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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

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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)

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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 molted, 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.

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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 Elmira, 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

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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 employment 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'

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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. ■

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