterranean Worlds Rising - The social worlds of outsiders in transformation

And these were the days of the subaltern rising
Of marginal women and men now arriving
Subterranean tribes now leaving the zoo,
Bohemians and radicals, delinquents too,
Outsiders and strangers with different views
Spreading the news of the rights now to choose
Empowering voices and plausible choices
Dominant hegemonies taken for granted
Subterranean traditions queering the slanted
Active and pushing and changing the spacing
Ideas from the past must now need replacing
When everyday life shatters each second of living
The margins merging, the queers unforgiving.
The Trannies and Greenpeace and women at Greenham
Fighting back for a world they can leave better,
In a world that they never ever made

If dominant cultures exist (I sometimes wonder if they actually do – I can never locate them as easily
as some sociological work does), we must always see this in relation to what I would like to call
subterranean cultures and ‘traditions’. In all societies there are what we might call the deep traditions
of the subterranean to which sociologists often pay little focused attention: everywhere there are
traditions that persistently work to minimally creatively react to and engage with whatever passes as a
‘dominant culture’ : they negotiate, play with it, subvert it. They reform, rebel it and revolutionise it.
And at extremes, they aim to destroy it.

In one sense, sociologists do write about this all the time: it is present in family studies and sexuality
studies, in ethnic studies and social movement studies; it is there in studies of the ill and in studies of
youth cultures: escaping, negotiating, resisting and rebelling against dominant worlds is a common
theme. We have seen ‘resistance through rituals’, the delinquent solution’, ‘escape attempts’ (cf
Cohen and Taylor, 1976). All of social life is active and across the world people are always resisting,
changing, modifying, denying and sometimes rejecting the realities they live in. Subterranean cultures
display submerged and less visible patterns of culture which subvert, criticise, mock or distance
themselves from the dominant culture. These are likely to have a lot of varieties, will have long
histories and are quite likely to be found in most societies. Nobody agrees fully with any status quo
and everybody negotiates their own space. Some of these will be directly confrontational and critical;
many will be subversive; others will simply retreat from the dominant order.

Dominant or hegemonic cultures, then, are never all there is – and ironically, they may not even be
that dominant if we want to understand social life. I suspect all societies thrive not only on the
ascendant but also the descendant. There may even be an imagined dominant world that has to be
resisted. There is a lot at work beneath the formal conventions, the orthodoxies. Societies generate subterranean traditions – whole worlds of values, meanings, practices that have little to do with these orthodoxies. Certainly, in much of the western world since the late 19th century we can trace subterranean worlds evolving and mutating into various modern forms. Consider the following. Throughout all the of the twentieth, much of the nineteenth and possibly a good part of the eighteenth we could find:

1. Ethnic, colonised, migrants, refugee worlds.
2. Queer – gay, lesbian, transgender, sexual worlds (multiples worlds at odds with the dominant heterosexual monogamous model)
3. Gender – women’s worlds of difference
4. Political cultures – of both extreme right and extreme left: and especially: Marxist – left worlds, Anarchist-situationist worlds, fascist worlds.
5. Peace and environmental worlds
6. Art and culture worlds – from Avant Gardism to tonalism etc.
7. Intellectual worlds - free thinkers outside of the conventional corpus
8. Bohemian worlds (becoming ‘countercultures’)
9. Youth worlds including student cultures etc.
10. Religious cultures – evangelicals, reformers, millenarian movements etc.
11. Class worlds – both at the bottom (the underclass in its various manifestations) and the upper class in its various manifestations)

Each one of these can be seen as a kind of contemporary social world in the making – some more strongly than others, some more political than others. Their roots dig back through the twentieth century, into the nineteenth century, and often into the eighteenth. They all have quite long histories that are now well documented: none of them just appeared in 1968. For example, we know there are long histories of environmental politics (Walt Whitman, Lewis Mumford, Rachel Carson..), of feminism, of the homophile rights movement, the black/slave/colonised people’s, and the worlds of bohemia (e.g. Wilson, 2003). David Matza, writing influentially in 1964, detected three major subterranean traditions (applied to youth in the 1960’s in America:

‘... delinquency, radicalism, and Bohemianism- each with their own subterranean tradition of American youth. The subterranean tradition of delinquency is guided by a Celebration of prowess, manifests a spirit of adventure, disdain of work, and aggression. Radicalism is guided by an apocalyptic vision, populism, and evangelism. The Bohemian tradition are committed to romanticism, expressive authenticity, and monasticism (and can be frivolous or morose). Only a small proportion of youth participates in any of these traditions, many sit on the edge”. Matza (1961)

Subterranean ‘traditions’ invent a sense of a past evoked to capture these cultures in the present. A classic illustration might be the use of the term ‘bohemian’ which captures a particular historical moment transplanted to a different time. Hippies are often seen as bohemians. These can also be imagined subterranean communities (though not communities without foundations in real history) that we use to build the sense of ourselves in the here and now through looking back at our pasts. Cultures provide tool boxes and recipes for social action that are always lived and experienced in daily lives at the intersections of dominant and subterranean cultures.

Outsiders rising. Sociologists have long expressed interest in a wide range of people who do not fit in. These are the Strangers (Simmel, Schutz), the migrants, the outsiders (Camus, Becker), the
‘marginal men’ (Stonequist), the ‘invisible man’ (Ellison), the gothic, the queer, the Apolonian and the Dynosian (Nietzsche). These are also ‘the wretched of the earth’ (Fanon), the ‘female eunuchs’ (Greer) and the second sex (DeBeauvoir). There is a history of talking about those who wear ‘the mask’ or the veil’ These outsiders are well matched in history and literature too: from James Baldwin’s Stranger in the Village, to Ralph Ellison’s ‘Invisible man’.

There are also clear links here ideas of *subaltern cultures*. An idea which started to develop in the 1970’s to cover initially colonised people in the South Asian continent, ‘subaltern studies’ appeared in the 1980’s as in part the search for authentic voices silenced in dominance. Homi Baba defines them as ‘oppressed groups whose presence was necessary for the self definition of the majority group’ and in 1988 Gayatri Spivak asked: ‘Can the subaltern speak? What must the elite do to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern?’ (p 90 of my reader). Note that this specifies not just oppressed groups but those who are right out of the loop – so not the working class, or students!

### 18th, 19th, 20th Centuries - ‘Subterannean Worlds’
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1968 etc
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#### Twenty First Century Social Movements, Tribes, Worlds (in process)

- Ethnic, colonised, migrants, refugee worlds
- Black Power, Anti-Racism,
- Post Colonial Movements, Amnesty
  - (Slave movements, *Up from Slavery*, nation/sub nation conflicts..)
  - The subaltern
- Queer – mollies, queers, male lesbian, transgender, sexual worlds
  - GLF/GBLT, Trans,
  - Bisexual,
  - Polyarmorous, Queer
  - Movements

- Gender – women’s worlds
  - 35 varieties of 2nd wave and 3rd wave feminism!
  - (Senneca Falls, Suffragettes, women’s writings..)
  - (Radical, socialist, black,
    - queer, postmodern, etc)

- Political cultures – of both extreme right and extreme left: and especially:
  - All kinds of major
  - and minor political parties, and their
  - Marxist inspired – left worlds, Anarchist-situationist worlds
  - Most did not exist two hundred years
  - Multiple and many interconnections and schisms
    - ago. (SWP, International
    - Situationist)

- Peace and environmental worlds
  - Green Parties: Greenpeace, Friends
  - of the Earth
  - (Nature, conservation, pacifism, early peace movements)

- Youth worlds including student cultures
  - Clubs, Organisations, Participation
  - in University governance

- Bohemian worlds (becoming countercultures)
  - Countercultures.......

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Art and culture worlds – from Avant Garde – to tonalism
Intellectual worlds - free thinkers outside of the conventional corpus
Religious cultures

Class worlds – both at the bottom (the underclass in its various manifestations) and the upper class in its various manifestations)

**TABLE 2: GENERATIONS MIGRATING, BODIES CHANGING, SUBTERANNEAN TRADITIONS RISING**

**The Long March of Social Movements**

In a string of important books, the late Charles Tilly has documented the significant growth of social movements in the modern world at a global level. Social movements are a key factor in ordinary folks participation in the running of their lives, and he links their rise and fall to the ‘expansion and contraction of democratic possibilities’ (Tilly, 2004:3). Three factors mark them out since their development after 1750: the prominence of sustained campaigns beyond any single event; the use of a wide range of tools (from pamphleteering to demonstrations); and their ultimate sense of their own worthiness, unity, size and commitment (what Tilley calls WUNC).

From their earliest days, such movements can be seen as arising in subterranean worlds where people are resisting dominant powerful forces. Under conditions often of stress and crisis, they engage in the stages of collective activity which produce claims and help frame arguments about the nature of their lives and their problems. From this they work to get organised – to mobilise resources. Initially based on specific countries, by the nineteenth century they increasingly had become international. And by the time of 1968, such movements were almost global: certainly as Todd Gitlin argued, ‘the whole world was watching’.

But it seems to me a significant turn also happens around this time: there is a spectacular growth of social movements. A range of movements that existed before 1968 in relative isolation and quietness, but the furor of 1968 helped them find space and ground to develop in the years between 1969-1975: for this is the time that we really get to see the growth of the environmental Movement, the Women’s Movement, the Gay/Lesbian and Queer Liberation Movements, and the spread of Anti Race and Post colonial Movements. These had all existed before for at least a century or more; but public awareness shifted around this time and made conditions more plausible for social movements to thrive publicly. Such movements are now firmly part of the modern world – and some such as Manuel Castells and Alan Touraine see them as absolutely central to it.

The movements of 1968 were multiple, global and often in tensions with each other. The major strands connected either to a new left movement (which ranged from hard line left to liberation left) and a countercultural movement (which ranged from romantic bohemianism and avant gardism to at various extremes a Nietzschean individualism and egoism, and a much tougher anarchism and situationalism). Depending on just where in the world you were, so issues varied. Social life is always multiply contested, and the positions available are multitudinous.

**An example - Queer Imaginations Rising**: Gay / queer cultures have quite a long history as does the homophile movement. Documents on gay culture can take us back to the eighteenth century and historians have documented a massive tradition of gay life during the early part of the twentieth century. Likewise, and notably in Germany and to a lesser extent in the US, there were significant pushes towards homosexual emancipation. In the UK, the scandals of Oscar Wilde left homosexuality
deeply underground if extensive. The cases of Wildeblood and Montagu led to the Wolfenden Report, which in turn created organisations that lobbied for homosexual law reform, and ultimately legal changes in 1967 in the UK – one year before 1968. These were the years of my youth. I moved from being a sick criminal to a legal gay adult overnight and before 1968 happened.

Like all social movements it did not arrive overnight. That said, the symbolic time and place was Stonewall 1969, and in the UK it was initiated by two LSE students (Aubrey Waters and Bob Mellors) who called the first meeting there in November 1970. So it seems connected to the student politics of 1968 even if not directly part of that year. It would make an interesting case study of what I am calling ‘subterranean traditions arising’. In this case, it is more specifically a queer vision uprising: the calls of the early GLF anticipated a radical reworking of social life and anticipated the development of a queer theory that started to emerge some 20 years later around 1987 (I take the publication of Sedgwick’s *Between Men* as the founding text in 1985, followed by her *Epistemology of the Closet* in 1990). Many of these ideas can indeed be traced back in dissident writings in the nineteenth century (see for example Dollimore, 1991).

1968, then, was not a specifically powerful year for the Gay Movement which has a long history and culminates in Stonewall in 1969 and London GLF in 1970. The Women’s Movement also had a very long history, had already made its mark in the 1960’s, and in a sense 1968 may almost have been a momentary set back: men are much more prominent than women in this movement, women are often the tea makers and Gestetner workers and their issues are rarely at the forefront in any country.

Religious issues in 1968 are almost non existent: even though the Pope’s attacks on birth control were a feature of that year. There are few or no protests about the abuses in Russian or China or in much of the world outside of the Vietnam conflict. And although the origins of Greenpeace lie in CND and the 1950’s peace movement, its direct origins comes in Vancouver in 1970 – taking its name from a US nuclear testing in 1969. Friends of the Earth was launched in 1971. It can be claimed – quite rightly I think – that these were facilitated by the climate of 1968. But they were not formed or detailedly the focus during that year. In this sense, 1968 may have been a facilitator of new movements as well as a spectacular symbol for their plausibility and possibility.

And at the Sociological Margins: Orthodoxies, Critical Sociologies & Queer Imaginations

Sociology too has subterranean traditions. We can see it in some of the Chicago tradition, looking at *The Hobo, The Polish Peasant, The Jack Roller*. It is present in much of the Frankfurt Critical theory – which manifested especially in Marcuse in California in 1968. It started to take on a presence in the growth of the deconstructionist tendencies of French though which started to become prominent around 1968. It is behind a lot of the justification of field work methodology and can be found in many of the new methodologies championed in field like performance theory (eg Denzin, 2003; Schenchner, 2002). Much of the subterranean in sociology gets cop-opted into the next generations orthodoxy. The radical Foucault or queer theory of one generation becomes mainstreamed by the next generation. That is the way of the subterranean rising!

The influential sociologist of the 1960’s Alvin Gouldner (who in 1970 writes about *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*) distinguished two ‘deep structures’ in social science which he called the romantic and the classical. We could say that the scientism of the west has a subterranean tradition in the humanism and arts of the romantic tendency (and maybe this parallels the divide I have found also been the left and countercultural strains, but I would not wish to push this too far). For Gouldner, the Romantics:
Rebelled on every front against the once honoured conventions of the artistic community: they welcomed a *melange* of times, tones, moods and places in an artistic product, counterposing it to the classical doctrines of the unities; they affirmed the values of the contingent, the changing and the local, counterposing this to the doctrines of universality and permanence; they prized inward conviction, counterposing it to judgements oriented to externalised and objectified standards; they delighted in the exotic, deviant or special case, counterposing these to the probable or average case; they portrayed the indecorous as a way of conferring reality on an individuality that was to be defined by its departure from, rather than its conformity with, social convention...... (Alvin Gouldner 1973: 327).

Putting it simply, some of the contrasts would be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASSICAL</th>
<th>ROMANTIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The average</td>
<td>The idiographic and unusual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The normal</td>
<td>The deviant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal reason</td>
<td>The extra technical sources of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>More informal, individual cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enduring structures</td>
<td>Historical laws and ethnography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherences and Unities</td>
<td>Tensions and schisms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The classical infrastructure has been dominant in social science; but there is a clear counter trend too. Radical deconstructionism and postmodernism has never found that many friends in sociology.

**The strange case of the 1968 National Deviancy Conference**

One instance of this subterranean tradition in ascendancy is The National Deviancy Conference which was established at York in September 1968, and fast became the ‘young turks’ of criminology and sociology. It is given a half line reference in Jennifer Platt’s *The British Sociological Association: A Sociological History* (2003), and absolutely no mention in A.H. Halsey’s extraordinarily orthodox *History of Sociology in Britain* (2004). Yet for around five years it was the liveliest group of sociologists to be found in the UK. History is always from a popint of view, and both Platt and Halsey speak for orthodoxies and tradition. I am speaking of the undergrounds of sociology.

In July 1968 a few young sociologists met to discuss their disillusionment with criminology and the orthodoxies of sociological approaches to it. Subsequently, termly conferences were organised at the University of York between September 1998 and 1973 attracting some 1,300 people. (A list of all the papers at the first twelve conferences can be found in Ian Taylor and Laurie Taylor’s *Politics and Deviance* (1973). These were the conferences of young radicals: youthful, exhuberant, fun loving and intellectually alive. (One critic- Sir Leon Radzinowicz, Director of the Cambridge Institute of Criminology -called them ‘naughty schoolboys’). Everything was under challenge. A radical deconstruction was in the air: this was the intellectual moment which claimed the need for decriminalization (Schur), decarceration (Goffman, Barton), deprofessionalization (Illich), de-labelling (Becker). For a short while, this was the time to celebrate ‘Outsiders’ (Becker), ‘Crimes without victims’ (Schur) and Becoming Deviant (Matza). It was the moment of the anti-psychiatry movement of Laing and Szasz.

The founding seven were Stan Cohen, Paul Rock, Kit Carson, David Downes, Ian Taylor, Jock Young and one woman: Mary McIntosh. All went on to illustrious careers, most as Professors of Sociology! At the heart of their concerns were the issues of analysing the social reactions to crime and deviance,
taking seriously the meaning worlds of the deviants, highlighting the ubiquitous nature of deviance and crime as changing features of societies, and linking all this to public understanding and political actions. Howard Becker’s * Outsiders* and Erving Goffman’s * Asylums* constituted the biblical text; but theoretically it was ecumenical- phenomenologists happily rubbed shoulders with Marxists. Politically, it negotiated a path between radical anarchistic libertarianism and hard line leftism. Personally, it celebrated marginality and any activism that promoted the emerging new age of....... There were papers on druggies and soccer hooligans, blackmail and rent boys, prisons and the disabled, hippies and youth cultures, psychiatry and and anti-psychiatry, the weathermen, heroin and alcoholics, transvestism and gay couples, and the prison movement, the squatter movement,.. (Footnote: A number of manifestos and textbooks were produced – amongst them Laurie Taylor’s * Deviance and Society* (197?), Paul Rock’s * Deviant Behaviour*, Mike Phillipson’s * The sociology of Crime and Deviance*, Steve Box’s * Deviance Reality and Society* and ultimately in 1973 Jock Young, Paul Walton and Ian Taylor’s enormously influential * The New Criminology*. Texts that are identified with this period would be Stan Cohen’s * Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, Jock Young’s * The Drugtakers*, The group produced inter alia * Images of Deviance* (ed by Stan Cohen, 1971), * Politics and Deviance* (ed by Ian Taylor and Laurie Taylor), and * Contemporary Social Problems* (ed by Roy Bailey and Jock ouing , 1973). The trail end of it saw * Capitalism and the Rule of Law* (Bob Fine et al 1979) and * Permissiveness and Control* (1980), as well as Geoff Pearson’s *The Deviant Imagination*). In some ways, the arrival of Stuart Hall’s Collection * Resistance Through Ritual*, and the NDC’s development into the European Group of Social Control marked its diffusion. By the mid 1970’s most of its key participants had become institutionalised into universities and its ideas had become the new taught orthodoxy of ‘The Sociology of Deviance’. It had also generated or scattered widely into a range of sociologies. A subterranean moment became public, embraced and rendered orthodox. However ‘bohemian’ and subterranean’ this felt at the time (and for me at any rate it surely did), it must be remembered that much of this was before feminism had become prominent (Carol Smart’s *Women, Crime and Criminology* was published in 1976) and it was all just at the cusp of the gay, black and post colonial movements. Nor had postmodernism ever been heard of! Yet in many ways it was the precursors of much of this next generation’s thinking.

**Conclusions**

- Spectacular tales and multiple voices
- Effervescent moments and plausible choices
- Mosaics and patchworks and kalaediscopes playing
- Grand designs .total structures. Collapsed and decaying
- And linear lines fragment into fractures
- Symbolic, shambolic, semiotic, systolic.
- This is the march of the times
- The movements, the changes that never will cease
- The years that fly be and the moments we lease
- The stories we tell and their memories we grease
- These are the change of the days.

Although 1968 did not achieve any of its grander goals like the ending of capitalism, the collapse of modern technology, the ending of wars or even the creation of university cultures that were genuinely concerned with knowledge and ideas and not dominated by markets and managers, it could be claimed perhaps that it served as a marker event for a long historical trend to bring subterranean
values more openly into the mainstream, and that the generation itself has promulgated ideas of change, creativity, and individualism that has often been manifested in the activities of a vast network of social movements and change agents. I have tried to suggest that modern day movements – from the Women’s Movement and Queer Movement to the Environment Movement and Post Colonial Movements – have long traditions back into the nineteenth (and in some cases eighteenth) centuries that were brought together at critical effervescent moments that occurred during the early 1960’s and mid 1970’s and which is symbolised by ‘1968’. Achieving little directly, it transformed the culture of expectations in which life has since been lived even if routinely contested. The importance of human rights across the world and the significance of individual lives across major differences – of living with and developing the differences- is now firmly on the agenda.

Gay rights and queer issues are a clear and simple example of all this. In the Western world, queer life has been radically re-organised over the past forty years. New generations can hardly comprehend the world that has been won (for them?). Indeed I can hardly grasp it. There back in the 1960’s homosexuality was a crime, a sickness, a huge secret. It was not easy to be gay then, or indeed for centuries before. It still is not in much of the world, and the battle is now a world wide one. But the transformations that took place during this period have established the agenda: human rights for gays is now a reality in many places. Life is still hard for many, but for many millions a world has arrived which was inconceivable before. We must therefore be wary of analysing society and its changes too negatively – as sociologists are prone to do. In many subterranean worlds of life once downtrodden and excluded, we have seen real change, And it is in part the spirit of 1968 which has helped in this.

The same story can be told over and over again. A.C.Grayling’s Towards the Light (2007) documents ‘five hundred years of struggles for liberty and rights that made the modern west’. In a sense this is a historical and philosophical guide to the gradual development of modern social movements that engage daily to enhance freedom and protect rights. He is rightly concerned that we can easily lose these rights: that the struggles and high costs of the last five hundred years can be easily lost. History is not inevitably on the side of progress. Events like 1968 help to consolidate and lead us towards utopian visions of human life.

Sociology has long been engaged with debates over values and politics. The debates in 1968 were notoriously part of this – they described the world we wanted to live in, the kind of studies and sociology we should do, of the changes that were needed. We were naive perhaps, but unashamedly partisan. I came into sociology with a passion and anger about the understanding of homosexuality – I was angry about the long historical and wider cultural rejection and abuse of homosexuals. It was a fortunate contingency to be born an early baby boomer and find myself in a culture which dreamt of radical change: it was a culture where everything seemed possible. Although I had just missed the excitement of 1968, I was indeed in time for the Gay Liberation Front. And this, I know, has been a major defining fact of my life.

I have been publicly out as gay man now for over forty years – at home, at work and at play; and I can hardly imagine now what pains must exist if people stay in the closet. In my life time I have seen major changes and many of them for the better. There has been major progress. But my value and political base line was actually very narrow; it was restricted to a neophyte queer imagination lodged in liberalism with Marxist aspirations. It served me very well at the time, but as I have aged, so my value and political baselines have broadened. My utopian dreaming has somehow never vanished. I am now what I call a critical humanist.
Social life is always contingent, creative and contested. It is always incorrigibly plural. Values and politics touch everything we do, even when we do not want them to. And we had better come clean about it. In the vast multi paradigm discipline that we have invented called sociology, we need to get our values up front and clear. Of course, we need objectivity, critical reasoning, edge: I am not arguing for any kind of postmodern relativism but a knowledge that is grounded surely on where we want to go. Many of the old dreams of sociologists have been destroyed: we need to make our agendas clearer for the twenty first century. Do we support the long term search for human capabilities flourishing for all and is human rights the best mode for doing this? Do we wish to live in a world where the multiple patterns of inequality – from class to disability- are weakened? Do we wish ultimately to cultivate a humane and cosmopolitan attitude in global citizens (Appiah, 2006; Bech, 2004; Chhachhi & Nicholas, 2006; Snaider, 2001)? My affirmative answer to these questions provides my utopian dream: not a utopia which will ever arrive, but one which a humane sociology can help each generation rework and thus enable social life to flourish.

And these are the dreams for the rest of the time
Utopias imagined will never arrive
But the dream and the drama will help us survive
And everyday life will keep us alive
Cultivate capabilities and the rights of all people
Weaken the deepening of all social inequalities.
Be cosmopolitan and live with our differences
And love one another or die.

And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Contested. Contingent. And creatively thriving.
Progressing. Regressing. And sometimes surviving.
Incorrigibly plural. Intransiently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.

And the moments we might have as futures unfold
And the hopes of the world if our visions are bold
The movements, the changes that never will end
The years that fly by and the moments we spend
The stories we tell and the memories we mend
The chances and whispers and dreams we construct
World changin’ and movin’: worlds won and worlds lost.
These are the times and the tales of our lives

Bibliography (working draft only)

Daniel Bell (1976) The Coming of Post Industrial Society
Stan Cohen (1970) Folk Devils and Moral Panics
Stan Cohen and Laurie Taylor (1976) Escape Attempts. Allen Lane
Alvin Gouldner (1971) The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology. Heinemann
Karl Mannheim (1936) Ideology and Utopia. Routledge
Eve Kasofsky Sedgwick (1985) Between Men
--------- (1990) Epistemology of the Closet
Taylor and Laurie Taylor eds (1973) Politics and Deviance. Penguin
I was born in Wood Green London in 1946: dad was a barber, mum worked in a laundry: she was a miner’s daughter. Nobody in our family had ever been near a university before.

The soundtrack of my life:
Dusty Springfield
Motown- Four Tops, Marvin Gaye..
Diana Ross and the Supremes
Judy Garland (who died in 1969)
Marlene Dietrich (who I did not see until 1970)
Big Musicals: Hello Dolly, Mame, Sound of Music etc
New Rock Musicals: Hair, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Do your Own Thing etc
Film Musicals: Singing in the Rain, Wizard of Oz, The Band Wagon etc
Groups like The Searchers, the Hollies and the Kinks
Simon and Garfunkel
(but definitely not the Rolling Stones, Doors or Jimmy Hendrix!)

The academic background shapers for my PhD: 1968-1973
The various articles written by John Gagnon and William Simon (published in 1974 as Sexual Conduct)
Howard S Becker Outsiders / ed. The Other Side
David Matza Becoming Deviant
Herbert Blumer Symbolic Interactionism
Anselm Strauss Mirrors and Masks, Awareness Contexts, Grounded Theory etc
Edwin Schur Crimes without Victims
Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann The Construction of Social Reality
Erving Goffman Aslums/Stigma/Presentation of Self in Everyday Life/ Encounters
Stanley Cohen Ph D Thesis, LSE
Paul Rock Deviant Behaviour (and other deviancy texts: like Rubington and Weinberg)
Interestingly: there are no women on this list – my feminist education started in 1974 with the BSA Conference held in that year; my ‘conversion’ happened through knowing Annabel Faraday in the late 1970’s and through reading Andrea Dworkin in the early 1980’s).

‘Queer’ texts that shaped my early life: or what I could get my hands on around 1968!
Michael Schofield Sociological Aspects of Homosexuality
Donald West Homosexuality
Evelyn Hooker ‘ Psychological adjustments of the overt homosexual..’
Alfred Kinsey et al Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male/Female
The papers of Gagnon and Simon ( their book was not published till 1974 in the UK)
Laud Humphreys Tea Room Trade
Mary McIntosh ‘The Homosexual Role’
.Genet.... James Baldwin etc.
Dennis Altman Homosexual: Liberation and Oppression (the first serious modern gay liberation book –published in 1971 in the UK)
(I wasn’t very keen on Freud at all but did read him!)

Some very influential books around the 1968 Generation
Herbert Marcuse Eros and Civilization
Guy DeBord The Society of the Spectacle
My Early Sociological Reading – Memories and Purchases

(Method: This list was written off the top of my head in half an hour – whatever else I may have read, these clearly left a mark on me. I clustered them by what I call to be roughly the courses that I took. I then did a bit of Amazon checking for a few titles that I was a bit unclear about).

My first degree was the London (external) B.Sc Sociology 1964-7. It included part one (examined at the end of the second year): economics, philosophy and methods/statistics; and part two (at the end of Year 3 – I took my exams during the ‘Six day War’ of Israel/Arab states June 5-10th 1967): sociological theory, comparative social institutions, social psychology, social history, social structure of modern Britain, and my options: criminology and social policy.

PART ONE:
Economics
Richard Lipsey Positive Economics 1st edition has just been published (I note that it is now in its 11th edition as Lipsey and Chrystal (Oxford, 2007)
Research
Michael Schonfield Sexual Behaviour of Young People
Alfred Kinsey et al Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male – methods appendix
Social Philosophy
Peter Winch The Idea of Social Science
Benn and Peters Social Principles and the

Democratic State
PART TWO:
Comparative Social Institutions
Edward Westermann History of Moral and the Family
Margaret Mead Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies
Stanislav Andreski Comparative Sociology
Karl Wittfogel Oriental Despotism
Criminology
Karl Mannheim Comparative Criminology
Robert Merton Social Theory and Social Structure (Anomie)
Howard S Becker Outsiders
Eving Goffman Stigma
Social Psychology
Stanley Milgram Obedience to Authority
Theodore Adorno The Authoritarian Personality
J C Brown Freud and the Post Freudians
Robert J Lifton Thought Reform
Sociological Theory
Don Martindale The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory
Talcott Parsons The Structure of Social Action
Karl Popper The Poverty of Historicism/The Open Society and its Enemies
Thomas Kuhn The Structure of Scientific Revolutions
C Wright Mills Marx and the Marxists
Tom Bottomore and Rubel: Karl Marx:Readings.
Ernest Gellner Thought and Change
John Rex Key Problems of Sociological Theory
Structure of Modern Britain
And these are the times and the tales of our lives
Incorrigibly plural. Intransigently vast.
These are the tales of how we order our past.
Cultivate capabilities and the rights of all people.
Weaken the deepening of all social inequalities.
Be cosmopolitan and live with our differences
And love one another or die.