Message from the Chair

Craig Calhoun, Social Science Research Council

This message is an elaborate call for papers—and call for new research. But before turning to substance, I’d like to begin with a little celebration. The Section’s membership has passed 200. Being historically inclined, we may not be much troubled by the fact it took us 10 years from when we became a full section in 1999 to reach our current (not so) lofty numbers. But we really should pay attention to membership, to being connected to the rest of the ASA, and to welcoming a diverse range of sociologists interested in the history of the discipline. This year our numbers were boosted partly by several senior members who sponsored graduate students in their departments. I think that’s a great tradition to extend. There’s also self-interest: membership numbers determine the number of sessions assigned to a section. And because of our increase, we happily have one more for the next meeting.

This creates the opportunity to hold a “miniconference” following a practice now widespread in larger sections. The theme will be the same that I announced at our August 2009 meeting, but the opportunity to participate is expanded and I encourage submissions. The ASA’s 2010 meeting in Atlanta is an appropriate occasion to examine the entangled history of race in American sociology.

Throughout the history of American sociology questions of race have been formative—partly because race has been so central to the history of the United States (and indeed Canada, though perhaps to a lesser extent). Race figures as an imposition, a state policy, a matter of perception, a matter of biological science—from crude classifications to more sophisticated genetic accounts of “clines”. Race figures in identities claimed by both dominated and dominators. It is constructed in different ways, including by sociologists designing surveys. Its meaning shifts with history and cultural change; and yet it is an enduring feature of American society.

Sociologists have studied each of these dimensions and others; they have been advocates for racist theories and among their strongest critics. Some of the very first mentions of sociology in the United States came from Southerners drawing on Comte as they sought to defend their more “organic” society from domination by the increasingly industrial North. Issues of race were on the agenda throughout the 19th century ascendancy of evolutionary theory. Sociologists both supported and sometimes questioned efforts to

Continued on page five
Recent Publications

Articles, chapters and books on the history of sociology. Please send citations to Jeff Pooley (pooley@muhlenberg.edu).

“Special Issue: John Kitsuse, Interpretive Sociology and Pragmatism.” The American Sociologist 40, no. 1 (2009).


Recent Publications

Continued


Membership News

Please send news items to Jeff Pooley (pooley@muhlenberg.edu).

Neil Gross (University of British Columbia) is the new editor of Sociological Theory. (See Chas Camic & Michele Lamont, “Neil Gross to Edit Sociological Theory,” ASA Footnotes 37, no. 7 (2009).)
Archival Spotlight: Sociology Teaching Materials

London School of Economics (LSE) Archives (Ref. No. STM)

Jennifer Platt, University of Sussex

Archival materials are an indispensable resource for the historian of sociology, but archiving is very uneven; in particular, an activity in which every university sociologist has engaged is neglected—teaching materials are seldom deliberately archived, even those of leading figures. How sociology has been taught is both of considerable interest in itself, and throws important light on the development of sociological ideas over time, especially those taken for granted by the wider sociological community, and transmitted to students, most of whom will not become professional sociologists.

In response to this need, a deposit of British teaching materials (from the 1950s, but mostly 1960s-80s) has just been made in the archives of the London School of Economics library. These have been compiled from a variety of sources: donations by individuals, data collected from departmental offices, and university publications of different kinds. The result cannot be taken as a formally representative sample, but it is quite a good collection—and certainly better than is to be found anywhere else in the country; that is a start, and I hope that more may accumulate. There are two different kinds of document: whole degree syllabus outlines, and individual course reading lists and official documents, with a lot of detail on reading matter and the teacher’s approach.

What specific historical purposes might such material be used for? It can be approached with interests in the pattern of teaching as such, but it can also be used as a quarry in which to dig for the uses made of the work of particular authors, ways in which the thinking of an individual teacher developed, changes in the extent to which US authors have been represented as British sociology expanded, the emergence and diffusion of movements such as academic Marxism, feminism or cultural studies. Changing conceptions of the appropriate basic knowledge required for a training in sociology are manifest, as are ways in which intellectually-external pressures such as shortage of staff, school or faculty structure, pressures from student demand, or external rating criteria, have affected what is actually presented. Light is also thrown on the distinctive character of departments as units, understood in their local and mission contexts.

ASA teaching resources, with their collections of syllabi, are not intended for historical purposes, but they could be used as such, though except where there have been successive editions on the same topic they inevitably offer snapshots rather than the moving picture. Are there other US sources which could be drawn on? If so, it could be useful to draw attention to them. If not, perhaps local archival efforts might help by encouraging departments, and individuals when they retire, to deposit materials they hold?

1 For instance, in a paper on Merton’s influence in British sociology I was able to report that in 1968 81% of recorded British courses on ‘theory’ and/or ‘methods’ included Social Theory and Social Structure on their lists of suggested reading—sometimes just listing ‘Merton’, to indicate the extent to which its appearance was taken for granted.
Race in the Making of American Sociology

Continued from page one

understand contemporary diversity in pseudohistorical, phylogenetic terms. Lester Frank Ward was among the promoters of the work of Ernst Haeckel, best known for the postulate that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, but also a key advocate for the notion of polygeny—different prehuman origins for the different races. Combating such bio-genetic theories was an important theme in the work of E. Franklyn Frazier and colleagues at Howard University. But they were obviously still on the agenda when the eugenics movement reached its peak in the early 20th century with the Rockefeller Foundation linking the social control theories of E.A. Ross and W.F. Ogburn to molecular biology and human engineering. And as Troy Duster has shown, similar issues have come back on the agenda in an era of much stronger genetic research but still problematic efforts to link this to public policy.

Mention of Frazier and Howard reminds us that the story of race in the making of American sociology is also an institutional history. Sociology grew as a discipline during the same period when historically Black colleges and universities became prominent. It was taught at Morgan State as early as 1894. From Tuskegee to Fisk to Howard to Atlanta University this is an important history and understudied. Yet it is partly a history of missed opportunities, as for example much of sociology long failed to incorporate the work of W.E.B. DuBois, which gained its current disciplinary prominence only in rediscovery, despite his leadership not only in theory but also in the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory and the journal Phylon.

The history of Black higher education also intersects with the history of race in a different way because historically Black colleges and universities hired a disproportionate number of Jewish refugee sociologists in the 1930s and 40s. Figures like Tougaloo’s Ernst Borinski went on to be influential in the Civil Rights Movement.

The institutional history is not limited to the HBCUs, of course. There is the story of slow integration of previous white colleges and universities, in which sociology departments were sometimes in the vanguard, a more general engagement of sociologists in struggles for civil rights and racial equality, and the development of both groups of Black sociologists in the discipline and an interdisciplinary field of African-American studies. Equally these questions are not limited to African-Americans, as efforts to limit the number of Jews in elite universities testify.

The experience, treatment, and societal role of Black Americans has been the strongest influence on the way American sociology has addressed race, including in the complicated relationship between the categories of race and ethnicity. It also shaped a range of other subfields including urban and community studies, stratification and mobility, and education. It emerged as an important theme in gender studies when feminists were called to account for focusing overwhelmingly on white women. It became a link between

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

the sociology of religion and the study of social movements because of the importance of the Black Church to the Civil Rights Movement. But race is an issue well beyond the central Black-white division.

Racialization and racism shaped the experience and treatment of Native Americans from the 15th century. Racial confusions combined with geographic ones in labeling indigenous North Americans “Indians”. Racial thinking played a role not only in the era of genocidal destruction of indigenous peoples but also in the organization of reservations and the long history of Indian education programs. ASA President Franklin Giddings argued that though Blacks were a “lower race” than whites, they could be civilized and at least were higher than “Tasmanians and Red Indians”. It is partly an enduring effect of 19th century evolutionary thinking that the study of Native Americans has been seen by many sociologists as more a matter for anthropology. The absence is as telling as the presence in the case of the sociology of Native Americans.

Race and racialization is also central to the sociology of immigration—and of immigrants and their descendants. The shifting places of Asian immigrants in the American imagination is one major dimension of this, from Chinese labor migrants to the struggles over how the Census should define Indians—a challenge to the prevailing racial classifications, Caucasians for a time, then expelled from that status—to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and long struggles for recognition and reparations, to today’s growing prominence. Hispanic migrants are another paramount example. The interrelationship of race and racist ascription with ethnicity, language, and national origins has been complex and pushed sociologists to refine their concepts and empirical approaches.

Sociologists have been challenged to new thinking by panethnic mobilizations and identities, by the question of relations among different racialized minorities, and by transformations in patterns of migration themselves. Indeed, old and seemingly settled categories have been called into question—for example as growing numbers of Caribbean and African immigrants complicate the meaning of ‘Black’ in the United States. Only rather lately did whiteness itself become a topic of investigation, but for Irish and Slavic and other immigrants construction as racial other was a real issue even if their descendants feel sure of their whiteness. And indeed versions of this issue are very current in regard to Muslim immigrants—from the confused and halting public discourse that shifts uneasily among terms like Islamic and Arab to the relationship of Black Islam to Islam more generally.

Sociology has made major contributions to the understanding of race and to practical action to end racism. Sociologists have also advanced racist understandings and struggled to overcome them, ignored race where it should have been a key dimension of analysis, and developed widely different approaches to the analysis of the ways in which race and racism shape social life. At different times sociological attention has focused on the “Negro Problem,” “racial advancement,” the dynamics of prejudice, how to facilitate integration, how to minimize racial conflict. Approaches to race have shifted from social psychology to cultural accounts of racial formation, from political economy to panel studies of mobility.

The role of race in the making of American sociology is rich and complex. Surprising absences are as important as impressive contributions. Why, for example, did C. Wright Mills show so little interest in race? The influence of regional location on sociological engagements with racial themes is significant and challenges tendencies to write history entirely at the national level. Think not only of the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory of a century ago, but also of the Chicago School and its specific engagements with both international migration and Black migration from South to North, and of the West Coast pioneers in the study of racism towards Asian-Americans and in the development of a distinctive approach to interdisciplinary ethnic studies. The organization of subfields, methodological approaches, and implicit visions of the public role of sociology are intertwined in distinctive ways in certain periods. Take for example the rise of an enormous postwar engagement with studies of prejudice, influenced by WWII studies of the military, centrally reliant on the development of survey research, featuring social psychology as a more central field of sociology than it has been since (and with closer relations between sociologists and psychologists), and linked to a vision of integration as progress to which sociology could contribute. And then consider also its decline as the locus of sociological attention shifted in the 1960s from white prejudice to Black collective action.

I’ve focused on the influence of race in the history of the US as well as US sociology, but of course this is an international topic—and only partly because the US exported a certain amount of its thinking about the subject. The development of thinking about race in American sociology was international from the start. It was influenced by European racist theories, by the slave trade and opposition to it, by new waves of immigration, by entanglements with various strands of nationalist thought, and by flows of intellectual and cultural influences across what Paul Gilroy has dubbed the Black Atlantic. DuBois was influenced by study in Germany as well as at Harvard, by

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

quarrels with Marcus Garvey (who came to the US by way of Jamaica and England) over Black Nationalism, and by both the struggles of African-Americans and the much broader pan-African movement. Race figured in US imperialism, not least with its distinctive dimension of the “return” of former slaves and their descendants to Liberia. It influenced Franklin Giddings and William Graham Sumner in their arguments over the Spanish-American War.

Race was also, of course, a central ideological feature in European colonialism and as George Steinmetz and others have shown, this had a major impact on the development of social science knowledge. So have Britain's particular approach to multiculturalism and France's resistance to official use of racial categories amid a growing conflict over immigration.

Apartheid and struggles to overcome its legacy have made South Africa an important contributor to more global knowledge and research questions. And of course there's more: from Islam's history of minimal racism to contemporary Sudanese conflict organized partly in racial terms; from the role of evangelical Christianity in struggles against slavery to the apparently declining significance of race among Christians mobilized by opposition to abortion and gay rights (and indeed the transformation of Christianity globally into an increasingly non-white religion).

Perhaps most basically of all, race is a topic shared by American sociology in its broadest sense—including North, Central, and South America. Latin American sociologists, studying different racial formations and different classificatory ideologies, have advanced distinctive lines of theory and research. Canadian sociology has engaged indigenous peoples and migrants in ways shaped by both different national and provincial histories and different public policies and issues as well as participated in a broader American sociology. We will understand the specific history of race in US sociology better both in comparative context and as a transnational phenomenon. Indeed, it is a distinctive and attractive feature of American sociology that it has never studied only the US, but long sought to understand the diversity of social patterns on a global scale.

Important historical research has been done on some aspects of the role of race in the making of American sociology, but some topics have been surprisingly understudied. My hope is that the Atlanta ASA meeting may be an occasion to encourage not only more such research but also more connections among the different relevant themes. The sociological history of racism as a factor in US immigration policy is not unrelated to race as a topic in the sociology of knowledge or race as a dimension of colonialism.

I have issued a call for papers and I restate and expand it here. I invite authors to propose papers on any dimension or phase of the way race figured in the history of American sociology, directly or indirectly through studies elsewhere in the world, and including the different ways race has been analyzed and addressed by sociologists in the various countries of the Americas and/or broader international comparisons.

Mnemonic Multiples: The Case of the Columbia Panel Studies

Jeff Pooley, Muhlenberg College

There is little doubt that The People’s Choice (1944), the book-length panel study conducted by Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues at Columbia’s Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR), is a classic. The question is, a classic of what? A cursory survey of textbooks and disciplinary handbooks suggests a patterned, field-specific answer: To political scientists, The People’s Choice is a landmark of voting research; to sociologists, a breakthrough in survey methods; and to communication scholars, the founding document of the “limited effects” paradigm of media research.

Consider a trio of examples, this one from political science:

The fiftieth anniversary of the modern era in political behavior research was celebrated (quite silently) in 1994. We mark 1944 as the birth of the modern era because in that year Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues from the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University published the first academically inspired study of an election that focused primarily on individual voters. (Carmines and Huckfeldt 1998: 223)

From sociology:

One famous early example of survey research was called “The People’s Choice!”, a study carried out by Paul Lazarsfeld and colleagues more than 60 years ago. This study, which investigated the voting intentions of residents of Erie County, Ohio during the 1940 campaign for the US presidency, pioneered several of the main techniques of survey research in use to this day. (Giddens 2009: 53-54)
Continued from previous page

And from communication research:

Evidence from [Lazarsfeld’s] Erie County (Ohio) panel study of the 1940 presidential election found that the persuasive effects of media on voters’ decisions were quite limited in comparison with the unsubstantiated claims made two decades earlier that World War I propaganda controlled the masses. (McLeod, Kosicki, & McLeod 2010: 185)

What are we to make of this? I propose that The People’s Choice, together with a pair of subsequent BASR panel studies, illustrates a neglected phenomenon in the remembered history of social science: mnemonic multiples. In suggesting the term, I am invoking the way that once-blended fields or research areas that since split off from one another come to remember their shared history in distinct ways. Textbook authors, seminar instructors, and even disciplinary historians look back on their disciplines’ pasts through the subsequent evolution of their respective fields. Twentieth-century American social science is, after all, the story of progressive differentiation. When we glance back at our fields’ pasts, we normally direct our gaze along the particular fork that leads to our present discipline.

There is a common complaint that historians of the individual social sciences all too often neglect the context of neighboring fields, most egregiously in treatments of those periods (like the late 19th century) when the social sciences were unevenly differentiated. The schizophrenic memory of The People’s Choice and its companion texts suggests a parallel class of cases, in which the same work is remembered along patterned and partial lines.

Lazarsfeld—in his background and intellectual style—made it easy for future scholars to remember his work in diverse ways. When he arrived in the US in 1933 on a Rockefeller fellowship, he was a psychologist trained in applied mathematics, with a self-taught expertise in market research. It is only due to a series of interventions by Robert Lynd that we know Lazarsfeld today as a sociologist; in a final beneficent act, Lynd championed Lazarsfeld for the now-famous compromise hire that also brought Robert Merton to Columbia in 1939 (Pooley 2006a: 207, 210-212, 237). Lazarsfeld was in the 1930s a self-identified “marginal man” who took advantage of whatever applied research work he could find in the Depression-era American academy (Lazarsfeld 1969: 302). At his own fledgling Newark Research Center; and soon after at the Rockefeller-funded Office of Radio Research (ORR) at Princeton, Lazarsfeld adapted client-commissioned projects to his own intellectual interests in methodology and the psychology of the decision act. He was highly resourceful, and already packaging his findings in audience-specific ways. This came out most impressively in the ORR’s hastily assembled, hodgepodge collection, Radio and the Printed Page (published in 1940), which managed to assuage a wary Rockefeller Foundation—but only by way of a carefully written introduction that re-framed the ORR’s disparate studies to-date as contributions to the Foundation’s interest in educational broadcasting.

On the strength of the pre-publication Radio and the Printed Page, the Foundation in 1939 had extended the ORR’s funding and agreed to the Columbia affiliation. Lazarsfeld, working out of the ORR’s new offices in Union Square, decided to test the impact of media messages on voting decisions in the 1940 presidential contest (Rossi 1959: 316). He selected Sandusky, Ohio for its middle-American normalcy, and sent a team to conduct a study of 600 voters over the course of the campaign, using the then-novel panel method. The results were written up as The People’s Choice, published in 1944—the same year that the ORR was renamed the Bureau of Applied Social Research (Sills 1987: 260).

Lazarsfeld’s penchant for resourceful framing was on display here again. Though the study had been designed to test media influence, the published book was put forward as a “voting” or “election” study. To Lazarsfeld’s surprise and horror, the Sandusky fieldwork had uncovered little evidence of direct media persuasion. Only 54—“few indeed”—of the 600 panelists, for example, appeared to have changed their voting preferences as a result of the candidates’ media campaigns (p. 94). The findings were a grave disappointment, and for a year they paralyzed Lazarsfeld and his co-authors (Rossi 1959: 316). To rescue the project, Lazarsfeld re-framed the study’s findings in political behavior terms. As published, the book took as its argument the claim that—contrary to conventional wisdom and democratic theory—voters’ preferences are for the most part already formed before a campaign begins, and that these preferences are rather inflexibly grounded in voters’ social backgrounds (e.g., p. 27). The People’s Choice is, in short, a study on media persuasion that melted, due to hypothesis-denying data, into a book about voting. So neatly had Lazarsfeld and his co-authors re-framed the inquiry—from successful media persuasion to the social character of voting—that the study’s original purpose was nearly impossible to discern in the published report.

If you read closely, though, you can find all three mnemonic strands in the book: the methodological breakthrough, the empirical research on voting behavior, and the finding that media have only limited effects. But it was left to subsequent work—including the Bureau’s two other book-length panel studies, Voting (1954) and Personal Influence (1955)—to suggest the three distinct interpretive lineages.

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

Consider the theme of methodological innovation, which is already flagged in The People’s Choice. In a characteristic Lazarsfeldian move, the book’s introduction includes a capsule history of survey research methods. The tools of opinion research, the authors argue, have advanced considerably in previous years, rendering “much more precise the study of certain determinants of vote” (p. 2). But hitherto existing methods have been unable to follow the “vagaries of the individual voter along the path” to his vote. “This study, designed to yield such answers, used the so-called panel technique as the next step forward in opinion research: repeated interviewing of the same people” (p. 2).

The narrated claim to methodological novelty is even more prominent in Lazarsfeld’s 1948 preface to the book’s second edition, and in his widely cited 1948 paper; “The Use of Panels in Social Research”:

The following remarks are designed to draw attention to a fairly recent development in social research. In its bare essentials, the type of study to be discussed consists of repeated interviews made with the same group of persons. The people participating as subjects in such studies are commonly known as panel members and the whole procedure has become widely known under the name of panel technique. (P.405)

Lazarsfeld’s use of third-person, passive attribution — “commonly” and “widely known” — establishes the method as a genuine innovation, which sets up well The People’s Choice example, which he cites in the article’s second paragraph. Future scholars were, in short, primed to read the book as a major breakthrough in survey research technique.

The election research angle, the second mnemonic stream, was sharpened by the Bureau’s publication of Voting in 1954. The book, based on a major panel study of the 1948 presidential campaigns in Elmiro, New York, was presented as a sequel to The People’s Choice. Its core finding echoed the earlier book—“voting traditions are not changed much more often than careers are chosen, religions drifted into or away from, or tastes revised” (p. 17)—though more attention was paid to voters’ rootedness in relatively homogeneous small groups. For our purposes, the important point is that the book was unambiguously framed as a voting study, and as heir to The People’s Choice.

The Bureau’s Personal Influence, published the next year, was also positioned as inheritor of The People’s Choice mantle. A last, conjectural chapter (“The Nature of Personal Influence”) of The People’s Choice had observed that face-to-face persuasion seems quite effective. The other, linked finding was that this “personal influence” was unevenly distributed, with various “opinion leaders” acting as nodes of guidance within small personal networks. Since these opinion leaders were also heavy consumers of media, Lazarsfeld had speculated about a “two-step flow of communication,” in which media messages were passed on by the high-consuming opinion leaders. As with the social character of voting, this was an inadvertent finding: the key survey question that led to the “opinion leader” formulation — “Have you tried to convince anyone of your political ideas recently?” — was initially included as part of a series of queries designed to track “extroversion” (Rossi 1959: 318). The People’s Choice concludes with these ideas—but could only suggest them as stimulants to further research, since the original study design had only accidentally captured data that weren’t conclusive.

The “further research” came in 1945, with a modified panel study in Decatur, Illinois led by then-Bureau associate C. Wright Mills. Funded by True Story publisher MacFadden, the study tracked consumer product, movie-going, and political preferences among a large panel of women, but also asked them to identify influential acquaintances. Field workers then followed up with the designated influencers.

In a dispute that was at once personal, political and intellectual, Mills and Lazarsfeld famously clashed over the Decatur data (see Summers 2006). A full decade after the original field work, the findings were finally published in 1955 as Personal Influence, with Bureau graduate student Elihu Katz as Lazarsfeld’s co-author: Personal Influence framed the “two-step flow” argument as evidence that media influence is happily negligible—that opinion leaders stand as buffers between man and media. The book presents its finding of minimal effects as a repudiation of interwar scholars’ naive belief in media potency (see Pooley 2006b).

As I have already claimed, these three Bureau books were remembered as the published trailheads to distinct scholarly pathways. In terms of survey research methodology, The People’s Choice is the most-often cited, though the trio as a whole is given the occasional nod. The other two mnemonic strands, taken together, form a “V”-shape: The People’s Choice on to Voting for election studies, and The People’s Choice through to Personal Influence for mass communication research. As I have suggested, the cues for mnemonic uptake, in each case, were inserted by Lazarsfeld and his Bureau associates. All scholars, of course, introduce research in narrative terms, very often in order to anchor claims to novelty. Lazarsfeld was particularly good at narrating his major projects, in part because he could afford to be rhetorically expedient: his real interests were in methods and decision psychology. All the way back to Vienna he had noticed “the methodological equivalence of socialist voting and the buying of soap” (Lazarsfeld 1969: 279). It is no surprise that he and the Bureau left multiple

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

frames—layabout narratives—waiting for others to extend or refute.

I have lingered on the context of these books’ creation, but the context of their reception is important too. With connections forged in the extraordinary social science mobilization of World War II, overlapping networks of elite post-war social scientists had, by the early 1950s, adopted the “behavioral sciences” moniker: Prominent sociologists, psychologists and political scientists were drawn together by foundation and military funders, but also by personal ties, Cold War commitments and a shared enthusiasm for team-based, quantitative research (see Crowther-Heyck 2006: 422-426; Isaac 2007: 734-739). This is, of course, a grossly simplified picture of early Cold War American social science, but it is enough to claim that Lazarsfeld and his Bureau were embedded in a larger, interdisciplinary academic culture. In the 1950s, “political behavior” and “communication research” were recognized (and overlapping) cross-disciplinary fields, attracting contributions from psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists alike. Voting and Personal Influence were published into these interdisciplinary fields.

What happened next is that “political behavior” and “communication research” were claimed, respectively, by political science and the new discipline of “communication” in the rapidly expanding 1960s university system. Michigan’s Survey Research Center in effect adopted the erstwhile election studies tradition with its bi-annual election surveys beginning in 1952 and reported in major monographs including The Voter Decides (1954) and The American Voter (1960). Though the Michigan studies were led by interdisciplinary teams, and though significant contributions to voting research continued to be made from outside the field, by the mid-1960s the academic study of election behavior was firmly established within the political science discipline.

Likewise, “communication research” as an interdisciplinary field gave way, over the 1960s, to a new, would-be “communication” discipline housed in professional schools of journalism and departments of speech. The reasons for the handoff are complex, involving journalism schools’ legitimacy needs and the tireless efforts of a few academic entrepreneurs (Pooley & Katz 2008). Crucial too was a major shift in social science patronage, from the foundation- and military-centric 1950s pattern to a post-Sputnik system of civilian agency grant-making that, in practice, dissolved the broker-driven interdisciplinary research culture that had incubated “communication research” (and “political behavior”) as cross-disciplinary fields (Crowther-Heyck 2006).

Lazarsfeld, meanwhile, directed most of his scholarly energies, from the early 1950s until his death in 1977, to methodological topics like latent structure analysis (e.g., Lazarsfeld 1954; Lazarsfeld & Henry 1968). He was also, in these later years, a careful tender of his legacy as a major methodologist, building his case through historical work on the history of research methods (e.g., Lazarsfeld 1972), in presidential addresses (Lazarsfeld 1957), in memoirs (Lazarsfeld 1969), and in oral history interviews.

There is a certain logic, then, to the three mnemonic strands, with their partial recollections of the Bureau’s trilogy of panel studies. The books are, after all, polyvocal: they invoke a handful of topics, all of which fit comfortably within the interdisciplinary space of 1950s behavioral science. Later readers—from the mid-1960s onward—encountered the books instead from their newly differentiated perches within political science, sociology or communication studies. The books were written and read in an interdisciplinary milieu that was itself history to the next generation of discipline-bound readers. And of course most of them—must of us—didn’t read the books, but instead a passing textbook reference or a paragraph in the latest state-of-the-field essay.

So it is hardly surprising that, for communication scholars, The People’s Choice and Personal Influence are remembered for establishing the “limited effects” paradigm of media research. With the aid of Personal Influence’s sweeping first-chapter narration, the nascent field’s textbooks (e.g., DeFleur 1966), and histories (Schramm 1963; Klapper 1963) told the story of an interwar “powerful effects” tradition supplanted by the Bureau’s more measured and scientific conclusion that media impact is minimal. That two-stage emplotment was repeated by critics (like Gitlin 1978), and remains a staple of the discipline’s textbooks (see Pooley 2006b).

Although the Bureau studies occupy a much smaller space within the remembered past of political science, much of the historiography on voting research begins with The People’s Choice and Voting (e.g., Smith 2001; Bartels 2010). In the typical narrative, the “Columbia studies” are treated first, followed by the “Michigan studies,” and on through revisionist critiques. When one of the Bureau studies shows up in a textbook or handbook chapter, it is nearly always in this voting research context.

Within sociology, the Bureau trilogy gets remembered more holistically, in part because Lazarsfeld and most Bureau figures were self-identified sociologists. Historical accounts, as well as textbooks and handbooks, often mention the voting- and media-related findings of the three books. But the treatment within sociology is still patterned, with the bulk of attention directed toward the books’
methodological breakthroughs (e.g., Coleman 1972; Oberschall 1978).

Perhaps this kind of splintered memory is inevitable, or at least a predictable consequence of academic differentiation. Regardless, the “careers” of notable academic texts—as they diffuse through sub-field and disciplines over time—strikes me as worthy of study. There are of course many other fascinating cases, deserving of far more rigorous treatment than I have offered here. American social science in the late 19th and early 20th century would seem especially ripe for such analysis, if only because disciplinary boundaries were fluid or as-yet unformed. The hermeneutic challenge: to reconstruct the singletons from the multiples they have become. ■
Call for Award Nominations

Graduate Student Paper Award
This award recognizes excellence in graduate student research in the field of the history of sociology. Students who were actively enrolled (full- or part-time) in a graduate sociology program as of December 15, 2009 may submit one scholarly paper for consideration for this award. The submission may be an unpublished manuscript, an article submitted or accepted for publication, or a single chapter from a thesis or dissertation, and should address a theoretical or empirical problem central to the history of sociology. Members of the current Graduate Student Award Committee are ineligible for the award. The paper, along with a cover letter, must be submitted electronically to the selection committee chair, Michelle Christian (Duke University; mmc22@soc.duke.edu), no later than March 15, 2010. Other members of the committee are Kristen Haltinen (University of Minnesota); Jonathan Imber (Wellesley College); Jan Marontate (Simon Fraser University).

Distinguished Scholarly Publication Award
This award honors sociologists who have made significant contributions to the History of Sociology by writing books or articles on the 'cutting edge' of sociological inquiry. Only monographs, articles, or edited works published in 2008 or 2009 are eligible. The author(s) or editor(s) must be sociologists. All texts submitted for consideration should be accompanied by a letter of nomination highlighting the texts' significant contributions to the history of sociology. Self-nominations are welcome if accompanied by a letter of support from another member of the ASA. Members of the current Distinguished Scholarly Book or Article Award Committee are ineligible for this award. To nominate a book or article, write highlighting the item’s significant contribution to the history of sociology to the committee chair, Anthony Blasi (Tennessee State; anthonyblasi@att.net), to arrive no later than March 15, 2010. Other members of the committee are Omar Lizardo (Notre Dame); Laura Stark (Wesleyan).

Lifetime Achievement Award
This award recognizes sociologists who have made outstanding contributions to the History of Sociology throughout their careers, or who have made ground-breaking innovations or produced significant bodies of scholarly work in the History of Sociology. Nominees must be sociologists. Letters of nomination should highlight the nominee’s outstanding innovation(s), career, and contributions to the History of Sociology. Self-nominations are welcome if accompanied by a letter of support from another member of the ASA. Members of the current Distinguished Award Committee are ineligible for the award. To nominate an individual, send a nomination letter, the nominee’s vitae, and samples of the nominee’s work to the committee chair, Gary Alan Fine (Northwestern; g-fine@northwestern.edu). Nominations must arrive no later than March 15, 2010. Other members of the committee are Ira Cohen (Rutgers University); Priscilla Ferguson (Columbia University); Peter Kivisto (Augustana College); Doyle McCarthy (Fordham University).

Section Mission Statement
The purpose of the Section on the History of Sociology is to provide a forum for sociologists and other scholars interested in the study of the historically specific processes shaping the development of sociology as a profession, an academic discipline, an organization, a community, and an intellectual endeavor. The Section serves its members as a structure 1) to disseminate information of professional interest, 2) to assist in the exchange of ideas and the search for research collaborators, 3) to obtain information about the location of archival materials, 4) to support efforts to expand such research resources and to preserve documents important to the history of sociology, and 5) to ensure that the scholarship of this group can be shared with the profession through programming at both regional and national meetings.
Section Officers 2009-2010

Chair
Craig Calhoun, SSRC

Chair Elect
Gary Alan Fine, Northwestern University

Past Chair
Charles Camic, Northwestern University

Secretary-Treasurer
Anne Frances Eisenberg, SUNY - Geneseo

Council
Matteo Bortolini, Università di Padova
Kay Richards Broschart, Hollins University

Kristin Haltinner, University of Minnesota
Richard Swedberg, Cornell University

Student Representatives
Michelle Marie Christian, Duke University
Kristin Haltinner, University of Minnesota

Section Committees 2009-2010

Distinguished Scholarly Publication Selection Committee
Anthony J. Blasi, Tennessee State (Chair)
Omar Lizardo, Notre Dame
Laura Stark, Wesleyan

Lifetime Achievement Selection Committee
Gary Alan Fine, Northwestern (Chair)
Ira Cohen, Rutgers
Priscilla Ferguson, Columbia
Peter Kivisto, Augustana College
Doyle McCarthy, Fordham University

Graduate Student Prize Selection Committee
Michelle Marie Christian, Duke (Chair)
Kristen Haltinen, Minnesota
Jonathan Imber, Wellesley
Jan Marontate, Simon Fraser

Nominations Committee
Charles Camic, Northwestern (Chair)
Michelle Marie Christian, Duke
Richard Swedberg, Cornell