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APPLIED SOCIOLOGY

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Applied sociology is the oldest and most general term for what Lester F. Ward (1903) identified more than 100 years ago as "the means and methods for the artificial improvement of social conditions on the part of man and society as conscious and intelligent agents" (p. vii). Applied sociology uses sociological knowledge and research skills to gain empirically based knowledge to inform decision makers, clients, and the general public about social problems, issues, processes, and conditions so that they might make informed choices and improve the quality of life (Rossi and Whyte 1983; Steele, Scarisbrick-Hauser, and Hauser 1999). In its broadest sense applied sociology encompasses evaluation research, needs assessment, market research, social indicators, and demographics. It would also include directed sociological research in medicine, mental health, complex organizations, work, education, and the military to mention but a few.

Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, this concept of applied sociology fits nicely with the National Institutes of Health's (Zerhouni 2003) and the National Institute of Mental Health's (2000) new funding initiatives in translational research, which require that scientists tie their research to practical applications (Dingfelder 2005). Translational research aims at converting basic biological and behavioral science research into forms that can address pressing issues in health care diagnosis, treatment, and delivery. By extension, this means that applied sociological research will produce descriptions, analyses, and findings that can be translated into ideas and lessons learned from previous activities or programs to be used by action organizations, including citizens groups, foundations, business, labor, and government. It is likely that in the near future, more public and private funding will continue to shift from basic to translational or applied research and from researcher-initiated grants to funder-defined contracts as universities become more engaged in community-based research and application (Petersen and Dukes 2004).

Early in the twentieth century, Ward (1906:9) separated applied sociology from civic and social reform. The relationship between applied sociology, on the one hand, and deliberate interventions based in sociological reasoning by social engineers and clinical sociologists, on the other, has been a source of contention ever since. This chapter will focus on the history and development of applied sociology as a research endeavor undertaken on behalf of clients or funding agencies in contrast to the more direct interventionist approach of clinical sociology.

This chapter divides the past 150 years into four periods: (1) from the origins of sociology through the end of World War I—1850 to 1920; (2) the struggle between academic sociology and applied sociology—1920 to 1940; (3) the growth of federally sponsored research from the Second World War through the end of the War on Poverty—1940 to 1980; and (4) the emergence of a more independent and professional applied sociology since 1980.

ORIGINS OF APPLIED SOCIOLOGY: 1850 TO 1920

Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who created sociology, divided it into social statics, the study of the conditions and

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preconditions of social order, and social dynamics, the study of human progress and evolution. Comte ([1854, 1896] 1961) wrote that the statical view of society is the basis of sociology but that the dynamical view is not only the more interesting of the two but more philosophical, since social dynamics would study the laws of the rise and fall of societies and furnish the true theory of progress for political practice. Comte (Barnes 1948a:101) envisioned a corps of positivist priests trained as sociologists, who would not possess any temporal power but rather would influence through teaching and provide informed direction to public opinion. They would impart useful scientific knowledge and social advice on all aspects of civil life. They would suggest action to the civil authorities but would never undertake such action on their own responsibility or initiative. It appears that Comte's applied sociologists would be neither basic researchers nor social activists/interventionists but rather occupy a translational role between the two.

In contrast, Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) argued against any form of artificial interference and that sociologists should convince the public that society must be free from the meddling of governments and reformers (Coser 1977:97–102). He was very skeptical of the possibility of generating progress through legislation since such legislation is not based on the widest possible knowledge of the sociological principles involved (Barnes 1948b:134). Spencer was a strong advocate of *laissez faire* and coined the phrase "survival of the fittest" several years before Darwin wrote *Origin of the Species.* As a result, he is considered the founder of Social Darwinism. Spencer thought societies evolved from coercive militarism to peaceful industrialism in which individuals are free to move about and change their social relations without destroying social cohesion. The change from militarism to industrialism is an evolutionary process that depends on the rate of integration, and the slower the rate, the more complete and satisfactory the evolution (Giddings 1909, cited in Tilman 2001). Therefore, evolution is a wholly spontaneous process that artificial human interference could in no way hasten but might fatally obstruct or divert (Barnes 1948b:129).

Within academic circles, one of Spencer's early supporters was William Graham Sumner (1840–1910). Sumner introduced the first serious course in sociology in the United States at Yale University in 1875, adopting Spencer's *The Study of Sociology* as the text. Sumner promoted a sociology marked by conservative politics, descriptive accounts of societal evolution, and the nature of normative systems that define and control behavior (Perdue 1986). In "The Absurd Effort to Make the World Over," Sumner ([1894] 1911) strongly supported the idea that social evolution was almost entirely an automatic, spontaneous process that cannot be extensively altered by social effort (Barnes 1948c:160). He favored *laissez faire* policies and saw state activity as "ignorant social doctors" telling the Forgotten Man, that is, the hard working middle class, what to do for those who had failed in the struggle for existence (Barnes 1948c:164).

Spencer was popularized in the United States through the efforts of Professor Edward Livingston Youmans, a chemist, educator, writer, and eventually an important agent and editor for D. Appleton and Company (Versen 2006). In 1860, after reading the prospectus for *Principles of Psychology,* Youmans arranged for the first American publication of Spencer's works, and in 1872, became the founding editor of *The Popular Science Monthly,* which promoted science generally and evolution in particular. For Youmans (1872), science was not limited to natural and biological phenomena but included the intelligent observation of the characters of people, the scrutiny of evidence in regard to political theories, the tracing of cause and effect in the sequences of human conduct, and the strict inductive inquiry as to how society has come to be what it is.

Spencer's ideas on evolution, antimilitarism, and peaceful industrialism became the focus of some adult education courses in the Second Unitarian Church in Brooklyn, New York. Youmans was acquainted with its minister, John White Chadwick. This group eventually formed the Brooklyn Ethical Association, and one of its objectives was "the scientific study of ethics, politics, economics, sociology, religion and philosophy, and also of physics and biology as related thereto" (Brooklyn Ethical Association, Certificate of Incorporation, cited in Versen 2004:9; Skilton 2005:4). The Association devoted its 1881–82 sessions to Spencer's *The Study of Sociology.* Within 10 years, the Association created a class of Honorary Corresponding Members, which included Herbert Spencer himself; Thomas H. Huxley ([1893] 2004), President of the British Royal Society, who argued that humans created an ethical process that deviated from, and worked counter to, the natural course of evolution; Minot J. Savage (1886), Unitarian minister in Chicago and Boston and author of *Social Problems;* Andrew Dickson White, historian and first president of Cornell University; Eliza A. Youmans, a pioneer in the field of botany and sister of Edward Youmans; and Joseph Le Conte, geologist, President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1891, and author of "Race Problems in the South" (1892), published in the Association's *Man and the State.*

In 1892, the Brooklyn Ethical Association published *Man and the State: Studies in Applied Sociology* and in 1893, *Factors in American Civilization: Studies in Applied Sociology.* This may be the first use of the term *applied sociology* in the title of a book. The association considered sociology to be the science of social evolution and sought to apply "evolutionary philosophy and ethics to the study and discussion of the pressing problems of politics and statesmanship to come before the people of the United States" (Skilton 2005:4).

The preface to *Man and State* (Brooklyn 1892:v–vi) reaffirmed Spencer's views that societies grew in a regular and orderly way according to inherent laws that were not mechanically imposed. It noted that while a priori schemes

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of social reformers can stimulate thought, promote altruistic endeavor, and educate the individual, enacting these schemes into legislation would not abolish poverty or crime, or speed the renovation of society. The preface saw the role of sociology as a safer and wiser way of individual enlightenment and moral education. Sociology would subject the schemes of social reformers to the operations of the principle of natural selection, identify what is instructive and good in each, propose practical forward steps, and substitute the method of evolution for that of violent and spasmodic change, thereby, slowly promoting the permanent welfare of societies and individuals.

Lester F. Ward (1841–1913), who brought the term applied sociology into the discipline, spent most of his career as a paleontologist with the United States Geological Survey, joining the Sociology Department of Brown University in 1906 when he was 65. His early work focused on the relation of fossil plants to geological location in strata and this undoubtedly reflected an interest in evolution. In 1876, he published "The Local Distribution of Plants and the Theory of Adaptation" in *Popular Science Monthly,* which brought him to the attention of its editor, Edward Youmans. In addition, Ward's mentor, the noted geologist and explorer John Wesley Powell, wrote to Youmans in support of *Dynamic Sociology or Applied Social Science,* which was published in 1883 (Ward 1883:iii–v; Scott 1976:29).

Dynamic Sociology was the first major American work on sociology and although not intended as a text, was on the reading lists of early sociology courses. Ward differed sharply from Spencer and Sumner on laissez-faire individualism, and he argued for the efficacy of government as an agent of social reform, if it could be put on a scientific basis and purged of its corruption and stupidity (Barnes 1948d:182). As a career government scientist with a legal background, Ward understandably took up Comte's idea of sociocrats, believing that government can directly improve the conditions of society in a conscious or "telic" manner if the legislators will only become social scientists or have gained knowledge of the nature and means of controlling the social forces and be willing to apply this knowledge (Barnes 1948d:183 citing *Dynamics*). Scientific lawmaking would be based on a greater use of social statistics (Ward 1877), with sociology as the chief source of information that is essential for any extensive development of scientific government (Barnes 1948d:185).

On the other hand, Ward (1906:10) was very skeptical about the efforts of utopian social reform and socialist movements that favored radical and abrupt changes in social structures. He was a "meliorist" who thought that much could be accomplished through education of both the public and government leaders. Ward (1906) wrote,

> Applied sociology is not government or politics, nor civic or social reform. It does not itself apply sociological principles; it only seeks to show how they might be. The most that it claims to do is to lay down certain general principles as guides to social and political action. (Pp. 9–10)

He added, "A sociologist, who takes sides on current events and the burning questions of the hour, abandons his science and becomes a politician." Ward came to this mainly as a reaction to Spencer's writing, which Ward thought was prejudiced, not scientific, and not in harmony with Spencer's system as a whole and well before Max Weber ([1913] 1978) called for value-free sociology.

Youmans was disappointed with the initial sales of *Dynamic Sociology or Applied Social Science* and suspected that the title, which was drawn directly from Comte's classification, was too close to Spencer's *Descriptive Sociology,* which in turn derived from Comte's social statics (Ward 1897:v). Ward, who would become the first president of the American Sociological Society (later renamed American Sociological Association, or ASA), was a participant in many intellectual and scientific societies (Odum 1951), including the Philosophical Society and Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. (Scott 1976) and the Metaphysical Club (Menand 2001:301). He may have come across the term applied sociology as a result of attending a meeting of the Ethical Association, at which Dr. Felix Adler, professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature at Cornell University and founder of the ethical culture movement, among others, dealt with different methods of relieving human suffering and promoting human welfare. Ward (1906:28) wrote that this congress (possibly of all the ethical societies in America that was held in St. Louis in 1896) talked applied sociology from first to last. He was familiar with the new ethics that inquired into social conditions and sought to introduce modifications that would prevent existing evils and render their recurrence impossible (Ward 1906:29).

This may have included the Brooklyn Ethical Association's two volumes of *Studies in Applied Sociology.* By the early 1890s, Ward (1903:vii, viii, 6) also knew that several European sociologists were using the term *pure sociology.* He may have first used the terms pure and applied sociology in the titles of two summer school courses at the University of Chicago in 1897, which he repeated at the University of West Virginia in 1898 and then at Stanford University in 1899. He published *Pure Sociology* in 1903 and *Applied Sociology* in 1906.

Ward himself did not do any sociological fieldwork or empirical research. Reformers at Hull House in Chicago did the earliest applied research in the United States. Despite his dislike for social reformers, Ward would probably have been pleased that it was done primarily by a group of women since he was a strong advocate of gender equality (Odum 1951). Like Ward, Jane Addams was critical of socialism and abstract theories that impeded social learning by their inflexibility and tendency to divide people. She also thought that science could guide social reform through the patient accumulation of facts about the lives of the working poor.

The key activist researcher was Florence Kelley (1859–1932), the daughter of a U.S. congressman, who studied at Cornell University and the University of Zurich

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and, in 1887, translated Engel's *The Conditions of the Working Class in England.* She came to Chicago in 1891 with her three children and became a resident of Hull House. Kelley, Addams and the other Hull House activists were convinced that once the overwhelming suffering of the poor was documented and publicized, meaningful reforms would be quickly put into place (Brown 2001).

In 1892, the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics hired Kelley to investigate the "sweating" system in the Chicago garment industry. Then, in 1893, when the U.S. Congress commissioned a nationwide survey to investigate the slums of great cities and assess the extent of poverty in urban areas, she was selected to lead the survey effort in Chicago. Kelley and others conducted a door-to-door survey in the Hull House district and, following the lead of Charles Booth's maps of poverty in London, created maps showing the nationality, wages, and employment history of each resident. Published in 1895, *The Hull-House Maps and Papers* offered no explanation for the causes of poverty and social disorder.

For Addams, practice was a priority over theory (Schram 2002). In the preface, she claimed that this was not a sociological investigation to test or build theory but a constructive work that could help push the progressive agenda to address the injustices of poverty. As such, it simply recorded certain phases of neighborhood life and presented detailed information that might prompt a humanitarian response from the government (Brown 2001). Kelley authored two chapters, one on the sweating system and another with Alzina P. Stevens on wage-earning children. Interestingly, the authors of two other chapters, Charles Zeublin, "The Chicago Ghetto" and Josefa Humpal Zeman, "The Bohemian People in Chicago," were forerunners of the Chicago School of Sociology of the 1920s. Zeublin joined the faculty of the University of Chicago Sociology Department a few years later.

Kelley earned a law degree from Northwestern University and in 1899 moved to New York City to head the National Consumer's League (NCL) where she worked with Josephine Goldmark, director of research at NCL, to prepare the successful "Brandeis brief" defense of 10-hour workday legislation for women in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), which like the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) school desegregation case almost 50 years later, used sociological evidence to support its case (Sklar 1985; Deegan 1986).

Jane Addams (1860–1935) followed her own applied and activist track in Chicago. Throughout her career, she maintained a tenuous relationship with academic sociology. In 1892, she taught a summer course on applied philanthropy and ethics with sociologist Franklin Giddings, and, in 1893, presided over a two-day conference at the Chicago World's Fair sponsored by the International Parliament of Sociology. She declined at least two offers to join the Sociology Department at Chicago, apparently over concerns about the limits on speech and political activism associated with university settings. Addams, however, did become a charter member of the American Sociological Society, was an invited speaker at several meetings, and published in the *American Journal of Sociology* (*AJS*) as well as other scholarly and popular journals. Two of her books (Adams [1902] 1964, [1916] 2002) received favorable reviews in the *AJS* (Deegan 1986).

But by 1920, a combination of backlash against social activism, the development of social theory to explain the causes as well as the effects of social problems, and gender discrimination marginalized Addams and other women sociologists from regular academic departments into what would become schools of social work (Deegan 1986).

If Addams and other social workers charted an independent course, Seba Eldridge (1885–1953) worked in social services before discovering sociology. Initially trained as a civil engineer, he came to New York City around 1907. He held a part-time position with the Bureau of Advice and Information of the New York Charity Organization Society investigating and appraising civic and social agencies appealing for aid and occasionally resided at various East Side settlement houses, becoming familiar with the conditions of the people in the neighborhoods (Ream 1923; Clark 1953; McCluggage 1955). Eldridge knew of the work of Felix Adler and the Ethical Culture movement. In 1911, he began graduate study at Columbia University in social philosophy and finished his dissertation under John Dewey in 1925. But he also studied with both Franklin Giddings and William F. Ogburn and learned of their interests in scientific sociology, quantitative methods, and objectivity. From 1913 to1915, he served as secretary of the Department of Social Betterment of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities.

Eldridge (1915) wrote *Problems of Community Life; an Outline of Applied Sociology* in which he classified New York's social problems according to the attention given them by reformers and the general public along with the general plans that various philanthropies, social reform groups, and municipal agencies put forward for the better organization of reform activities in the city. His suggestions for reform were few and emerged from the logic of the situations under analysis rather than from partisan interests (he was politically active on the side of anti-Tammany forces). In 1921, Eldridge joined the sociology faculty at the University of Kansas where he remained for the rest of his life. Much of his subsequent work focused on methods of improving the quality of citizenship, and he was well ahead of his time in advocating that social science departments should give students actual practice in the skills of citizenship through participation in community activities.

Not only was sociology being applied in social welfare and social policy, but it also gained an early toehold in industry. In January 1914, Henry Ford created a "profit sharing" plan that would pay workers up to $5 a day, when the average wage for an unskilled automobile worker was $2.40. The "profit sharing" was not a Taylorist scientific

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management bonus for additional quality work and was not directly tied to Ford Motor Company profits. Rather, it depended on workers maintaining good habits and taking care of their families and dependants. This was a radical concept and challenged the general belief that a sharp increase in the wages would have a bad effect because the workers would spend the additional money on drinking and gambling. Ford, however, wanted every worker to have a comfortable home and be able to own a Ford automobile. To select workers for the program and monitor their behavior as well as test this "theory," he created a "Sociology Department" within Ford Motor Company (Loizides and Sonnad 2004).

The Department was headed by John R. Lee who was asked to identify which workers were qualified to participate in the "profit sharing" and then help the others to become qualified. This meant gathering information from the workers, and occasionally friends or neighbors, on their background, family situation, financial state, and personal habits through informal, semistructured interviews. Recorded data included basic demographics; financial information, including life insurance and bank name, location and balance; and health information, including family doctor and habits such as smoking or drinking. In early 1914, investigators and interpreters, selected from among existing Ford employees, were highly visible as they drove Ford automobiles to the homes of the workers who were to be interviewed. The result was that 60 percent of the workers qualified for the "profit sharing" (Loizides and Sonnad 2004).

However, the investigators were aggressive and some questions were intrusive. In addition, many non-English speaking workers did not qualify, possibly because of translation difficulties, and they and their families were angry. (The cause of these negative reactions would be recalled in the mid-1930s when Ford adamantly opposed unionization). Lee then conducted a second phase, in the spring of 1914, to verify the initial findings and use better-prepared translators. He told the investigators not to go into a home in a way that they would not want someone to come into theirs and cautioned them about delving into strictly personal matters. At the end of this phase, 69 percent of the workers were eligible. The company then began to Americanize its immigrant work force. In May 1914, it opened the Ford Language School, which taught English to workers after the first shift. Classes also stressed American ways and customs, encouraged thriftiness, and good personal and work habits. By the end of 1914, 87 percent of the workers qualified for the "profit sharing" (Loizides and Sonnad 2004).

In 1916, Lee left Ford to develop the field of personnel management. Lee (1916) wrote a paper on the Ford profit-sharing system for the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences.* About 10 years later, Shenton (1927:198) noted in his *Practical Application of Sociology* that "certain businessmen have already made beginnings in sociological research and a number are conducting experiments under the observation of trained sociologists."

ACADEMIC VERSUS APPLIED SOCIOLOGY: 1920 TO 1940

In 1916, sociology students at the University of Southern California started a journal, *Studies in Sociology,* but in October 1921, they changed its name to *Journal of Applied Sociology.* Alice Fesler (1921) explained that the name was taken from Ward's threefold classification of pure sociology, applied sociology, and social reform. The journal carried short pieces by students and well-known sociologists. A 1924 issue included "The Major Ills of the Social Survey" by Seba Eldridge, "A Race Relations Survey" by Robert E. Park, and "Social Psychology of Fads" by Emory Bogardus. But in 1927, the *JAS* was combined with the *Bulletin of Social Research* to become *Sociology and Social Research.* An editorial note explained that since productive research was the very basis of applied sociology, the journal would now publish significant pieces of research, although descriptions and analyses of social problems and the process, whereby they are reduced and solved, would still be printed. The journal would combine research and practice (Lucas 1927).

World War I marked the beginning of the end for the Progressive Era of social reforms to improve the lives of workers and immigrants, to conserve natural resources, and to make government more effective and less corrupt. In the social sciences, the acceptance of statistical thinking and quantification spurred the emergence of scientific methods, which in turn supported a growing dominance of the academic discipline over practical sociology and social activism. Social work was considered to be a technique and an art, not a science (Shenton 1927). In contrast, applied sociology was a science that could contribute to the development of an objective description of social problems and an understanding of their causes (Bossard 1932) and could be used to guide social planning and social engineering (Odum 1934). Applied sociology would attempt to keep an even keel of objective, value-free, social research amidst cross-currents of political ideology and social activism.

In 1916, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, a former Princeton professor of political science, supported a request by the National Academy of Sciences to create a National Research Council (NRC) to organize research and secure the cooperation of military and civilian agencies as a measure of national preparedness (Cochrane 1978). In 1918, after the United States entered the war, Wilson (1918) issued an executive order under which the NRC was

> to stimulate research in the mathematical, physical and biological sciences, and in the application of these sciences to engineering, agriculture, medicine and other useful arts, with

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> the object of increasing knowledge, of strengthening the national defense, and of contributing in other ways to the public welfare.

(Social sciences would not be explicitly added until George H. Bush did so in a January 1993 executive order.)

In 1921, Congress passed the national origins immigration Quota Act that discouraged immigration from eastern and southern Europe. The next year, the NRC asked for social science representation on a study of human migration (Rhoades 1981). The sociologist member of the Committee on the Scientific Problems of Human Migration was Mary Abby van Kleeck, the director of the Russell Sage Foundation's Department of Industrial Studies. Van Kleeck was a pioneer in industrial sociology, having conducted studies of unorganized workers and sweatshop labor. Other sociologists who attended a sponsored conference on migration, included Edith Abbott, Henry Fairchild, William Ogburn, and Robert Park (Wissler 1929).

On taking office in 1929, President Herbert Hoover established the President's Research Committee on Social Trends in the hope that social issues and problems could be scrutinized in the rational manner that had characterized his earlier efforts that reduced domestic consumption of food by 15 percent without rationing during World War I and his organization of flood relief work and health improvement in 1927 (Odum 1933; Volti 2004; Hoover Archives 2005). The Rockefeller Foundation funded it for three years at $560,000, and William F. Ogburn (1886–1950), who coined the phrase "cultural lag," was named study director (Rhoades 1981). He would also serve as director of the Consumers Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration (NRA).

In his 1929 ASS Presidential address, Ogburn (1930) declared that "sociology as a science is not interested in making the world a better place in which to live." On the surface this appears to be a rejection of Ward's amelioration and a revival of Sumner's *laissez-faire* position. But Ogburn's main purpose was to ensure that scientific methods would be the basis for applied research and to distance it from ethics, religion, journalism, and propaganda. Like Ward, he did not believe that the sociologist as scientist should hold office or lead movements. Ogburn encouraged sociologists to be wherever data on significant social problems were to be found: on the staff of the courts, in factories, at political party headquarters, and in community centers. He wanted the sociologist to be there to discover new knowledge and relationships rather than as an executive, leader, or social worker who puts to use the information which the scientific sociologist furnishes. He even predicted that a great deal of research would be done outside of universities by government, trade unions, employers' associations, civic bodies, political parties, and social service organizations. Ogburn recognized that this research would be done for a specific purpose to prove a particular hypothesis or to gain a desired end. He asserted that to do this, the researchers should be free to follow the evidence and that they therefore must be sharply distinguished from the executives or policymakers.

This was already happening. The most well-known private sector applied research began in April 1927 at the Western Electric Plant in Hawthorne, Illinois. It would culminate with the publication of *Management and the Worker* (Roethlisberger and Dixon 1939), which described worker behaviors and interactions in the experimental Relay Assembly Test Room and the Bank Wiring Observation Room. A few years later in 1933, J. L. Moreno, in collaboration with Helen Hall Jennings, began consulting at the New York State Training School for Girls in Hudson, New York, where he developed his sociometric system and began the *Sociometric Review,* which was renamed *Sociometry.*

Ogburn also drew an interesting distinction between sociologists who are research scientists and social engineers who, like physicians, are not scientists but who apply reliable scientific procedures and relatively exact knowledge. The concept of social engineering was developed by William Tolman ([1909] 2005), who thought that industrialists should assume more social responsibility for their workers and should hire social engineers to be the primary intermediary between the industrialist and the employees. Andrew Carnegie liked the idea and wrote an introduction to the book. Tolman also advocated that employers become involved with the workers and their families through programs for social insurance, profit sharing, and savings (Östlund 2003). These ideas may have led Henry Ford to set up the "Sociology Department" to support his "profit sharing" plan and John Lee to leave Ford and start personnel management.

But the term *social engineering* was about to take on an ominous and decidedly negative connotation. In 1928, Stalin introduced the first Soviet five-year plan, and the Third Reich would soon adopt social engineering and use applied urban and rural sociology in their plans for the reorganization of an expanded Germany and the expulsion and annihilation of the populations of conquered territories (Klingemann 1992). These developments were noted by several American sociologists, including Robert K. Merton (1936), who advocated that scientists repudiate the application of utilitarian norms and quipped that "an economy of social engineers is no more conceivable or practicable than an economy of laundrymen" (p. 900).

In 1934, *Social Forces* asked 23 prominent sociologists to contribute to a Round Table Symposium to address questions such as "What is the role of sociology in current social reconstruction?" Arthur E. Wood (1934) recounted that Charles Cooley said that in his early days he had the greatest difficulty in trying to tell his colleagues the difference between sociology and socialism. Borrowing terms from William James, Wood then identified three types of sociologists: (1) the tough minded who are all for objectivity but sit on the sidelines when it comes to the hard contests over practical issues; (2) the tender minded or welfare

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sociologists who come from a background of religion or social work and tinker around the edges without much knowledge or insight into the nature of the structure which they would change; and (3) the radicals, that is, those active in partisan or revolutionary movements, who have an analysis of the social order and a blue print of what should be done but whose strength lies in their dogmatism which does not qualify them as social scientists. Without using the term applied sociology, Wood concluded that sociology could use descriptive analysis of social structures and processes involving critical evaluations to guide the tendencies of social change in the interest of reform.

The issue of the relationship between academic sociology and applied sociology in its various forms was part of a five-year struggle within the American Sociological Society over what Marklund (2005) calls the scientific detachment versus political involvement dilemma or as Stuart A. Queen (1934), who worked for the American Red Cross and the Detroit Community Fund as well as teaching sociology at Kansas and Washington University, put it, "How to steer between the Scylla of academic isolation and the Charybdis of partisan activity." (p. 207–208).

At the 1931 annual meeting of the American Sociological Society, Maurice Parmelee, an early behaviorist and criminologist, Robert MacIver, and Pitirim Sorokin among others, distributed a memorandum in which they claimed that the programs and publications of the Society were devoted in considerable part to practical rather than to scientific problems, that as a result the public has the impression that the Society is a religious, moral, and social reform organization rather than a scientific society, and that the Society has become in large part a society of applied sociology. To remedy this, they proposed that voting members have a higher university degree in sociology and be engaged in sociological research, writing, and teaching and that the Society assume control of the official journal, at the time the *American Journal of Sociology* controlled by the Chicago Sociology Department (Rhoades 1981). Martindale (1976) interpreted this as a conflict between the more populist and progressive midwestern departments that were receptive to Ward's Comtean view of science as social reconstruction and the more academically conservative eastern departments linked to Sumner and Social Darwinism.

In 1934, the Society's Committee on Scope of Research reported that New Deal and other social welfare agencies were using sociological research for the solution of practical problems. It recommended a closer integration of sociologists with the sociological work of government, a more complete and discriminating canvass of research in progress and an emphasis on the region as the unit of research because of developments in social planning. Two years later, in 1936, the Committee on Opportunities for Trained Sociologists recommended the creation of a new permanent committee for the promotion of the professional (as opposed to the disciplinary) interests of sociologists. The new committee would get sociological training and field experience recognized as a qualification or substitute qualification for certain Federal and state civil service positions, expand graduate training in sociology to meet the need for equipping students for technical positions, and involve sociology in state planning commissions and the reorganization of state welfare systems, as well as publicize sociology (Rhoades 1981). The Society, however, did not take up these recommendations. Applied sociology was set adrift in stormy seas as the academics opted for a narrower disciplinary and scientific learned society and the reformers moved into administrative positions in New Deal agencies.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR APPLIED SOCIOLOGY: 1940 TO 1980

Applied sociology received a substantial boost from World War II and then the War on Poverty. In both cases, research and observations collected in natural settings for applied purposes would generate new knowledge and contribute to sociological theories and concepts, as had been called for by Ogburn (1930) in his Society presidential address. Fifty years later, Peter Rossi (1980) in his ASA presidential address noted that many pieces of client-initiated applied work would, over time, be presented in the sociological literature as primarily basic research.

In November 1941, the War Department established a Research Branch in the Information and Education Division to provide the army command quickly and accurately with facts about the attitudes of soldiers. Samuel Stouffer (1900–1960) became the director of the Troop Attitude Program and with the assistance of more than 100 sociologists, seven of whom would serve as presidents of the ASA, conducted more than 200 surveys during the war years with more than half a million soldiers. Topics covered included practices associated with trench foot, what articles were read in *Yank Magazine,* determining attitudes toward promotion and job assignments in the military, the attitudes of Negro soldiers, and the point system for personnel demobilization after the war (Bowers 1967).

In December 1942, a compendium of troop-attitude studies was published for limited army staff distribution, but each succeeding issue was more widely distributed, eventually down to the company level. Stouffer saw the research branch as doing an engineering job, not a scientific one. The reports not only emphasized that problems could be treated at the local command level but also that they were of value in planning and policy activities, for example, estimates of the number of veterans who would go to college if federal aid were provided led to the GI Bill and accurately predicted the actual postwar experience. Nevertheless Stouffer noted that the channels of communication between the policymakers and the actual study directors in the Branch were often very unsatisfactory and the potential effectiveness in policy making of some of the research was lost (Bowers 1967).

Stouffer's applied research efforts, however, would make an impact on sociological theory and methods,

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initially in the four volumes of *The American Soldier,* and then in extensive secondary analyses published in *Continuities in Social Research: Studies in the Scope and Methods of "The American Soldier"* (Merton and Lazarsfeld 1950). Chapters by Hans Speier, Edward Shils, Robert Merton, and Alice Kitt (Rossi) supported and developed theories and understandings of primary groups, reference groups, and military organization. Also working for the Research Branch was Louis Guttman who made significant contributions to attitude research, particularly the technique, which bears his name, for demonstrating the unidimensionality of scales based on a small number of items. Further study of its properties by Lazarsfeld led to latent content analysis. Finally, a number of sociologists, including John Useem, George C. Homans, Ralph Turner, Morris Janowitz, and Edward Shils used their military experiences in their sociological writings (Bowers 1967).

Applied research was also conducted on the home front. In the fall of 1941, an Office of Facts and Figures was created in the Office of War Information (OWI) to collect survey data on public attitudes and behavior concerning a broad range of war-related problems, including civilian morale and the effects of wartime regulations. The OWI needed a contractor and asked George Gallup who recommended Harry H. Field who had worked for him when they were both in the market research department of the advertising firm of Young and Rubicam (Marklund 2005). Through Gallup, Field was introduced to Hadley Cantril, Paul Lazarsfeld, and Samuel Stouffer who helped him establish the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Denver in the fall of 1941 (NORC would move to the University of Chicago in 1947). NORC got the contract for the civilian surveys and established a New York office in the building used by OWI. Early in 1942, Paul B. Sheatsley, who was working for Gallup at the time, headed the survey research efforts. Many of the OWI surveys were simply fact-finding endeavors (how people disposed of their waste fats or how they were using their ration coupons), but others were pioneering efforts such as the first national measurement of racial attitudes (NORC 2005)

The OWI employed Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) among others. Lazarsfeld had come to the United States as a Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation and served as director of the Foundation's Office of Radio Research, which moved to Columbia University in 1939 and became the Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR) in 1944 (now the Lazarsfeld Center for the Social Sciences in the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy). Over the years, Lazarsfeld and his students would conduct applied research for clients that would later contribute to modern market research, mathematical sociology, and mass communications research (BASR 2005). His work on personal influence (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955) stemmed from applied work financed by a magazine publisher to convince would be advertisers that placing ads in the magazine would reach opinion leaders, and a BASR study for a pharmaceutical company on the adoption of a new drug revealed the roles played by professional and social ties among physicians (Coleman, Katz, and Menzel 1966). In 1983, three of Lazarsfeld's former students would be the directors of social research for the three major networks: CBS, ABC, and NBC (Sills 1987).

Just before the war, the U.S. Department of Agriculture appointed Rensis Likert (1903–1981) director of the Division of Program Surveys in Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Likert had already developed his five-point scale and taught at New York University before becoming director of research for the Life Insurance Agency in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1935, where he conducted studies on the effectiveness of different styles of supervision. During the war, Likert and his colleagues conducted surveys of farmer's experiences and opinions. At the end of the war, Likert contacted Theodore M. Newcomb, who had worked with him during the war. Together they formed the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Michigan to conduct publishable studies for businesses, foundations, governmental and other agencies on all kinds of economic, social, and business problems.

To complement the survey focus, Likert suggested that the Research Center for Group Dynamics (RCGD), then at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, join SRC to form the Institute for Social Research (ISR) in 1948. The RCGD was founded by Kurt Lewin (1890–1947) and then headed by Dorwin Cartwright who had worked with Likert in the Division of Program Surveys. Likert had served on the Committee on Food Habits of the National Research Council, which funded Lewin's experiments demonstrating that food shoppers were more likely to change their buying habits as a result of a discussion followed by a public commitment than after a lecture by an expert. This led to his field theory involving food channels and the concept of gatekeepers (Wansink 2002). Lewin used the term *action research* and intended his research to result in guiding the actions needed to solve social problems, reducing the gap between social science knowledge and the use of that knowledge.

Early SRC research included an objective evaluation of a program to encourage acceptance of minority groups within the United Autoworkers Union and a study of morale at a telephone company that led to improved productivity and job satisfaction. RCGD and the Tavistock Institute in London jointly published the journal *Human Relations.* In *New Patterns of Management,* Likert (1961) summarized the principles and practices used by highest producing managers and proposed a more effective system of management.

By 1960, these and other university-based social research centers were producing empirical findings that had a considerable impact on sociological theories, methods, and concepts. In 1961, the Society for the Study of Social Problems under the leadership of Alvin Gouldner focused its meeting on the topic of applied social science and major papers were published in *Applied Sociology: Opportunities and Problems* (Gouldner and Miller 1965).

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The papers explored practitioner-client relations and case studies in a variety of areas, including law, family, community, race relations, and delinquency. Years later, coeditor S. M. Miller (2001) revealed that he regretted the use of the term applied sociology because it was highly ambiguous—did it refer to sociologists employed outside academia, to academic sociologists who did studies for nonprofit and voluntary organizations whether paid for or not, to social activists or to public policy critics and intellectuals?—and because he saw little linkage between applied work and sociological study.

When Paul Lazarsfeld was elected ASA president, he proposed that the theme for the 1962 meetings be "Sociology in Action" or "Applied Sociology" to highlight the contribution of applied and case studies to theoretical and methodological advances. The ASA Executive Council, however, changed it to "Uses of Sociology," which also became the title of an edited volume of 31 invited papers. The term *uses* went beyond applied sociology to encompass where and to what extent sociological findings and perspectives were used by professionals, businesses, voluntary agencies, the military, schools, and public bodies. Authors were asked to address the difficulties of translating practical issues into research problems and to discuss the intellectual gaps between research findings and advice for action (Lazarsfeld, Sewell, and Wilensky 1967:x). According to Gollin (1983:444), most authors had problems doing the latter—that is, identifying concrete applications of sociological ideas or findings.

In a provocative essay, Robert C. Angell (1967:737) raised some ethical issues concerning applied research. He worried that since such research is used to further the practical ends of business, voluntary associations, or government, it would take only a slight distortion in the sampling procedure or in the phrasing of questions to obtain findings desired by the client. Because they do not have the high calling of developing abstract scientific knowledge, he argued that the applied researcher cannot claim the special privileges that are sometimes enjoyed by those who do. For example, while it may be sometimes ethical to deceive subjects for the purpose of obtaining important new scientific knowledge, provided they are later debriefed, this justification cannot, in Angell's opinion, be used for applied research because the ends are not scientific ones.

These edited volumes on applied sociology written from the perspective of disciplinary sociology, however, failed to take the wind out of the sails. In fact, in his ASA presidential address, Rossi (1980) noted that from 1960 to 1980 applied social research enjoyed a boom period in which sociology, as a discipline, had not really shared. Essentially the War on Poverty generated large-scale applied research involving needs assessments for program planning, demonstration and pilot services, and program evaluations, which were risky, controversial, and could not easily be translated into academic publications. Dentler (2002) estimated that, from 1960 to 1975, approximately 100 social science research and development firms were established, a third of which were located in the Washington, D.C., suburbs. Finally several specialized applied social research centers were created, such as the Disaster Research Center at the Ohio State University in 1963, now at the University of Delaware.

In 1964, the U.S. Office of Education commissioned James S. Coleman to determine how educational opportunity, defined as condition of school buildings, trained teachers, and curricula, were distributed by race and ethnicity. The Report, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Coleman et al. 1966), which studied all 3rd-, 6th-, 9th-, and 12th-grade students in 4,000 schools, not only documented the pervasiveness of segregation in the schools but went beyond the rather narrow Congressional mandate to explore how parental education and social status as well as peer pressures effected student achievement (Rossi 1980; Rossi and Whyte 1983; Dentler 2002). If the findings were controversial, the subsequent implementation of mandated bussing and the flight of white families from city schools were even more so. Coleman (1976), who originally supported school integration, changed his mind in the 1970s when he concluded that the policies that focused wholly on within-district bussing actually increased rather than reduced school segregation.

The Coleman Report (Coleman et al. 1966) belies the argument that doing applied research for government agencies substantially limits intellectual and political independence and that applied researchers are at the beck and call of decision makers and policy implementers (Dentler 2002). Rossi (1980) pointed out that the applied researcher could negotiate and in some cases broaden the scope of the study to include sociological variables and factors. On the other hand, it also illustrates Rossi's points that applied social research may be used in policy formation and become embroiled in rancorous controversy in which the work is attacked, misused, or misapplied, and that sociologists are ordinarily not directly involved in decision making, policy formation, or program implementation. Like Ward and Ogburn before him, Rossi warned that applied social research is not for would-be philosopher kings.

During this time, studies continued to bridge the gap between pure and applied research. For example, Benjamin Bloom's (1964) work on stability of IQ during early childhood later provided Head Start with data on where best to intervene with compensatory preschool educational programs, William Sewell's study (Sewell, Hauser, and Featherman 1976) on status attainment began as a state-sponsored survey of Wisconsin high school seniors, and Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977, 1983) published her own research on corporations for a broader audience.

PROFESSIONALISM AND TRAINING IN APPLIED SOCIOLOGY: 1980 TO PRESENT

The late 1970s witnessed an increase in the production of M.A. and Ph.D. sociologists at a time when sociology

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departments were not hiring (Koppel 1993). A large number of new sociologists took positions outside academia in professional schools and in research units in government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private consulting firms. Many wanted to present and publish their findings in sociological venues.

In the late 1960s, Alex Boros (1931–1996) established what is believed to be the first graduate program in applied sociology at Kent State University. In 1978, a dinner conversation about the lack of applied sessions at the North Central Sociological Association (NCSA) meetings led to the formation of the Society for Applied Sociology (SAS; Steele and Iutcovich 1997). In 1979, SAS held sessions in conjunction with the NCSA. SAS was formally incorporated in 1984 with Boros as the first president, and it began publishing the *Journal of Applied Sociology.* In 1994, SAS approved a code of ethics for Applied Sociologists. Over the years, the presidency of SAS has been fairly evenly divided between applied sociologists who worked in academic institutions and those who either owned their own consulting firms or were employed by governmental, nonprofit, or business entities.

The late 1970s also saw the creation of the Clinical Sociological Association (renamed Sociological Practice Association) and the ASA Section on Sociological Practice. Then, in 1980, Peter Rossi became ASA president followed the next year by William Foote Whyte, both of whom considered themselves applied sociologists. An ASA Committee on Professional Opportunities in Applied Sociology, chaired by Howard Freeman, held a workshop in December 1981 titled "Directions in Applied Sociology." The papers presented were published in *Applied Sociology* (Freeman et al. 1983) and explored the then current status of applied sociology, the range of applied sociology roles in diverse settings, and the academic training of applied sociologists (Rosich 2005).

ASA also started a journal, the *Sociological Practice Review,* to provide a discipline sponsored publication for applied, clinical, and practicing sociologists, and to disseminate knowledge on how sociology can be applied to practical problems. Reviewed in 1992 during its third year, it was found to have had difficulty attracting sufficient manuscripts along with falling subscriptions. Despite opposition by the majority of editors of other ASA journals, the publications committee, by one vote, recommended that it be supported for another three years. The Executive Office and Budget Committee, however, recommended discontinuance and the ASA Council agreed (Dentler 1992; K. G. Edwards, personal communication from ASA Director of Publications, June 28, 2005).

In 1991, ASA was awarded funds to establish the Sydney S. Spivak Program in Applied Social Research and Social Policy with the purpose of enhancing the visibility, prestige, and centrality of applied social research and the application of sociological knowledge to social policy. The Program supported a Congressional Fellowship and policy briefings by sociologists on topics such as HIV/AIDS, youth violence, immigrants, and reactions to terrorism. It also offered Community Action Fellowships of up to $2,500 to cover direct costs of sociologists working with community groups to conduct needs assessments, evaluation studies, and empirical research of community activities and planning, or to produce an analytical literature review to address the community group's goals (Rosich 2005).

The introduction to the *Uses of Sociology* (Lazarsfeld et al. 1967:xxii) noted that a Ph.D. in sociology did not really train students for employment outside academia. It asked what type of professional training would be needed, what role university research bureaus, centers and institutes would play, and whether sociologists should create programs within departments or separate schools of social research. Freeman and Rossi (1984) proposed that some departments having appropriately trained and motivated faculty, add applied training as an option for their graduate and undergraduate students. Such a program would provide a solid general grounding in the history, current trends, theories, and range of research methods in sociology, with additional practical and pragmatic skills of how to administer sample surveys and field research, how to select and work with a survey research organization or train others to collect data, and how to write a response to a request for proposals as opposed to a journal article.

In her SAS Presidential address, Jeanne Ballantine (1991) reported on a study of where sociology majors were employed after graduation, what employers were seeking, and what undergraduate applied programs were providing. She found a variety of efforts ranging from one or two courses, to an internship or field experience, to a complete track or concentration. The demand for training generated a set of texts and supplements by Sullivan (1992), Steele, Scarisbrick-Hauser, and Hauser (1999), Du Bois and Wright (2001), Dentler (2002), Straus (2002), Steele and Price (2003), and Dukes, Petersen, and Van Valey (2004).

SAS president Stephen Steele conducted a needs assessment survey of SAS members in 1992 and found an interest in strengthening training programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels. He appointed Harry Perlstadt to pursue this. In 1995, with the support of Joyce Iutcovich, SAS President and David Kallen, president of the Sociological Practice Association (SPA), they formed the Commission on Applied and Clinical Sociology (Perlstadt 1995, 1998). The commission created standards for undergraduate and graduate programs (CACS 2005) and, by 2005, had accredited three undergraduate programs (St. Cloud State, Minnesota; Our Lady of the Lake, Texas; and Valdosta State, Georgia) and two masters level graduate programs (Humboldt State, California and Valdosta State, Georgia). Accreditation standards help programs provide quality training with adequate resources and the Commission itself serves as a clearinghouse for the programs.

In August 2000, SAS and SPA met together in Washington, D.C., with the theme Unity 2000. Both

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recognized they were small and could benefit from combining their resources and efforts. As the result of hard work by, among others, Ross Koppel and Joan Biddle of SPA and Augie Diana and Jay Weinstein of SAS, the two groups merged in 2005 to become the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS), with a combined journal.

Since 1970, many Ph.D. sociologists have conducted applied research in a variety of settings. A 1995 National Science Foundation survey of Ph.D. sociologists found that less than half (45.8 percent) of all sociologists taught sociology at the postsecondary level and 27.1 percent of all Ph.D. sociologists were employed outside educational institutions (Dotzler and Koppel 1999). Unfortunately, only a few Ph.D. sociologists can be mentioned here. Michael Quinn Patton, one of the leading experts in evaluation research, wrote *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Patton 1997) and was president of the American Evaluation Association. Terence C. Halliday is a Senior Research Fellow at the American Bar Foundation and President of the National Institute for Social Science Information. He helped found and was chair of the ASA Sociology of Law section and served as editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Law and Social Inquiry.* Lola Jean Kozak, with the job title of health statistician/senior health researcher in the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers of Disease Control, has done applied research on avoidable hospitalizations that has affected the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (Kozak, Hall, and Owings 2001). Sociologist William W. Darrow was the sole nonmedical scientist on the CDC Task Force in the early 1980s that did the initial investigations of what would be identified as the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Darrow et al. 1987; Lui, Darrow, and Rutherford 1988).

APPLIED SOCIOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Over the years, applied sociology has bridged sociological theory and sociological practice, bringing theory and ideas to professional practitioners and decision makers while, in return, contributing to the knowledge base of sociology as a science and discipline. To some extent, the history of applied sociology has been embroiled in what Andrew Abbott (1988) would identify as clarifications and disputes over jurisdictions between the academic discipline and the practice of the profession. Applied sociology has tried to steer clear of entanglements with social philosophy and ethics, on the one hand, and social engineering, reform, and activism on the other. But the very nature of applied sociology, and the interests of those who choose to do it, will mean that such jurisdictional tensions will continue well into the twenty-first century as they have for the past 150 years.

But the demand for applied sociology is not likely to slacken. The U.S. government has been commissioning social surveys and studies for over a century, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the NIH and NIMH roadmaps for research continue to look to and fund the applied side of the social and behavioral sciences. As Ogburn (1930) predicted, business, labor, community, and nonprofit service organizations all have a need for reliable and accurate data, needs assessments, and evaluations that applied sociology can provide. Evidence-based decision making and accountability will continue to be stressed as a rational necessity. Of course, decision makers and administrators will highlight those findings that meet their ends and ignore those that do not. In a few instances, applied findings will, unfortunately, be used for nefarious purposes as they were by the Soviets and Nazis.

Although the primary focus of ASA will remain on basic research and academic positions, applied sociology will continue to be recognized as a specialty/derivative field. The newly formed Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology may professionalize sociology by bringing more practitioners into contact with disciplinary sociology, thereby following a pattern that already exists in economics, psychology, and political science. This may be strengthened as more departments develop applied research and sociological practice training programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in response to societal demands. This would be accelerated if these departments consciously pursued their common educational interests through the Commission on Applied and Clinical Sociology.

Applied sociology is very resilient. The term has survived for more than a hundred years despite vague definitions and attempts to ignore or replace it. While sociology as a discipline and perspective may have increasing difficulties being appreciated in a culture of expanding individualism, personal liberty, and self-actualization, people, and especially social organizations and government agencies, will need to choose wisely on the basis of evidence. The heart of applied sociology is social research, and as long as decision makers want to know the social facts and people are trained to provide them, applied sociology will flourish.