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What is conventional wisdom?

J. K. Galbraith and the acceptability of knowledge

Björn Lundberg

New academic disciplines take shape in the nebulae of critical discussion. For a loosely gathered cloud of scholarly inquiry to mould into a bright shining star of scientific distinction, members of a new field must deliver justifiable answers to queries about the nature of the discipline itself. For historians of knowledge, the most fundamental question concerns the nature of knowledge. What *is* knowledge? One might object that the point at issue should not be phrased in present tense, as historians of knowledge are less concerned with what knowledge *is* than what it *has been*. Simone Lässig has remarked that knowledge is subject to change, and accordingly ‘the history of knowledge explores what people in the past understood by the idea of knowledge and what they defined or accepted as knowledge’.¹ Yet, the question does not go away so easily. Although knowledge is understood as changeable, historians of the field must grasp what this changing object of study is. It has been pointed out that there otherwise is a risk that the concept of knowledge, much like that of culture for cultural historians, becomes vague and lacking in analytical precision.² In the words of Lorraine Daston, what doesn’t it cover?³

Reflecting the inclusive nature of knowledge as a concept, historians of this new field have taken interest in the production and circulation of both practical and theoretical knowledge as well as knowledge traditionally considered ‘high’ or ‘low’.⁴ The will to include different forms of knowledge has led scholars to propose that knowledge should ultimately be considered an empirical question—in other words that the object of

study is what has been considered knowledge in given circumstances.⁵ But this definition has its own limits, since it excludes forms of knowledge that may not have been recognized as knowledge in particular historical contexts, such as practical knowledge of low-status groups in society.⁶

Linguistic entrenchment also contributes to the vagueness of the concept of knowledge. For example, epistemologists differentiate between propositional knowledge and acquaintance knowledge ('to know that the Earth orbits around the sun' as opposed to 'to know someone'), but that distinction does not necessarily make sense in other languages.⁷ In Swedish, to know someone is expressed using the verb *känna*, to 'feel' or 'sense'. On the other hand, the Swedish verb *kunna*, to 'know', also means 'to be able to'. Further, the German *wissen* and the Swedish *veta* translate as knowing, but mainly refer to theoretical or propositional knowledge (or in the German case, memory). It is difficult not to interpret the lively debate between German proponents of history of knowledge as opposed to history of science in light of the linguistic similarities between the words *Wissen* (knowing) and *Wissenschaft* (science).⁸ These examples illustrate that the understanding of what knowledge is in relation to other concepts such as science, emotion, proficiency, truth, or memory, is to some degree influenced by language.

Even if we disregard the particularities of different languages, epistemology does not provide ready blueprints for a more precise conceptualization of knowledge in history. Since antiquity, philosophers have discussed the nature of knowledge, often in terms such as 'true judgement' or 'true, justifiable belief'. However, these definitions have inherent limits⁹ and do not account for non-propositional knowledge (knowing how to swim does not require truth). Nevertheless, other forms of knowledge such as practical or embodied knowledge also rest on justification to be socially acceptable or desired.¹⁰ As Simone Lässig has pointed out, the history of knowledge 'is concerned with the interaction of different types and claims to knowledge and the process of negotiation between opposing understandings of knowledge'.¹¹ In order to bring greater precision to the study of knowledge in history, an emphasis on processes of justification appears to be called for.

There are several possible ways to proceed in this endeavour. One

possibility is to address justification in relation to the social dimensions of science, by scrutinizing the social logics and institutional conditions that influence the justification of knowledge among scholars and scientists.¹² Another approach to the problem is to empirically examine how different actors have shaped the understanding of knowledge in contemporary society, or in academic discussions. Studies in this vein have covered influential critics and commentators such as Daniel Bell, Michel Foucault, and Thomas Kuhn.¹³ However, there are also other, less prominent actors who have exercised influence on the popular conceptualization of knowledge in the post-war era, but who have not garnered extensive attention from historians of knowledge or science. This essay will direct the attention to one such figure: the Canadian American economist John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–2006). Most famous for his treatises on the affluent society and the role of corporations and states in modern economies, he made a specific contribution to the history of modern knowledge by coining the term ‘conventional wisdom’, which has since gained considerable popularity.¹⁴

In this essay, I will examine how Galbraith employed conventional wisdom as a concept to justify particular knowledge claims concerning life and economics in affluent societies. The approach is informed by an understanding of knowledge claims as grounded in historical contexts and conceptual contestation. Quentin Skinner has argued that ‘there *is* no history of the idea to be written but only a history necessarily focused on the various agents who used the idea and their varying situations and intentions in using it.’¹⁵ Skinner’s conceptual analysis considers the community or society in which a text was written, what the text argued against and whom it sought to persuade. From the viewpoint of legal history, Pamela Brandwein has proposed a methodology for the study of the successes and failures of scholarly knowledge claims based on sociohistorical analysis.¹⁶ Brandwein argues that the ‘careers’ of competing knowledge claims do not result only from the intrinsic value of the claims, but must be viewed relative to the interpretative communities in which they compete. This includes how arguments and narratives are constructed and the modes of persuasion employed.¹⁷ It is worth contemplating what happens if we apply the same approach

to the history of knowledge. In other words, we may ask how different agents have justified information and know-how as knowledge, and for what purposes they have made use of certain knowledge. While its scope does not allow for a thorough socio-historical analysis of Galbraith's personal and professional networks or his general audience, this essay brings overlooked agents into the study of production and circulation of knowledge by studying a specific case of how knowledge has been justified.¹⁸

Background

The concept of the conventional wisdom was presented by John Kenneth Galbraith in his 1958 publication *The Affluent Society*. While the term had in fact been used in a few instances at least as early as the nineteenth century, Galbraith doubtlessly popularized it.¹⁹ It is worth noting that the concept of conventional wisdom did not come about by chance. Galbraith later affirmed that he had put some effort into the thought-process on how to label the phenomenon he sought to describe. After testing a few alternatives on his colleagues at Harvard, his choice fell on 'conventional wisdom'. As Galbraith acknowledged: 'I should add that the selection of that name owes more than a little to Harvard colleagues on whom I tried out several possibilities.'²⁰

The Affluent Society quickly became a bestseller in the US, was translated into several languages, and made Galbraith a leading public intellectual.²¹ Sixty years after its original publication, the volume remains in print, and it has been hailed as one of the most influential non-fiction books of the past century.²² While the impact of the book and the relevance of Galbraith's economic theory have been covered at considerable length, the concept of the conventional wisdom has not previously attracted much attention among scholars.²³

Perhaps this can be explained by the seemingly insignificant role the concept played in Galbraith's book. As suggested by the title, *The Affluent Society* was not a book primarily about knowledge theory. Instead, it sought to explain economic and social development in increasingly affluent post-war societies, primarily the US. One of Galbraith's key

concerns was the relationship between ‘private opulence and public squalor’, where private consumption experienced rapid growth while society remained poor in terms of public spending.²⁴ Thereby, Galbraith also challenged the notion of increased productivity as a straightforward measure of increased societal wealth.

Galbraith’s critique of consumer society came at a time that in hindsight has been regarded as a turning point in American consumerism. Private consumption and materialism had been at the centre of society in the US since at least the 1930s. After the constraints on private spending that had been imposed by the Great Depression and the Second World War ended in 1945, Americans indulged in a prolonged shopping spree that filled post-war middle-class homes with television sets, kitchen appliances, record players, and futuristic furniture.²⁵ Riding the wave of optimism and wealth, *The Affluent Society* gave rise to a heated debate about economics and welfare far beyond the borders of the US. Although Galbraith’s importance as an economic theorist was eventually diminished by the demise of institutionalism, his treatise on affluence had a considerable influence on policy and discourse in North America and Western Europe.²⁶

Introducing conventional wisdom

As with many popular phrases, the notion of conventional wisdom can take on different meaning, but is commonly understood as knowledge that is accepted within a certain community or among the general public. Unlike some other expressions that enter the language through a single book—such as ‘the end of history’ or ‘imagined communities’²⁷—the concept of conventional wisdom was not directly connected to the title of the book or even the central economic argument of *The Affluent Society*. But according to Galbraith, one of the purposes of the book was also to show how economic thinking was still guided by theories grounded in the inequalities and scarcities of the past.²⁸ Like John Maynard Keynes had argued three decades earlier, Galbraith claimed that economic theory failed to deal with contemporary issues. In Galbraith’s historiography of orthodox economics, the so-called central tradition

had treated scarcity as natural law. Following Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo, this tradition had allowed little room for governmental intervention in macroeconomic affairs. Increasingly affluent societies, argued Galbraith, needed to accept new knowledge.²⁹

In the introduction to the book, Galbraith argued that a certain logic explained why economists and politicians still clung to the logics of scarcity when the (industrialized) world experienced rapidly increasing affluence. To Galbraith, this was a consequence of the logics of the conventional wisdom.³⁰ To strengthen his argument, an entire chapter in *The Affluent Society* was dedicated to explaining this concept. It may seem surprising that Galbraith discussed the general production and mediation of academic knowledge in a book that covered a specific aspect of economy and society, but the urban studies scholar Michael Berry has argued that the concept was important for the substantive economic arguments of the book, since it presented a historical background that explained the current status of economic theory.³¹

Galbraith primarily discussed economics, but his notion of conventional wisdom was presented as a general concept, applicable to various scientific fields as well as political discourse. He did not overburden this in the second chapter in the book with theoretical models or appeal to the authority of epistemologists or his predecessors and fellow economic theorists by the use of extensive footnotes. In fact, he included a minimum of references to other scholars (the first two chapters of the book featured a total of three footnotes).³² Instead, Galbraith presented what can be described as a theory of knowledge that mostly appealed to the common sense of his readership.

In this framework, Galbraith laid out what he understood to be the conventional wisdom of orthodox economics. It clearly accentuated how established knowledge in the field had become outdated. In order to explain why this archaic knowledge remained strong despite rapidly changing circumstances in society in terms of production and productivity, Galbraith described conventional wisdom as a form of social logic. Since patterns of social life, including economics, are complex and often incoherent, he argued that there is always room for personal assumptions or a certain degree of arbitrariness. Because of this, people

will tend to hold on to opinions and ideas that fit with their established worldviews. Accordingly, the conventional wisdom provides an obstacle for the acceptance of new knowledge or novel and original thinking, and makes it possible for people to go on with their everyday lives without a constant shattering of worldviews.³³ To its adherents, it provides comfortable padding against inconvenient truths and the complexities of reality. Galbraith stated: ‘Therefore we adhere, as though to a raft, to those ideas which represent our understanding. This is a prime manifestation of vested interest. For a vested interest in understanding is more preciously guarded than any other treasure.’³⁴

Galbraith thus argued that the acceptability of new knowledge is crucial in order to account for the impact of economic theories and other products of knowledge. This would explain why acceptable ideas are disinclined to change, and those ideas that are appreciated at a given time or by a given group primarily because of their acceptability were what Galbraith labelled conventional wisdom. In the struggle between what is correct and what is agreeable, Galbraith argued that conventional wisdom had a tactical advantage.³⁵ Further, the notion of acceptability framed the production and circulation of knowledge in terms of psychology. ‘There are many reasons why people like to hear articulated that which they approve’, wrote Galbraith. ‘It serves the ego: the individual has the satisfaction of knowing that other and more famous people share his conclusions. The individual knows that he is supported in his thoughts—that he has not been left behind and alone.’³⁶ Here, Galbraith did little to hide his animosity towards the self-congratulatory tendencies of his fellow scholars. Galbraith likened academia to a religious rite with little interest in the pursuit of new knowledge: ‘Scholars gather in scholarly assemblages to hear in elegant statement what all have heard before. Yet it is not a negligible rite, for its purpose is not to convey knowledge but to beatify learning and the learned.’³⁷

At this point, we may ask how it is possible to conceptualize epistemic change if convenience regularly trumps truth and our understanding of the world is governed primarily by self-interest or vanity? To Galbraith, the answer was the test of time:

The enemy of the conventional wisdom is not ideas but the march of events....The fatal blow to the conventional wisdom comes when the conventional ideas fail signally to deal with some contingency to which obsolescence has made them palpably inapplicable....Meanwhile, like the Old Guard, the conventional wisdom dies but does not surrender. Society with intransigent cruelty may transfer its exponents from the category of wise man to that of old fogey or even stuffed shirt.³⁸

This illustrates that the notion of the conventional wisdom includes relationships of power in regard to knowledge, according to which new knowledge may be combatted or ignored by those who adhere to established principles. In this sense, the concept anticipated Thomas Kuhn's famous notion of scientific paradigms in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* published four years later.³⁹

Galbraith's use of the term conventionality signalled that old beliefs were held out of convenience. The word 'wisdom' further associated established knowledge with age and tradition as opposed to new insights. While the use of the term 'conventional' signalled a position in opposition to the unconventional, and thereby set the stage for assessing competing knowledge claims, Galbraith understood change as a process primarily brought about by the amassing of facts. In his own example, the increasing affluence in society must eventually be accounted for. Galbraith's conventional wisdom thus emphasized the importance of external events to account for structural change: 'Ideas are inherently conservative. They yield not to the attack of other ideas but to the massive onslaught of circumstance with which they cannot contend.'⁴⁰

Conventional wisdom as justification

Six decades after its original publication, *The Affluent Society's* legacy is inconclusive. While hailed as one of the most widely read and accessible books on economics of the past century, Galbraith's influence on mainstream economic theory is negligible.⁴¹ With the demise of institutionalism and the hegemonic status of neoclassical economics in the decades that followed after its publication, it may be said that the conventional wisdom of economic theory has remained just that—conven-

tional. Nevertheless, the concept of the conventional wisdom entered the language, and was even used to describe Galbraith's economic theory, as the author himself noted: 'To my surprise and, no one should doubt, my pleasure, the term entered the language. It has acquired a negative, slightly insulting connotation and is sometimes used by people with views deeply adverse to mine who are unaware of its origin. Few matters give me more satisfaction.'⁴²

In this essay, I have presented and discussed the background and context of the concept as it was used by Galbraith in *The Affluent Society*. The concept of the conventional wisdom was not presented in sophisticated philosophical terminology, but Galbraith's notion can nevertheless be understood as the basis of a simplified theory of knowledge. I have sought to show how such theories can also make for interesting empirical cases in the historiography of knowledge, as they reveal something of the intentions of certain agents in light of what they argued for and against.

As a rhetorical device the concept of conventional wisdom accentuated the difference between established truths and new knowledge, which was one of Galbraith's primary intentions. Its usage signalled that its author was fighting a battle against ignorance and old beliefs as opposed to new knowledge claims. Thereby Galbraith rhetorically also sought to put forward his own arguments to a position beyond contention. As evident from the popularity of the term, conventional wisdom served the purposes of the author. Since its use in *The Affluent Society* in 1958, politicians, pundits, and practitioners of science and philosophy alike have used the term to stress the rupture between accepted knowledge and whatever propositions the person in question seeks to present as convincingly new and different.

The concept of conventional wisdom casts light on important aspects on how to explore knowledge in the past. For example, the concept highlights the acceptability of knowledge and turns the historian's attention to knowledge claims as social and communicative processes. It raises questions on the importance of audiences on how knowledge claims in the past have succeeded or been silenced, which opens up interesting perspectives. We may ask, for example, how particular contestations of knowledge have been informed by the social context in which they

took shape. Further, the term 'conventional wisdom' highlights the often contentious relationship between novel claims and established truths in the production of science and other forms of knowledge. Insofar, Galbraith anticipated Kuhn's influential argument in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

However, the rhetorical strength of conventional wisdom also exposes its weakness as an analytical concept. Berry has described Galbraith's use of the concept as 'vague and whimsical'.⁴³ There is an obvious risk that the dichotomic discrepancy between knowledge old and new, traditional and novel, outdated and informed, conventional and innovative, serves to conceal the multifaceted nature of knowledge in circulation. There is a strong argument that historians of knowledge should not pass judgement in the form of teleological narratives of how new knowledge eventually prevails over outdated beliefs, but rather empirically examine the various ways in which historical actors have sought to justify knowledge under given circumstances.

To sum up, the concept of conventional wisdom serves as an empirical example of how a specific actor sought to legitimize and justify a particular knowledge claim. By introducing the concept of conventional wisdom, Galbraith presented a history of economic theory that had become fundamentally out-of-touch with contemporary challenges, while presenting his own knowledge claims as a remedy to this situation. Instead of referencing other theorists, his claim appealed to the common sense of the reader by the use of rhetorical strength. Apparently, it was a successful tactic. Today, an Internet search on 'conventional wisdom' provides countless hits. A search of the academic database Google Scholar alone produces more than 600,000 results. In other words, conventional wisdom has become an important concept in public, political, and academic discourse, describing and affecting the understanding of knowledge in society.

I have argued that the historical justification for knowledge constitutes an important area of research for historians of knowledge. Needless to say, researchers in the fields of science studies, sociology of science and the history of science have also studied the history of knowledge claims. What historians of knowledge can bring to the table is the study of know-

ledge claims made outside academia, and with it an emphasis on the production and circulation of knowledge in relation to society at large.

Notes

- 1 Simone Lässig, 'The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda', *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 59 (2016): 39.
- 2 Staffan Bergwik, 'Kunskapshistoria: nya insikter?', *Scandia* 84/2 (2018): 87.
- 3 Lorraine Daston, 'The History of Science and the History of Knowledge', *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1:1 (2017): 143.
- 4 Daston, 'The History of Science'; Anna Nilsson Hammar, 'Theoria, Praxis and Poiesis: Theoretical Considerations on the Circulation of Knowledge in Everyday Life', in Johan Östling et al. (eds.), *Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018), 107–124.
- 5 See for example: Martin Mulrow, 'History of Knowledge' in Marek Tamm & Peter Burke (eds.), *Debating New Approaches to History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 161.
- 6 Lorraine Daston, 'History of Knowledge: Comment', in Marek Tamm & Peter Burke (eds.) *Debating New Approaches to History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 174.
- 7 For a discussion on the relevance of epistemology for historians of knowledge, see Nilsson Hammar, 'Theoria, Praxis and Poiesis', 112–114.
- 8 See, for example, Daston, 'The History of Science'; Ulrich Johannes Schneider, 'Wissensgeschichte, nicht Wissenschaftsgeschichte', in Axel Honneth & Martin Saar (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Zwischenbilanz einer Rezeption* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003); Jürgen Renn, 'From the History of Science to the History of Knowledge—and Back', *Centaurus: An International Journal of the History of Science & its Cultural Aspects* 57/1 (2015).
- 9 The most famous example concerns the so-called Gettier problem, raised by Edmund Gettier in 1963. Edmund L. Gettier, 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?', *Analysis* 23/6 (1963): 121–123.
- 10 The social conditions of embodied knowledge, or 'techniques of the body' was designated by French sociologist Marcel Mauss as *habitus*. See Marcel Mauss, 'Techniques of the body', *Economy and Society* 2/1 (1973): 70–88.
- 11 Lässig, 'The History of Knowledge', 39.
- 12 Ludwik Fleck, *The Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); Helen E. Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry* (Princeton: PUP, 2002).

- 1990); Steven Shapin, 'The History of Science and Its Sociological Reconstructions', *History of Science*, 20 (1982): 157–211.
- 13 For example: Malcolm Waters, *Daniel Bell* (London/New York: Routledge, 1996). The literature on Foucault and Kuhn is very extensive. Recent overviews on Kuhn are presented in William Devlin & Alisa Bokulich (eds.), *Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions: 50 Years On* (Cham: Springer, 2015); Robert Richards & Lorraine Daston (eds.), *Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions at Fifty: Reflections on a Science Classic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016). Examples of analysis of Foucault and knowledge: Gary Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989); Stephen J. Ball (ed.), *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1990); Ellen K. Feder, 'Power/knowledge' in Dianna Taylor (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); Kathy Nicoll & Andreas Fejes (eds.), *Foucault and Lifelong Learning: Governing the Subject* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Jeremy Crampton & Stuart Elden (eds.), *Space, knowledge and power: Foucault and geography* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).
- 14 John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958); John Kenneth Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).
- 15 Quentin Skinner, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', *History and Theory*, 8/1, 1969: 38, original emphasis.
- 16 Pamela Brandwein, 'Studying the Careers of Knowledge Claims: Applying Science Studies to Legal Studies', in Dvora Yanow & Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (eds.), *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 229.
- 17 Brandwein, 'Studying the Careers', 233.
- 18 The reception and circulation of Galbraith's key concepts in Scandinavia will be detailed in the forthcoming essay Björn Lundberg 'The Galbraithian Moment: Affluence and Critique of Growth in Scandinavia 1958–72' in Johan Östling, Niklas Olsen & David Larsson Heidenblad (eds.), *Histories of Knowledge in Postwar Scandinavia: Actors, Arenas, and Aspirations* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, forthcoming 2020).
- 19 For an early example of the term, see J. K. Galbraith, *An Inquiry into the Moral and Religious Character of the American Government* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1838), 35. More notably, Torstein Veblen used it in *The Instinct of Workmanship* (New York: Macmillan & Co, 1914), 39. It is not far-fetched to think that Galbraith may have picked up the term, consciously or unconsciously, from Veblen.
- 20 John Kenneth Galbraith & A.D. Williams (ed.), *The Essential Galbraith* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2001), 19.
- 21 Richard Parker, *J. K. Galbraith: A 20th Century Life* (London: Old Street Pub-

- lishing, 2007), 273–310; James R. Stanfield, *John Kenneth Galbraith* (New York: S:t Martin's, 1996), 41–60.
- 22 Examples include: Robert McCrum, 'The 100 best nonfiction books of all time: the full list', *The Guardian* 31 December 2017, www.theguardian.com/books/2017/dec/31/the-100-best-nonfiction-books-of-all-time-the-full-list; '100 Best Non-fiction books', *The Modern Library*, www.modernlibrary.com/top-100/100-best-nonfiction; Dinita Smith, 'Another Top 100 List: Now It's Nonfiction', *New York Times* 30 April 1999, www.nytimes.com/1999/04/30/books/another-top-100-list-now-it-s-nonfiction.html.
- 23 An exception in this regard is Michael Berry, who discusses Galbraith's use of the term. Michael Berry, *The Affluent Society Revisited* (Oxford: OUP, 2013).
- 24 J. R. Stanfield, 'The Affluent Society after Twenty-five Years', *Journal of Economic Issues* 17/3 (1983); Robert Heilbroner, 'Rereading The Affluent Society', *Journal of Economic Issues* 23/2 (1989); Stanfield, *John Kenneth Galbraith*; Parker, *J.K. Galbraith*.
- 25 Gary Cross, *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 67, 111–145; Daniel Horowitz, *The Anxieties of Affluence: Critiques of American Consumer Culture, 1939–1979* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 101–128.
- 26 Galbraith's influence in Europe has been covered in Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (eds.), *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War 'Golden Age' Revisited* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 6; Eva Friman, *No Limits. The 20th Century Discourse of Economic Growth* (Umeå: Umeå universitet, 2002).
- 27 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
- 28 Galbraith, *Affluent Society*, 3.
- 29 Ibid. 21–33.
- 30 Ibid. 7.
- 31 Berry, *The Affluent Society Revisited*, 7.
- 32 Galbraith was frequently faulted by academic colleagues for his style of writing, including the lack of references. See Parker, *J.K. Galbraith*, 296.
- 33 Berry, *The Affluent Society Revisited*, 9.
- 34 Galbraith, *Affluent Society*, 8–9.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid. 11.
- 37 Ibid. 12.
- 38 Ibid. 13–14.
- 39 Kuhn, *Structure*.
- 40 Galbraith, *Affluent Society*, 20.
- 41 For a discussion on Galbraith's legacy in the fields of economic theory and public

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policy, see Parker, *J. K. Galbraith*, 647–669. Galbraith's relation to institutionalism is covered in Malcolm Rutherford, 'Institutional Economics: Then and Now', *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 15/3 (2001): 185; see also James Ronald Stanfield and Mary Wrenn, 'John Kenneth Galbraith and Original Institutional Economics', *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics*, 28/1 (2005): 25–45.

42 Galbraith, *Essential Galbraith*, 19.

43 Berry, *Affluent Society Revisited*, 12.