

This Week's Citation Classic®

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Barber B. *Science and the social order.* Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952. 288 p.
[Columbia University, New York, NY]

Although I did not write *Science and the Social Order* to help establish the sociology of science, it has played its part in that enterprise. I trace out the contributions of various new social conditions and of various other scholars to the emergence and maturation of that field, which is now a full-blown specialty with a firm cognitive and professional identity. [The *SCI*® and *SSCI*® indicate that this book has been cited in over 165 publications since 1955.]

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When I wrote my *Science and the Social Order* in 1952, the sociology of science was not yet a social-science specialty with a realized professional identity. There were no courses, no professional associations, no journals, no prizes, no dense networks of citations and informal colleague interactions, all those structures and processes that make up a specialty with a realized professional identity. That identity began to be established only in the late 1960s and the 1970s. And I did not write my book with the sociology of science foremost in mind. What was foremost in mind was the late Talcott Parsons's lectures and writing on the theory of the social system. I wrote my book to exemplify the usefulness of that theory. I might have chosen any one of a number of other social structural or cultural subsystems of society for this purpose, for example, social stratification (about which I did publish a book later¹) or religion, but I chose the subsystem of science because that was the one with which I felt most familiar.

As an undergraduate at Harvard in the late 1930s and then again as a graduate student in the early 1940s, I had become acquainted, through course lectures, reading courses, and their books, with the work on the social aspects of science of such scholars as Robert K. Merton, Parsons, George Sarton, L.J. Henderson, and James Bryant Conant. I had also read the work of the so-called British "scientific humanists": J.D. Bernal, J.S. Haldane, and Lancelot Hogben. So it was easiest for me to do a social-system analysis in that area.

My book was little noticed at first. More attention was paid to it as a result of what happened later. In 1957 *Sputnik* alarmed everyone about the apparent relative weakness of American science. There then occurred activity in all Western countries about science policy. On the intellectual side, Merton began again to work intensively in the sociology of science,² Derek J. de Solla Price published his path-breaking quantitative studies on the structure and growth of science,^{3,4} and Thomas S. Kuhn published *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,⁵ which fruitfully brought together the history, philosophy, and sociology of science.

Still later, there occurred more innovations for the sociology of science and also the beginnings of a realized professional identity. Among the innovations were the invention of the *Science Citation Index*® (*SCI*®) by Eugene Garfield, the use of survey research techniques and citation data from the *SCI* by sociologists like Jonathan and Stephen Cole, and then the excellent studies of the actual substance of scientific ideas by a group of British scholars such as David Edge, Barry Barnes, Michael Mulkey, Harry Collins, Steve Woolgar, and Richard Whitley. For a sample of their work, see the journal *Social Studies of Science*, edited by Edge at the Science Studies Unit, Edinburgh University. We now have several international professional associations, journals, meetings, and much co-citing work in the sociology of science. A great difference from *Science and the Social Order* in 1952!

1. Barber B. *Social stratification: a comparative analysis of structure and process.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957. 540 p. (Cited 185 times.)

2. Merton R K. *The sociology of science: theoretical and empirical investigations.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1973. 605 p. (Cited 520 times.)

3. Price D J D. *Little science, big science...and beyond.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1966. 301 p.

4. ———. *Little science, big science.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1963. 118 p. (Cited 850 times.)

[See also: Price D J D. Citation Classic. (Smelser N J, comp.) *Contemporary classics in the social and behavioral sciences.* Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1987. p. 59.]

5. Kuhn T S. *The structure of scientific revolutions.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1962. 172 p.

(Cited 3,155 times.)

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