

Radio Research, McCarthyism and Paul F. Lazarsfeld  
by  
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Submitted to the Department of  
Political Science  
In Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Degrees of  
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE in  
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES  
at the  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
May 1987

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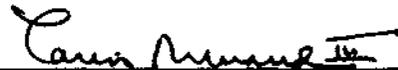
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## ABSTRACT

Does Sociology contracted for political purposes have the desired effect of changing society? If not, what use does such research serve?

This thesis is an examination of two major sociological research projects conducted by Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901-1976): The radio research project by the Office of Radio Research and the Bureau of Applied Research (1937-1948), and the Teacher Apprehension Study (1954-1957), respectively funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic. The history of the two foundations is presented and their motivations for funding the research in question explored.

This thesis is based on a careful reading of the works of Paul F. Lazarsfeld, including his books, articles and personal files on file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Columbia University, and scattered secondary sources. It concludes by posing questions about the practical uses of sociological research findings.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Few people today outside the academic social sciences have heard the name of Paul F. Lazarsfeld, but between 1940 and 1960 his name was frequently mentioned in newspaper articles discussing radio and television; he was occasionally asked to testify before the Senate as a media "expert." He earned the reputation of an expert in mass communication research for his studies at the Office of Radio Research (renamed in 1944 as the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR)) at which he was the director, between 1938 and 1949. In recent years, however, Lazarsfeld's qualitative contributions to the field of social sciences have been largely ignored for his methodological ones.<sup>1</sup>

Lazarsfeld himself believed his contributions to the field of social research were primarily methodological. In the 1930s and 40s, Lazarsfeld spearheaded the movement to quantify the social sciences. His techniques of sampling, paneling, interviewing, questionnaire construction, scaling and survey analysis "quickly dominated the field [of American sociology] and gave it the characteristic flavor" it had in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>2</sup> His emphasis on methodology caused him to be termed

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<sup>1</sup>Robert K. Merton, James S. Coleman, and Peter H. Rossi. Preface. In *Qualitative and quantitative social research: papers in honor of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, The Free Press, a division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1979. p.x. Hereafter referred to as [Merton et al., 1979].

<sup>2</sup>Bernard Berelson. The study of public opinion. In Leonard D. White, editor, *The state of the*

by many a champion of value-free social science, with an “‘apolitical’ empiricism [which] dominated American sociology in the 1950s.”<sup>3</sup> Lazarsfeld himself wrote in the mid 1960s that a major purpose of sociology was to leave a (supposedly unbiased) historical record without attempting to settle issues of social relevance. His final formula for success was to avoid issues of controversy and fund the BASR—one of the primary purposes of which was to train graduate students for professional careers in sociology—on outside contracts which were more concerned with data collection than predictions of final outcomes. Indeed, Lazarsfeld was often criticized for turning the BASR into a “quasi-marketing research firm with only few socially relevant and intellectually exciting projects.” [Pollak, 1980, p.169]

From the beginning, Lazarsfeld’s research was rigorously mathematical and quantitative, owing to his training as a mathematician at the University of Vienna. It was in Vienna too that he adopted his practice of funding his organization mostly by outside contracts. But far from conducting value free social science, Lazarsfeld started his career using sociology for highly political purposes. In one of his two autobiographical essays, he wrote that he had hoped to use sociology to help determine why the worker’s revolution had failed in Vienna and suggest possible strategies for success.<sup>4 5</sup>

Lazarsfeld’s willingness to pursue sociology for political purposes continued in the United States (although his direct participation in politics abruptly termi-

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*social sciences: papers presented at the 25th anniversary of the Social Science Research Building, University of Chicago, November 10-12, 1955*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1956. p.309. Hereafter referred to as [Berelson, 1956].

<sup>3</sup>Michael Pollak. Paul F. Lazarsfeld: a sociointellectual biography. *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization*, 2(2):155-177, December 1980. p.157. Hereafter referred to as [Pollak, 1980].

<sup>4</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. On becoming an immigrant. In *Qualitative analysis: historical and critical essays*, chapter 12, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, MA, 1972. Reprinted from *Perspectives in American History*, 2 (1968). Published by the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University. Copyright ©1968 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. p.247. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1972b].

<sup>5</sup>Actually, Lazarsfeld used the term “psychology” instead of sociology. Lazarsfeld considered individuals in as detailed and personal a manner as possible, and felt that the term “psychology” was more appropriate.

nated when he immigrated to this country because he felt alienated by the American Socialist Party. [Pollak, 1980, p.162]) Nevertheless, the political implications of his work gradually decreased in importance over the course of his career.

In the United States, Lazarsfeld's research on the impacts of radio on American society was both funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and pursued by Lazarsfeld for the expressed purpose of improving the quality and educational power of radio broadcasts. The reports which resulted from of this research effort and documents written by and about the Rockefeller Foundation speak to the political importance of the radio research work.

In 1955, Lazarsfeld conducted an in-depth study for the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic on the impacts of McCarthyism in academia, again for the political purpose of fighting the witch hunts against professors.<sup>6</sup>

This thesis explores these two projects by Lazarsfeld's research group. In both of these circumstances, research motivated for political concerns had little if any political impact, for reasons which shall be explored in this thesis.

As Lazarsfeld's career progressed, he attached increasing importance to the idea that the work be value free. His motivation for performing sociological research (SR) changed from the idea that one can change the world if one has enough data to thinking that if one has enough data, one might be able to describe to future generations what a part of the world was like. Lazarsfeld's disillusionment in the power of social science research—possibly the result of seeing the powerlessness of the projects explored in this thesis—was shared by a generation of social scientists.

“Paul Lazarsfeld made many major contributions to our substantive understanding of contemporary society. His early work on ... the consequences of the mass media, ... and his unprecedented study of the impact of McCarthy-

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<sup>6</sup>In the case of Teacher Apprehension Study, study, by the time the results were published, America's McCarthyism fever had mostly broken. In *The Academic Mind*, the volume which details the Teacher Apprehension Study's findings, the authors write that they consider the study's primary value to be its place as a historical record of the period.

ism on American academic life are just a few examples of these substantive contributions." [Merton et al., 1979, p.x] Both of these research projects were funded for specific political reasons. Neither project accomplished its objectives, yet both of them were seen as successes by the funding organizations and aided the furthering of Lazarsfeld's career. The details of these studies provide insight into Lazarsfeld's intellectual development and a key element of the intellectual background for the failures of the large-scale social research and social engineering projects of the 1960s and 1970s.

## Chapter 2

### Sociology

*"We study the past in order to master the future."*

— *Paul F. Lazarsfeld*<sup>1</sup>

Why do people do sociology? Why are there sociologists? Why does society sponsor sociological research?

At one level, sociologists are trivia gatherers—they are people who enjoy discovering interesting facts about groups of people. The cynical answer to the question "why do people engage in sociological research?" is that other people pay them to: sociologists are individuals who have successfully convinced society to fund their hobby of trivia gathering. In order to maintain this funding, sociologists must produce (and usually publish) reports that convey the findings of their research. The complete cynical answer is that sociologists do research in order to publish reports so that they can earn money to do further research. It is a never-ending academic circle.

There are other, less cynical answers to the question.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. The effects of radio on public opinion. In Douglas Waples, editor, *Print, radio, and film in a democracy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1942. Ten papers on the administration of mass communications in the public interest – read before the Sixth Annual Institute of the Graduate Library School, The University of Chicago, August 4-9, 1941. p.66. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1942].

Sociology can be thought of as a tool for understanding society, but this presupposes that society is difficult to understand. Why should society be hard to understand? Perhaps society is simple to understand, and people who state otherwise have a personal stake in collecting funds for "studying society." Alternatively the process of studying society may in turn complicate society by subtle feedback mechanisms which happen to benefit the sociologists who make their living from studying the "complexity of society."

Nevertheless, society seems complicated to the author. This thesis will assume that society is complicated and that sociological research does convey some kind of useful information about the current state of the world.

But why understand society? At one level, understanding society is an academic goal in and of itself. Alternatively, we might wish to understand society for the altruistic purpose of making the world a better place—"fixing society." If we want political power, understanding society might be the first step to controlling it. Sociological research might be usable to gain direct control over society or people in general. Advertising research, for example, a very specific form of sociological research, is funded because companies believe they can use it to produce advertisements which make people buy more of a particular product. Campaign research is funded because politicians believe that their advertisements will make people vote in a particular fashion. Other examples of belief in the power of SR abound.

Most of these motives for doing sociology make the assumption that sociology actually tells us something about the society that sociologists allegedly study. Sociology might not. Sociology may tell us nothing about the world except that there are sociologists in it. Society may be too complicated and contain too many interacting variables to allow it to be studied within the context of current sociological methodologies (or any, for that matter). Alternatively, society may be too simple, and the content of SR reports may consist mostly of artifacts introduced from the particular manner in which the study was conducted.

Yet even if sociology is of no practical use—if it cannot be used to understand, fix or control society—the reports which sociologists publish still have political impact, especially in twentieth century American political system. Reports which claim to explain the state of people's lives and provide motives and causes for people's actions affect our view of the world, often whether we believe the report to be founded on sound sociological methodologies or not. Indeed, denial of sociological findings has occasionally become a herald for people to rally about too.

Additionally, there is a political value in conducting research, regardless of the findings. Studying a topic lends an air of importance and authority to the topic itself, especially before conclusions are made public.<sup>2</sup> Reports leave a lasting intellectual heritage which lets future students grapple with the intellectual and moral questions raised and write papers on the subjects.

The idea that sociologists primarily gather data for other academics—notably historians—was proposed by Lazarsfeld in his essay *Obligations of a 1950 pollster to a 1984 historian*.<sup>3</sup> Historians can use findings from past sociological research to substantiate their claims and explore circuitous causes and effects. Particularly in the field of public opinion analysis, sociologists (especially since mid 1930s) have made possible new forms of historical analysis.

Sociological reports also form a kind of message to future academics of what the present is like: they become a form of immortality, a bit of the world that will be preserved after the present is lost. Reports preserve the wisdom of current scholars for future generations to read and learn from. Additionally, reports and preserved raw data allow reanalysis of issues without the biases of current events

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<sup>2</sup>Presumably in the funding of the Teacher Apprehension Study, one of the principle values of the project was the mere fact that the research was being conducted. The Fund For the Republic's action of contracting the research forced people to consider the effects of McCarthyism on academia, if only to criticise the Fund for spending so many tax-free dollars on the subject.

<sup>3</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. *Obligations of a 1950 pollster to a 1984 historian*. In *Qualitative analysis: historical and critical essays*, chapter 14, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, MA, 1972. Originally published in *Public Opinion Quarterly* (1964), Columbia University Press. . Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1972a].

coloring judgment and evaluation.<sup>4</sup>

Sociological research can be used to generate *political* documents. These documents can then be used to help introduce change within the standing political system. Usually, these documents are used as support material in the context of a larger initiative, although they may also be forerunners of a larger initiative designed to attract supporters.

Politically, SR findings can serve one of three purposes: they can lead to action those who already know the facts, they can provide the facts for those who have already been called to action, and they can keep already existing programs in action. Examples of these political uses of sociological research are many; indeed, when we think of the positive uses of SR, these are the ones that we usually think of. In research directed towards political goals, the quality of the research methodology usually has little impact on the influence of the study. Rather, it is the degree to which the SR findings agree with "ordinary knowledge,"—peoples' internalized, non-scientific impressions of the world around them—and the willingness of politically active people to believe such findings that determines the degree of their impact of the work.

## 2.1 History of Sociology

Lazarsfeld traced the current state of sociology in the United States as the result of three distinct phases of development. Initially, sociology arose in conjunction with the Great Reform Movement following the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> At the time, sociology

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<sup>4</sup>As an example of the importance attached to the collection of this information, consider the National Science Foundation's (NSF) funding of sociological research during the Reagan administration: The *only* studies funded by the NSF since 1981 have been for the collection of primary research data, under the rationale that once the opportunity to collect information has passed, there would be no chance of collecting it in the future. (See Daniel Metlay. Personal communication. September 1986. , hereafter referred to as [Metlay, 1986].)

<sup>5</sup>For a detailed account of the history of the birth of sociology in the United States, the first professional organization (the American Social Science Association) and the connections with the reform movement, see Luther L. Bernard, *Origins of American Sociology*, 1943.

was heralded as a way for applying the techniques of science, which had already proven themselves to be powerful and successful, to the problems of society. The proponents believed that by scientifically studying the problems of society solutions would automatically suggest themselves. Lazarsfeld saw Columbia University's establishment of a graduate department in sociology in 1894 as an example of this, a move on the part of Columbia partly designed to cure the evils of New York City—to use the city of New York as a living laboratory.

During the second phase of sociology,<sup>6</sup> sociologists attempted to increase their academic prestige and recognition.<sup>7</sup> This phase is marked by an emphasis on methods and methodology and a quest for legitimacy in the eyes of other academics, especially other social scientists. These sociologists stressed they could use the scientific method and hopefully achieve successes similar to those of the natural sciences, even though their work was not strictly scientific.<sup>8</sup> Lazarsfeld was a product of this second phase in sociology. The research projects examined in this thesis are examples of research conducted with a phase II emphasis on methodology.

Coincidentally, the second phase of sociology also marks the birth of market research—essentially, sociology applied for commercial purposes. The public opinion analysis techniques which had discovered why citizens voted for a particular candidate could be used just as well (perhaps better) to discover why people purchased a particular brand of soap. The advent of radio created vast audiences for manufactures to sell their products to, and manufactures used market research to determine the most effective forms for their advertisements to take. Market research was also used by radio broadcasters to demonstrate audience size to potential advertisers.[Lazarsfeld and Reitz, 1975, p.2]

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<sup>6</sup>Lazarsfeld dates the second phase in sociology from 1923 with the formation of the Social Science Research Council.

<sup>7</sup>An example of this emphasis on methodology can be seen in the papers presented in Stuart Rices' *Methods in Social Science*, 1931.

<sup>8</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Jeffery G. Reitz. *Introduction to applied sociology*. Elsevier, New York, 1975. with the collaboration of Ann K. Pasanella. p.2. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld and Reitz, 1975].

The third phase of sociology—the one we are living in now—is marked by an increase in sociology contracted by non-sociologists for specific purposes. This phase began a few years before the Second World War “when it became increasingly clear that somehow the United States would become involved. By then,” writes Lazarsfeld in the book he published shortly before his death, “social research activities had become so ubiquitous that the government turned to social researchers as a matter of course.” [Lazarsfeld and Reitz, 1975, p.6] The research projects examined in this thesis are examples of research funded with a phase III emphasis on results.

We now live in a world in which social research has become pervasive

“A museum faced a decline in attendance and called on researchers to determine the reasons for the decline and for ideas on how to attract support for its program.<sup>9</sup> The establishment of social research in the Navy was attributed to the fact that rapid technological change brought new and more complicated forms of social organization which were more difficult to manage.<sup>10</sup> Research in the trading-stamp industry developed during the sixties, when trading stamps came under increased attack from consumers<sup>11</sup>....

“A volunteer welfare agency, forced to adopt a completely new program, initiated research to find ways to retain the support of its workers.<sup>12</sup> With the advent of a new type of warfare, the Army Air Force confronted the need for dramatic increase in trained air crews and research was carried out.<sup>13</sup> Settlers in a national forest in Louisiana set fires to areas containing new seedlings, and the Forest Service undertook research.<sup>14</sup>” [Lazarsfeld and Reitz, 1975, p.129]

This thesis tells the story of how two research projects by social science’s

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<sup>9</sup>H. Zetterberg, *Social Theory and Social Practice* (Totowa, N.J.: Bedminster Press, 1962), chapter 4.

<sup>10</sup>D. McDonald, *Some Problems in the Organization and Use of Social Research in the U.S. Navy* (New York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, 1971).

<sup>11</sup>A. K. Pasanella, with J. Weinman, *The Road to Recommendations* (New York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, 1973).

<sup>12</sup>C. Y. Glock, “Applied Social Research: Some Conditions Affecting Its Utilization,” in C. Y. Glock, et. al., *Case Studies in Bringing Behavioral Science into Use* (Stanford, Calif.: Institute for Communication Research, 1969), pp. 17-18.

<sup>13</sup>Stuart Chase, *The Proper Study of Mankind*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1963), pp. 50-57.

<sup>14</sup>R. Likert, “Behavioral Research: A Guide for Effective Action,” *The Annals*, 394 (March, 1971), 75-76.

father of methodology, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, funded for phase III concerns, did not accomplish their stated goals but were still considered successful projects, partly by evaluating them under phase II criteria, partly by appreciating the studies for the historical record which they formed.

## Chapter 3

# Motivations for funding radio research

The Lynds' 1929 study *Middletown* makes three references to radio. The first mention notes that "mechanical inventions such as the phonograph and radio are further bringing to Middletown more contacts with more kinds of music than ever before."<sup>1</sup> The second mention, in a footnote, compares percentages of      and boys attending movies, listening to the radio and playing musical instruments      with and without their parents.[Lynd and Lynd, 1929, p.257]<sup>2</sup>

*Middletown* tells the story of the town that the automobile made. Eight years later, the Lynd's published their follow-up to *Middletown*, *Middletown in Transition*.<sup>3</sup> *Middletown in Transition* contains extensive references to radio. During the eight years between the publication of the two studies, radio became

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<sup>1</sup>Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. *Middletown: A study in American culture*. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1929. Foreword by Clark Wissler. p.244. Hereafter referred to as [Lynd and Lynd, 1929].

<sup>2</sup>The limited attention given to radio in this first study of Middletown was criticized at the time. In the 1937 volume *Middletown in Transition*, the authors defended their 1929 treatment, writing that the "limited treatment was due to the then meager diffusion of the radio throughout the city." [Lynd and Lynd, 1937, p.263]

<sup>3</sup>Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. *Middletown in transition: a study in cultural conflicts*. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1937. . Hereafter referred to as [Lynd and Lynd, 1937].

a major factor in American life. *Middletown in Transition*[Lynd and Lynd, 1937] tells the story of the town that radio made.

Shortly after radio's introduction into Middletown, radio ownership and radio broadcasting exploded. By the mid 1930s, Middletown's lone radio station had grown from a one-man, three hour a day station, to a fourteen-person, fourteen hour a day station with a wide variety of programs and listeners. Likewise, ownership of radio sets jumped from one radio per eight homes in the business-class households and one in sixteen among working-class homes to 46 per cent ownership across classes.[Lynd and Lynd, 1937, p.263] Not surprisingly, the growth of radio listening in Middletown was accompanied by a "skewing" of the town's broadcasts to programs of a more "popular" nature: Programs which broadcast organ music were replaced with those which broadcast popular "hillbilly" music; Sunday afternoon religious programs were canceled in favor of music shows; "Children's hours, with local juvenile performers, have been dropped, 'because nobody but the families of the children who perform was [sic.] interested.'" [Lynd and Lynd, 1937, p.264]

Just what kind of role radio played, however, was ambiguous. Was radio a progressive force for social change, or was it merely reinforcing old patterns of behavior and taking up people's spare time? Was radio living up to its possibilities? In 1937, Lazarsfeld was contracted by the Rockefeller Foundation's Program in the Humanities to conduct a detailed analysis of the effects which radio was having on American society. The contract established the Office of Radio Research at Princeton University (later moved to Columbia University) to perform a series of undirected inquiries<sup>4</sup> into the impacts of radio on society. The inquiries were designed to answer questions such as "what individuals and social groups listen to the radio? How much do they listen and why? In what ways are they affected by

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<sup>4</sup>The studies were "undirected" in the sense that the Rockefeller Foundation did not instruct Lazarsfeld about what to study in terms of radio's impacts.

their listening?"<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup> The Rockefeller Foundation hoped to use this information to promote educational radio broadcasts, as will be shown later in this chapter.

### 3.1 Rockefeller Foundation 1913–1929

In 1913, John D. Rockefeller, Sr.,<sup>7</sup> established the Rockefeller Foundation "to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world." [Fosdick, 1952, p.vii] The Foundation did not represent a radical step in giving for Rockefeller, but instead was a successive step along a philanthropic path which he had embarked in the 1870s<sup>8</sup> Before 1892, he had funded a large number of individual, small, independent philanthropic programs and religious missions. Under the advice of Frederick T. Gates,<sup>9</sup> Rockefeller's friend and "principle advisor in the business and philanthropy," [Fosdick, 1952, p.1] Rockefeller gradually adopted a system of "scientific giving." [Fosdick, 1952, p.7] Scientific giving consisted of giving large block grants to organizations which would then apportion the money in smaller amounts and give it to other groups. The Rockefeller Foundation was the culmination of this approach to scientific giving.

Although Gates persuaded Rockefeller to establish the Foundation as a last-

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<sup>5</sup> Raymond B. Fosdick. *The story of the Rockefeller Foundation*. Harper and Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1952. p.246. Hereafter referred to as [Fosdick, 1952].

<sup>6</sup> The Rockefeller Foundation's interest in the impacts of radio were no doubt due in part to the success with which Roosevelt had used radio during the 1936 presidential elections. For a further discussion see page 27 of this thesis.

<sup>7</sup> John D. Rockefeller (1839–1937), famous capitalist and Philanthropist. It is estimated that the total amount of money Rockefeller donated to charitable organizations by 1921 exceeded \$500 million. (See *Who was who in America*. Volume 1, Marquis Who's Who Inc., Chicago, IL., 1956. p.1047, hereafter referred to as [Marquis, 1956].)

<sup>8</sup> Rockefeller had always given money to those who were in need of it. An old story about John D. Rockefeller describes how he always walked around with a pocket full of change in case he was asked for a dime by a passing stranger.

<sup>9</sup> Frederick T. Gates (1853–1929), graduated University of Chicago with a LLD, ordained Baptist minister in 1880, was the business and benevolent representative of John D. Rockefeller between 1893 and 1912. In addition to directing the Rockefeller Foundation, Gates chaired the board of trustees for the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, the General Education Board, and the International Health Board. [Marquis, 1956, p.444]

ing organization for the good of mankind, the United States Congress felt that Rockefeller was trying to find a way to prevent taxation of his fortune and preserve the estate after his death.<sup>10</sup> Several bills introduced into the Senate to create the Rockefeller Foundation failed in 1910, 1911, and 1912. In 1913, weary of the fight to push the Rockefeller Foundation charter through Congress, Rockefeller's advisors had the Rockefeller Foundation incorporated in the state of New York with little difficulty.[Fosdick, 1952, pp.18-20]

For its first fifteen years, the Rockefeller Foundation largely ignored the social sciences and turned its attention almost exclusively to projects related to medicine and public health, largely because of Gate's influence and the Foundation's initial highly negative experience in social science research.<sup>11</sup>

Gates' preoccupation with health and medicine was evident from the first meeting of the Foundation's Trustees, at which he was reported to have said: "Disease is the supreme ill of human life, and it is the main source of almost all other

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<sup>10</sup>However, the desire to retain control over the family estate while at the same time avoiding inheritance taxes was probably the driving motive which made the Ford Foundation the richest foundation in the world, as will be shown in the chapter 5 of this thesis.

<sup>11</sup>The Rockefeller Foundation's endeavor in the field of social science research began in 1914, during a massive mine worker strike against several companies including the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. The Rockefeller family had substantial financial interest in these companies. "The strike culminated in the tragic 'Ludlow massacre,' where, in a pitched battle between the strikers and the state militia, many were killed and injured. Federal troops finally brought the situation under control." [Fosdick, 1952, p.26]

The trustees of the Foundation commissioned a specialist in industrial relations to study and attempt to solve the problem. (The notion that social sciences could be used to isolate and "solve" a particular problem was by no means isolated to this event in the Rockefeller Foundation's history. When the Foundation began pursuing social science research again in 1928, its approach was remarkably similar to its approach to issues of public health: to attempt to isolate and solve problems.) Of critical importance was the Foundation's decision "to use the personnel and machinery of the Foundation" [Fosdick, 1952, p.26] in its task, rather than contracting the study to an outside organization. The press and the government were infuriated with the Rockefeller Foundation's actions—they felt that the Rockefeller Foundation was being used to further the interests of Rockefeller himself, while at the same time it was officially an independent philanthropic foundation that enjoyed tax-free status. Eventually Mr. Rockefeller and most of the trustees were subpoenaed as witnesses before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations.[Fosdick, 1952, p.26]

As a result of the experience, the Rockefeller Foundation decided to principally pursue and fund research in "a narrow range of noncontroversial subjects, notably public health, medicine and agriculture." [Fosdick, 1952, p.27]

human ills — poverty, crime, ignorance, vice, inefficiency, hereditary taint, and many other evils.”<sup>12</sup> Curing diseases, Gates reasoned, would cure all other ills of society. In his unpublished autobiography he wrote “As medical research goes on, it will find out and promulgate, as an unforeseen by-product of its work, new moral laws and new social laws, new definitions of what is right and wrong in our relations with each other.”[Fosdick, 1952, p.193]<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the Foundation’s projects were limited to four main categories: improvement of public health services and facilities, study and control of specific diseases, training and education of professional men and women, and support of research in the medical and natural sciences.[Shaplen, 1964, p.17] “By 1920 the Foundation had to all intents and purposes been captured by doctors,”[Fosdick, 1952, p.193] Forays into the field of social science were discouraged by Gates, “who felt strongly that any “scatteration” of the Foundation’s efforts would be its downfall.”[Shaplen, 1964, p.127] When the Foundation finally did embark into the fields of the social sciences, it did so by funding specific, strategic projects designed to have immediate results.

The Foundation notwithstanding, by 1923 the Rockefeller fortune was supporting the humanities and social sciences through other channels. In 1923 the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, with its \$74 million capital fund, made support of the social sciences (“economics, sociology, political science, and the related subjects, psychology, anthropology, and history”[Fosdick, 1952, p.194]) its primary commitment. The Memorial’s funding also contributed to the late entry of the Foundation into the social sciences. Although there was mention made of the possibility of merging the Memorial with the Foundation, until such a merger took

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<sup>12</sup>Robert Shaplen. *Toward the well-being of mankind: fifty years of the Rockefeller Foundation*. Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1964. Foreword by J. George Harrar. p.17. Hereafter referred to as [Shaplen, 1964].

<sup>13</sup>Gates’s aversion to the social sciences was so complete that he vetoed studies designed to determine if there were problems in the social sciences worth studying. In 1914 Gates succeeded in convincing the trustees to table plans to fund a committee of economists under the chairmanship of Professor Edwin F. Gay of Harvard “to make a selection of problems of economic importance which could be advantageously studied.”[Fosdick, 1952, p.193]

place there were strong incentives on both sides not to step into each others fields of philanthropy. Under the directorship of Beardsley Rumml<sup>14</sup> the Memorial pursued a program of funding projects in applied social science with presumed immediate benefits.[Fosdick, 1952, p.195]

In 1928 a major reorganization of the Rockefeller philanthropic organizations took place. "All of the programs of the four Rockefeller boards *relating to the advance of human knowledge*,"[Fosdick, 1952, p.137][Emphasis in original] were consolidated under the Rockefeller Foundation.<sup>15</sup>

As a result of the reorganization, the Foundation's endowment rose to approximately \$242 million.[Shaplen, 1964, p.8] The 1928 Rockefeller Foundation had been created from one Foundation (the former Rockefeller Foundation) which had been badly burned pursuing social science research, and another (The Memorial) which had already established a style of funding social science programs with presumed immediate benefits. When the new Foundation began funding social science research, it naturally sought to locate and sponsor work which would be as pragmatic, as scientific and as non-controversial as possible.

*"Unless we can find successful solutions to some of the intricately complex and fast growing problems of human relationships, we run the risk of having a world in which public health and medicine are of little*

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<sup>14</sup>Beardsley was a trained psychologist formerly associated with Dr. James R. Angell, president of the Carnegie Corporation

<sup>15</sup>The activities transferred to the Rockefeller Foundation in 1928 included:

- "The natural sciences from the General Education Board and the International Education Board.
- "The social sciences from the Memorial.
- "The humanities and arts from the General Education Board.
- "The medical sciences from the General Education Board.
- "Agriculture and forestry from the International Education Board and the General Education Board." [Fosdick, 1952, p.138]

*significance.*"

—*Raymond B. Fosdick, former chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation* [Fosdick, 1952, p.192]

Dr. Edmund E. Day<sup>16</sup> was named to head the Division of Social Sciences at the Foundation in 1929. The early years of Day's administration were spent funding studies of the Great Depression which were intended to find immediate cures. Although many studies were funded, "it quickly became apparent that it was too soon to diagnose such problems, and no panaceas were found nor any firm conclusions reached." [Shaplen, 1964, p.144] However, the Division of the Social Sciences continued its practice of looking for immediate solutions to social problems.

Day's administration soon adopted the practice of funding specific programs in the humanities and closely following them up, rather than merely "donating to prominent universities funds which they were permitted to use more or less as they saw fit." [Shaplen, 1964] (The previous practice of funding had resulted in a large number of nondescript projects being pursued without the formation of cohesive, respected research programs.) Day was succeeded in 1937 by Joseph H. Willits,<sup>17</sup> who followed the practices established in Day's administration.

### 3.2 Possibilities for radio

The directors of the Humanities Program were interested in the possibilities of using radio as a tool to promote "education"<sup>18</sup> and "cultural development." Radio and

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<sup>16</sup>Day was formerly a professor of economics at Harvard and dean of the School of Business Administration at the University of Michigan. [Shaplen, 1964, p.143]

<sup>17</sup>Willits was formerly head of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>18</sup>Throughout this thesis, the term "education," as applied to radio, refers to the process of instructing an individual with a recognized body of information. Such instruction presumably is designed to allow the individual to become a richer, more culturally aware and more understanding citizen. (See page 30 of this thesis for a detailed explanation of the process which Lazarsfeld called "serious reading" and its application to radio in the form of "serious listening.") Radio education was not generally recognized to reflect the casually informing and enlightening aspects of radio.

motion pictures were seen as "active mediums of communication that were shaping and molding the social ideas and aesthetic standards of people." [Fosdick, 1952, p.245] But for Foundation grants to have any real effect, they had to be strategically directed toward changing the practices of the broadcasting and the motion picture industries, rather than directly funding alternative programming, which would be prohibitively expensive. The resources of the Program in the Humanities were meager when compared with those of the broadcasting companies. "Only by change in their present practices, controlling as they do the facilities for communication, and commanding as they do the mass audiences, will a wider educational or cultural usefulness be achieved in film or radio."<sup>19</sup>

Thus, the primary motivation of the Rockefeller Foundation's program in the humanities for funding radio research was to attempt to learn how to use radio as an educational force and then change the practices of the broadcast industry to make radio an effective tool for mass education (also called by Lazarsfeld the "leveling up of socially needed information"<sup>20</sup> ). The Rockefeller Foundation was not alone in its belief that radio could serve this function.

Today, the 1930s desire to use radio as an educational force may seem a faddish response to a new technology. But in 1930 many observers believed that radio carried great promise to educate America. If "serious radio listening" could have an educational impact similar to that of serious reading, radio would make realizable a kind of mass education never before possible.<sup>21</sup> When faced with the question

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<sup>19</sup>David H. Stevens. The humanities program of the Rockefeller Foundation: a review of the period 1942-1940 by the director. April 1948. p.34. Hereafter referred to as [Stevens, 1948].

<sup>20</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. Proposal for continuation of radio research project for a final three years at Columbia University. 1939. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. p.2. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1939].

<sup>21</sup>Sociologists had harbored similar hopes for the educational possibilities of motion pictures, but by the 30s these hopes were seen as unrealizable. In *Middletown*, the Lynds write that the Middletown newspapers gave up after an initial attempt to raise the quality of the movies:

"The newspapers of today keep their hands off the movies, save for running free publicity stories and cuts furnished by the exhibitors who advertise. Save for some efforts among certain of the women's clubs to "clean up the movies" and the opposition of the Ministerial Association to "Sunday movies," Middletown appears content in the

of pursuing radio-based education rather than education in general (presumably with books), one response was "that it is easier to promote serious listening than to promote reading beyond the scope it has attained so far."<sup>22</sup> The hope was that by merely listening to the radio people could become educated.

One reason it was thought that radio could bring the country to higher educational and cultural levels was because radio had a power unlike any other medium to reach directly into the home and expose people to new educational and cultural sources. In *Advertising the American Dream*, Roland Marchand writes that "[r]adio was the most tantalizing, yet most perplexing, new medium ever to confront advertisers. No other medium had offered such potential for intimacy with the audience."<sup>23</sup> But advertisers were not alone in their belief that radio could be turned to their advantage. Educators thought that radio could be used to teach, and liberals tried to use radio to increase political participation. Radio could also reach Americans for whom educational opportunities had been previously out of reach.<sup>24</sup>

Another reason for hope in the reforming power of radio was the cultural origins of the radio sets themselves, which "gradually spread from the wealthier classes to the less affluent, thus suggesting an initial elite audience," for quality broadcasts.[Marchand, 1985, pp.89] Broadcasters and sponsors reinforced these attitudes towards radio by stressing that radio was a theater, a college, a newspaper and a library.[Marchand, 1985, p.90]<sup>25</sup> Marchand believes that radio adopted this educa-

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main to take the movies at their face value - "a darned good show" - and largely disregard their educational or habit-forming aspects." [Lynd and Lynd, 1929, p.269]

<sup>22</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. *Radio and the printed page: an introduction to the study of radio and its role in the communication of ideas*. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1940. p.120. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1940].

<sup>23</sup>Roland Marchand. *Advertising the American dream: making way for modernity, 1920-1940*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985. p.88. Hereafter referred to as [Marchand, 1985].

<sup>24</sup>Americans with limited educational opportunities included people who lived in the country, on farms, away from urban centers of learning and society. But it also included people who did not have convenient access to good libraries or local universities with adult education programs.

<sup>25</sup>*Saturday Evening Post*, Jan. 26, 1924, p.61. See also *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept. 8, 1923,

tional veneer, because of early radio's tendency to broadcast classical music, "with all its calming, enlightening, and culturally uplifting qualities." [Marchand, 1985, p.90]

It only took a few years for the popular attitude towards radio to change from cultural uplift to easy-listening pastime.<sup>26</sup> Instead of acting in what educators believed would be the "public good,"<sup>27</sup> radio broadcasters operated their stations to make profits and broadcast popular, revenue-generating entertainment programs, often to the exclusion of educational ones.<sup>28</sup> Spokesmen for the public in magazines and newspapers, were further incensed with the appearance of radio commercials, which the spokesmen considered annoying. [Marchand, 1985, p.106]

The potential for radio to become a malevolent political force, especially in a democracy, overshadowed its possible educational uses. If radio could be used to influence the way people voted, then it might be possible for a relatively small number of people, using radio, to seize power or at least significantly alter the course of American politics. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, many observers believed that it might be desirable to implement controls in the broadcasting industry to prevent such a scenario from materializing. Lazarsfeld echoed this concern in 1941:

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p.83. On the high expectations of Americans in the early 1920 for radio as an agent of education and cultural uplift, see Clayton R. Koppes, "The Social Destiny of the Radio: Hope and Disillusionment in the 1920s," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 68 (1969): 364-68.

<sup>26</sup>Some observers of British radio broadcasts maintain that the British Broadcasting Company's "Third Program," devoted to quality programming, affairs of state, discussions of parliamentary debate and programs of similar content, did approach the goal of what early educators had wished for radio in the United States. British radio was non-commercial.

<sup>27</sup>Although the public interest language of the 1934 FCC establishing act was not discussed in the initial Rockefeller Foundation grant creating the office of radio research, Lazarsfeld's research was later justified as usable by those wishing to force Broadcasters to produce and air educational programs. See page 44 of this thesis.

<sup>28</sup>If not a wireless classroom, radio in the 1930s did become a wireless newspaper of sorts. Although newspaper and periodical circulation fell in the depression, probably due to the cost associated with purchasing the physical article, radio listenership rose remarkably. The cost of radio sets fell dramatically between 1925 and 1940 and radio news was (at least apparently) free, once the receiver was paid for. [Lynd and Lynd, 1937, p.386] The rapid success of radio news explains why much of the early radio research was aimed at discovering if radio news reports were replacing newspapers as principle sources for news.

"We study the past in order to master the future. Nothing is more urgent for us at this moment than to reconcile the tremendous economic and technical centralization of contemporary society with our beliefs in individual freedom and dignity. We know that conditions cannot remain as they were during the laissez-faire period before the first World War. At the same time we are horrified at the violent solutions which some European countries have attempted. We feel that public opinion can be as dangerous when it is set against any social change as when it is too subservient to authoritarian forms of control. Thus we look at radio and its effects upon public opinion as a possible means of steering safely between these two dangers. Has it made, or can it make, us more amenable to social change without making us thoughtless and intolerant victims of propaganda stereotypes?" [Lazarsfeld, 1942, p.66]

The rise of the National Socialist Party in Germany was accompanied by a barrage of propaganda announcements in the German media. Many observers in the United States mistakenly believed that Hitler had used the media to help gain power,<sup>29</sup> and translated this belief into a general principle that radio was politically powerful for those who knew how to handle it. People were anxious to learn how to permit free speech on radio while at the same time preventing its use as a propagandistic tool which might aid in the overthrow of the government.

In the United States, the Lynds provided the social science community with a smaller scale example of the political power that radio had in Middletown:

"The 1936 election witnessed perhaps the strongest effort in [Middletown's] history by the local big businessmen (industrialists and bankers) to stampede local opinion in behalf of a single presidential candidate. These men own Middletown's jobs and they largely own Middletown's press; and they made use of both sources of pressure—though not to the point of excluding summaries of President Roosevelt's speeches from the later [sic].<sup>30</sup> The one important channel of communication which they could not control was the national radio networks,

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<sup>29</sup>The news media were actually among the later institutions for Hitler to gain control of, but this fact was not generally made issue of in the pre-war years in the United States. [Lazarsfeld, 1942] Most Americans who expressed the fears described in this paragraph thought that the German example might be repeated in the United States, and they wished to prevent it.

<sup>30</sup>That is, the newspapers were not controlled to the point that they were forced to refrain from printing summaries of Roosevelt's speeches. Nevertheless, the power of a political speech is considerably reduced when it is only presented in summary form.

which brought "the other side" before local voters, notably in President Roosevelt's own speeches." [Lynd and Lynd, 1937, p.360-361]

Almost echoing the Lynd's findings, one of the stated purposes of the Rockefeller radio research grant was to determine "what relationship exists between listening to speeches and going to political meetings,"<sup>31</sup> and in general determine the effects of radio broadcasts of political speeches.<sup>32</sup> However, the political uses of radio were largely overlooked by the Office of Radio Research before the start of the Second World War.

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<sup>31</sup>Community of 10,000 in rural setting wanted for study of broadcasting effects with emphasis on response of listening groups. *The New York Times*, II 5:3, January 16, 1938. . Hereafter referred to as [Times, 1938].

<sup>32</sup>This echoing is not entirely surprising considering the influence which the Robert Lynd enjoyed with the Rockefeller Foundation's Program in the Humanities at the time.

## Chapter 4

# Radio research to promote educational broadcasting

*"When I was a high school boy, I saved my allowance for many months to buy a trinket for a girl. She loved it—and in order to display her new possession, she immediately went out with another boy. Can you understand that some of the social innovators feel the way I did at the time of this incident? They have fought for several generations to give people three more hours of free time each day. Now that their old battle is won, they find that people spend this time listening to your radio programs. The intelligent reformer does not begrudge them the fun, nor you the audience. But he hopes that now you in turn will make your contribution to the further development of our standard of living.*

*"It has been said that radio, like all other modern media of mass communications, play a triple role today: As a craft, as a business, and as a social force. Your critics admire your craftsmanship; they are sure that you are good businessmen. When they think of radio as a social force, they keep their fingers crossed."*

—Paul F. Lazarsfeld at the 1946 convention of the  
National Association of Broadcasters.<sup>1</sup>

According to Dr. Harold W. Dodd, president of Princeton University, the

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<sup>1</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Patricia L. Kendall. *Radio Listening in America*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1948. Report on a survey conducted by The National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago; Clyde Hart, director. p.85. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948].

purpose of the Radio Research Project was "to analyze the current techniques for gathering information about the part played by radio in the life of the listener; to devise, if possible, new methods to enable the research worker to delve more deeply into the basic motivational forces in radio listening, and to study the effects of radio on the listener."<sup>2</sup> The study was aimed primarily at the effects of radio on the listener because other studies at the time were studying radio's educational possibilities.[Times, 1938] Nevertheless, by learning why people listened to one type of program versus another, the researchers hoped to be able to make educational programs more attractive and therefore increase the educational possibilities of radio.<sup>3</sup>

Dodd's stress on the project's methodological concerns is significant: in order to be able to apply the social science and get reliable answers, it was necessary to have reliable data, which presupposed the existence of reliable, repeatable and understandable methods for data collection. Because of radio's newness, no such methodologies existed. Therefore, developing methodologies to study radio was of primary importance to the program. In addition to methodological development, the Office of Radio Research became a clearinghouse of the publication of communication research and a center for the reanalysis for data collected by other agencies.

Originally, the Princeton Radio Project's initial emphasis was to be experimentation and the acquisition of primary data.[Times, 1938] The researchers quickly learned, however, that their funds were too limited to collect as much primary data as they wished and subsequently changed their focus to the reanalysis of data acquired from other sources, such as the Columbia Broadcasting System and the Gallup organization. Like any academic program seeking professional recognition,

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<sup>2</sup>Plans radio survey: Princeton gets \$67,000 fund to make wide study. *The New York Times*, October 20, 1937. . Hereafter referred to as [Times, 1937].

<sup>3</sup>The researchers held the belief that there were a particular set of components which made a program successful. A *Times* reporter wrote that "in seeking seeking to ferret out the basic ingredients of the successful radio program, the research directors hope to aid in the better planning and execution of non-commercial and educational broadcasting." [Times, 1938]

the group began to publish papers and reports and published its first book, *Radio and the Printed Page*, in 1940.

In *Radio and the Printed Page*, Lazarsfeld introduced the concept of "serious radio listening," and asked the question "To what extent has radio increased, or can radio increase, the scope of serious responses beyond the scope so far achieved by print?" [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.5]

Serious listening, as defined by Lazarsfeld, was similar to a phenomenon he called serious reading: "Such reading involves going to the root of things, becoming a 'richer' person, being able to see the world more fully than other, less well-read people." [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.3] Lazarsfeld's unstated argument was that radio could only become a significant educational force if those who are listening to it are engaged in "serious listening," listening to "serious programs." Any other combination (such as people seriously listening to non-serious programs, or people listening to serious programs but without any seriousness on their part), would presumably lessen radio's educational impact.

Lazarsfeld defined a serious radio program as one which fell within one of the following groups of programming:<sup>4</sup>

- "A. *Public Affairs*: This group included both forum-type programs, such as "America's Town Meeting of the Air" and "People's Platform," and individual talks on politics, economics, and other matters of current interest.
- "B. *General Knowledge*: This category included talks on science, art, philosophy, and the like, and certain literary and professional club programs.
- "C. *Straight Education*: This group included only programs which were intended to be of a purely instructive nature, such as the "American

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<sup>4</sup>Lazarsfeld did not define news broadcasts as serious programs. Because of their perceived importance, news broadcasts were studied separately in the volume. Although this was perhaps a methodological convince, classifying news programs (which made up a significant amount of "serious" listener time) as "nonserious," combined with the implicit purpose of the research (increasing the amount of serious programming), limited the number of ways in which the research could yield positive, practical results.

School of the Air." This distinction between this group and others is very arbitrary, since most of the programs studied are of a more or less "educational" nature.

"D. *Dramatized True Events*: These are programs of an historical and descriptive nature. They included such well-known programs as "Americans All—Immigrants All" and the Smithsonian Institute's program, "The World Is Yours." It is a mixed group as far as subject matter is concerned, but is unified by the common technique of presentation.

"E. *Semi-serious Programs*: This is a miscellaneous group of programs of a semi-popular nature, variously entitled "Timely Topics," "The Fact Finder," "Don't You Believe It," etc., which titles are somewhat self-explanatory." [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.30]

Given the existence of some serious program, *Radio and the Printed Page* begins to explore what kinds of programs (both serious and non-serious) attract what kinds of listeners.

*Radio and the Printed Page* conveys the impression that the research has been conducted with the express purpose at attempting to discover how to persuade more people of all classes to listen to serious radio programming, first by improving the quality and appeal of serious programming and second by convincing broadcasters that there already exists a demand for such broadcasts.

The bulk of *Radio and the Printed Page* is devoted to the presentation of various factual statistics about radio listeners. Many of the statistics presented within *Radio and the Printed Page* detail what kinds of people like to listen to what kinds of radio programs; correlations of preferences with gender, age, urbanization, telephone ownership and economic class; effects of amount of radio listening on reading and vice versa. One of the most striking findings of the volume is that the amount of serious listening an individual engages in is proportional to that individual's socio-economic class and inversely proportional to the amount of time that the individual spends listening to radio. That is, members of the higher social classes listened to less radio, and the programs that they did listen to were generally more serious. Significantly, Lazarsfeld chose to see these conclusions as reflecting

the current limited state of serious programming available, rather than as indicative of an overwhelming non-serious trait in the lower socio-economic class American radio listener. If such a trait were inherent in the nature of radio and the American audience, the clear implications of this finding would be that radio could not be used as a tool to promote broad spectrum education, since educational radio programs would only increase the educational differential between high and low class listeners. Lazarsfeld, the eternal optimist, never stated this possibility in his conclusions.

Instead, Lazarsfeld believed that a statistical summary of listener responses could eventually produce educational programs which were as interesting as purely entertainment-oriented programs. For example, consider the second chapter's examination of what the authors felt was a surprisingly popular kind of radio program—the quiz show. Lazarsfeld explained that “The program ‘Professor Quiz’ was analyzed because it is a type of highly successful quiz broadcast regarded by many of the radio public as ‘educational.’” [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.64] The quiz program had many of the elements of a successful program which the researchers hoped to use in educational programming. “‘Professor Quiz’ has a very large audience, and, in a general way, one can easily account for his success. Such programs have a multiple appeal: different aspects of them appeal to different people.” [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.64] The only thing which the researchers thought “Professor Quiz” lacked was an educational element.

The researchers found that the appeal of “Professor Quiz” included elements of competition, apparent education, self-rating, and the sporting appeal. [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.66] Listeners of the program enjoyed competing with their friends with the actual contestants on the program. When listeners were able to answer questions successfully, they felt pleased, as they had demonstrated their knowledge both to themselves and to their family. When listeners were unable to answer questions, they minimized their failure by stating something like “After all, I didn’t go on the air,” [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.74] to make excuse for their lack of

knowledge. Listening to Professor Quiz was therefore a low-risk, high-payoff social activity.

"Professor Quiz" was the kind of popular program which the Princeton Radio Research Program was designed to make educational (without causing it to lose its popularity), first by learning how to change the program's content or format, then by convincing broadcasters that such a change was in their best interests. The irony is that listeners of the program already considered "Professor Quiz" to be an educational program, while researchers at the Office of Radio Research thought that the program was not educational at all:

"[The favorite aspect of the program which] is mentioned by all but one person, and is stressed by the majority as most important [about Professor Quiz], is 'education.' Of 20 people, only 15 said that the contest adds to their enjoyment, and all 20 said they considered the program educational. The educational element even enters into the enjoyment of the competition: listeners enjoy the competition as a means of expressing their resentment against the educated.<sup>5</sup> But obviously formal education cannot be obtained through answers to the quiz. What, then, do people mean when they say they like the program because of its 'educational value?'" [Lazarsfeld, 1940, pp.74-75]

Lazarsfeld concluded that it was precisely because the information required to answer the quiz show's questions—trivia—could not be integrated into a formal educational curriculum that listeners enjoyed the program. Formally educated listeners did no better than their friends and relatives, making the relatively little educated (who composed the majority of the audience) feel better about themselves and their low educational level. But Lazarsfeld did not follow his argument to its logical conclusion: If the program were truly educational, it would not be popular. The research cannot accomplish its stated goal due to the nature of radio and the American radio listener. Catch-22.

Serial radio dramas (soap operas) were another class of program that the

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<sup>5</sup>That is, uneducated listeners did often do as well as educated listeners.

researchers classified as strictly entertaining, but which listeners, mostly housewives, thought were educational.[Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.52] Listeners believed that the programs taught one how to deal with the problems of life by showing how other people react in morally difficult situations. Mothers praised programs with morals that taught children the proper way to act.<sup>6</sup>

*Radio and the Printed Page* spends a remarkably small amount of space on the serial drama, especially considering these programs made up the overwhelming majority of material people were listening too.<sup>7</sup> This reflects partly a prejudice of intellectuals of the time who looked down upon serial dramas and partly the haste in which the volume was produced.<sup>8</sup> Lazarsfeld's reaction to the strong listenership of quiz programs and serial dramas was to wish that these very formats can be used to educate people:

If the people on the lower cultural levels do not want to listen to serious broadcasts, why should we try to inveigle them into doing so? If they prefer to get education of a sort from listening to "Professor Quiz" rather than to a round-table discussion, why shouldn't they? This is not the place to enter into detailed discussion of such questions. But one thing is sure. If young people feel that they can learn something by listening. to "Gangbusters," if adults like to follow "psychological" programs, no intelligent educator will merely frown upon them and let it go at that. Teachers should exploit these programs, so far as possible, in their classroom work. Psychologists should endeavor to raise program standards,

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<sup>6</sup>One mother quoted in the volume made this revealing comment:

"Aunt Jennie's stories are good for children. There was the story about the feller who killed a man and let his brother take the blame for it. When it came to the trial he broke down and confessed. *I want my child to hear that—it teaches it to tell the truth and that it is better to do it right away*"[Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.52][Emphasis in original]

<sup>7</sup>A table in the volume reports that serial dramas enjoyed more than a five to one listening advantage over other radio programs.[Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.50] The scarcity of analysis of radio serial programs was corrected by a paper published by the research program two years later, Helen J. Kaufman, "The Appeal of Specific Daytime Serials," in *Radio Research 1942-1943*. (See Helen J. Kaufman. The appeal of specific daytime serials. In *Radio research 1942-1943*, Deull, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1944. , hereafter referred to as [Kaufman, 1944].)

<sup>8</sup>See description of the production of *Radio and the Printed Page* on page 76 in the Appendix.

because if they do not the opportunity afforded by these broadcasts for the education of large audiences will be missed. [Lazarsfeld, 1940, p.94]

Rather than merely arguing that the educational level of all programs be raised, Lazarsfeld pinpointed several techniques learned from non-serious commercial programs which could be applied to serious programs. In particular, he advocates a technique called "audience building:" a variety of techniques which broadcasters can use to assure that their programs will have a greater chance of being listened too. Lazarsfeld points to some programs—such as "Town Meeting Hall"—which already used audience building techniques to increase listenership.<sup>9</sup>

The term of the initial Rockefeller was from Fall 1937 to Fall 1939. At the end of that time, Lazarsfeld applied for the grant to be continued for an additional three years (that is, until Fall 1942). In the grant extension application, Lazarsfeld summarized the first two years of the program<sup>10</sup> and proposed a number of projects

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<sup>9</sup>As an example of audience building, the producers of "Town Meeting Hall" provided a pamphlet describing the cast of characters, their backgrounds, and the topics of discussion of the weekly program by mail order. The researchers found that reading the pamphlet before listening to the program improved the quality of the experience of listening to "Town Meeting Hall."

This technique of audience building is still in use today. In the early 1980s, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) produced a series of the plays of William Shakespear for television. At the same time, the network produced and distributed to high schools printed material about the plays to boost viewership among high school students.

<sup>10</sup>In the grant application to the Rockefeller Foundation, Lazarsfeld wrote:

"The first two years of the Radio Research Project have been frankly experimental, aimed at exploring various aspect of possible research in the field of radio as a medium of social communication. This body of knowledge has charted the field. From this point on it is planned to focus the work on the study of the conditions necessary to make socially significant programs more effective.

"The work to date has demonstrated the weak pulling power of such programs. There is no foundation, for instance, for the vague optimistic hope that radio, as operating at present, will solve the problem of levelling up socially needed information among those not accustomed to getting such information through reading and other channels.

"Two central factors are involved in the present weakness of these serious, informative radio programs:

"(1) The element of self-selection in listening disclosed in the first two years of the Radio Research Project, e.g. the tendency to listen only to those things one is "for" in advance. This imposes a crucial handicap at present upon the central purpose of serious broadcasting to *change* habits of thought and actions, rather

which the program will pursue if the funding is continued. These proposals included preparing a number of short, specific, practical bulletins, of how to make programming more attractive; a proposal to complete a book already started on popular music broadcasting; and a proposal to test the effect of governmental radio broadcasts. Lastly, the group had planned the "utilization of research in the constructing of a model broadcast in a single test area of serious program broadcasting, experimenting in audience building, and [producing] a model program." [Lazarsfeld, 1939] The model program was never produced, however, probably due to the entrance of the United States in the Second World War.<sup>11</sup>

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than simply to confirm existing ones.

- "(2) And the failure of current serious broadcasting to meet the challenge of rival successful commercial programs by learning from the latter and adapting for its purpose adequate skills as to format and level of psychological appeal. One can dismiss outright the tricks that hold and build audiences for meretricious, pseudo-educational programs like "Professor Quiz." Or one can study these and learn why *homo Americanus* responds to them." [Lazarsfeld, 1939, pp.1-3]

<sup>11</sup>The Second World War represented a research and financial opportunity to Lazarsfeld and the Bureau of Applied Social Research (which the office of Radio Research was formally incorporated into in 1941). During World War II, the Office of Radio Research was contracted by the Office of War Information to study propaganda and its impacts.

"The war made it technically very difficult to continue the Radio Research series which was begun in 1941. At the same time, it was responsible for expanding greatly the area in which communication research has become important..."

"Contrary to some fears expressed at the outset of the war, the present emergency has not arrested research. Rather, it has highlighted its importance and strengthened demands for its continued development." (See Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Frank N. Stanton, editors. *Radio research 1942-1943*. Deull, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1944. p.v, hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld and Stanton, 1944].)

World War Two marks the beginning of Lazarsfeld's involvement with the the Department of Defenses in the contracting of sociological research projects. This involvement continued, primarily with the Office of Naval Research, until Lazarsfeld's death.

One of the major technical methodological innovations of this period was the development of the Program Analyzer, [Lazarsfeld and Stanton, 1944] a polygraph like machine which records a listener's reactions to a radio broadcast on a strip of paper. Ten listeners are recorded at a time, each with a separate pen. Each listener is given two buttons, one to push when the program is interesting, one to push when the program is decidedly not interesting. A transcript of the radio program is printed across the top of the paper, allowing the researchers to correlate specific dialogue in the radio broadcast with listener pleasure or displeasure. The Program Analyzer was applied to such radio programming features as introductions, sound effects, news flashes, commercial announcements, music broadcasts, and, for purpose of comparison, two educational films. The Program Analyzer

In 1941, after Lazarsfeld had been studying the effects of radio for three years, a conference was held at University of Chicago in part to determine if the government should take over radio to improve its educational possibilities and limit its political ones. The papers at the conference were submitted before the United States entered into the Second World War. At the time Lazarsfeld wrote that he thought radio should remain commercial, "not because it is particularly good, but because no definite proof has been offered that government ownership would be better." [Lazarsfeld, 1942, p.77] But he believed that independent regional councils, regulated by law, should be established to assure that quality programs were broadcast to exploit the educational possibilities of radio, and that these programs appear at regular times and build audiences. [Lazarsfeld, 1942, p.77]

After his initial survey into the field of radio research, Lazarsfeld was fearful of radio's political possibilities. He didn't believe that radio could affect massive changes on public opinion and therefore on the political process, but he believed that it could affect significant, critical decisions.<sup>12</sup> "There are exceptions [to the rule that radio is a conservative force] and there which do not invalidate the statement. The exceptions may, however, affect the course of civilization. Presidents in this country are often elected by a 1 or 2 per cent margin of the popular vote. A general finding about radio's effects may very well have just this small margin of uncertainty

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is still used by Columbia Broadcasting to this day (See Leorah Ross. Personal communication. October, 1986. , hereafter referred to as [Ross, 1986].)

<sup>12</sup>Lazarsfeld saw radio, especially in the United States with the largest concentration of radio stations in the world, largely a conservative influence. [Lazarsfeld, 1942, p.67] This is largely because it derives its funds from advertising. To attract large audiences, radio can't range too far in ideology far from what the listener already accepts and is willing to listen too. It is too easy for a listener to find another station. He believed that the conservativeness of radio was a result of actions by both the broadcasters and by the listeners. Radio programs Lazarsfeld studied tended to reinforce the attitudes of their intended audiences. For example, he wrote, soap operas tended to reinforce middle class values, while foreign language broadcasts in the United States reinforced nostalgia for the homeland of the broadcast. Secondly, listeners tended to listen to programs which they already had a background to understand. For example, a study of a radio show celebrating the various virtues of many different ethnicities that had emigrated to the United States, designed to promote harmony between the communities, found that each community only listened to the segment featuring itself. [Lazarsfeld, 1942, pp.67-68]

which would upset the predicted outcome of an election and the role which radio would play in it.[Lazarsfeld, 1942, p.72]"

Lazarsfeld's last major radio research effort was *Radio Listening in America*, published in 1948 with Patricia Kendall. *Radio Listening in America* is a compilation and analysis of statistics compiled from a survey performed by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago of 3529 radio listeners.[Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.115]<sup>13</sup>

The 1948 volume is filled with interesting statistics about radio's audience. The book describes what kinds of radio listeners exist, distinguishing between "fans," "moderate consumers" and "abstainers" of programming. Like *Radio and the Printed Page*, *Radio Listening in America* correlates radio listening with socio-economic standing, gender, interests, profession and preference to other forms of media. The study finds that individuals who tend to be participate in one form of mass entertainment (such as book reading) are more prone to engage in other forms of mass entertainment (such as movie going).[Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.8]<sup>14</sup>

In one correlation it was found that the average number of favorite program types increased with both education level and with the amount of evening listening,[Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.20] whereas another correlation discovered that amount of listening is inversely proportional to education level. That is,

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<sup>13</sup>*Radio Listening in America* was a follow up to Lazarsfeld's 1945 research project *The People Look At Radio* (See Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Harry Field. *The people look at radio*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1947. , hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld and Field, 1947].) and was subtitled "the people look at radio again." to emphasize this continuity. The 1948 study asked many of the same questions of the 1945 study so that trends could be observed.

<sup>14</sup>In breaking down the survey sample into subcategories, Lazarsfeld and Kendall choose *education level* as his measure of socio-economic class (rather than income level or telephone ownership, for example). Defending this, they wrote:

"It makes little difference which particular index is used to classify people into social layers. Any one of the four or five reasonably good measures yields about the same results in a survey on radio listening. For a number of reasons we shall use education as our index in the following discussion." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.24]

Thus, most of the statistics presented in the volume are cross tabulated by education level.

both educated people and heavy listeners tended to have more favorite programs than their counterparts, but the educated spent less time overall listening to their favorite programs. These conclusions are similar to the conclusions stated in *Radio and the Printed Page*, but this similarity is never made.

*Radio Listening in America* continues the trend started in *Radio and the Printed Page* of trying to figure out how to promote "serious listening," (although this volume does not dwell on what serious listening is.) Like the 1940 volume, the 1948 publication also found that educated people listen to serious programs more than non-educated people: "serious music and discussion of public issues are selected as favorites twice as frequently in the college group as in the grade school group.[Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.25]" The book continues:

"In other words, the program types which reveal most marked differences in taste are those which have come to symbolize radio's cultural or educational mission. They are favorites of the highly educated listeners, but they hold relatively little appeal for listeners on the lower strata. This fact creates a dilemma for the broadcaster." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.25]

Broadcasters faced a dilemma because the terms of their broadcasting licenses bound them to broadcast material which was in the public interest, which many presumed to mean "educational," yet serious and educational programming was not as lucrative.

"In order to make his business a success, he needs large audiences, and, for obvious reasons, these are drawn mainly from less educated groups. He therefore feels that he cannot broadcast too many programs which have only limited appeal for uneducated listeners. But in satisfying one section of his audience, the broadcaster antagonizes another." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.26]

By 1948, radio had clearly failed as a powerful educational medium in America. *Radio Listening in America* acknowledges this failure and suggests that the

responsibility might lie with broadcasters, rather than with listeners. Broadcasters, the authors write, might not have made the same effort to build up audiences for educational programs as they have to build audiences for their entertainment programs. The authors speculate that "if there were a larger number of serious programs, and if these were carefully written and conveniently scheduled, they, too, might find a more receptive audience. Increased supply might be followed by increased interest." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.36] In other words, Lazarsfeld and Kendall were asking broadcasters to take a chance on serious educational programming, rather than the non-serious programming which had firmly taken hold by 1948.<sup>15</sup>

The conclusion of *Radio Listening in America* is that the 1947 level of consumption of radio educational programming is not an indication of demand.<sup>16</sup> It was up to broadcasters to change demand into consumption. One way to do this, the authors postulate, is to keep the volume of educational broadcasts slight above what the audiences want, [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.42] to accustom people to higher and higher levels of serious programming. This is the same conclusion as

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<sup>15</sup>Quiz programs continued to make up a significant listenership for people in the "middle educational strata" (those with high school but not college education), and these people continued to think that quiz programs were somehow educational. *Radio Listening in America* reiterated *Radio and the Printed Page's* contention that quiz programs are not educational, [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.25] for reasons similar to those previous stated.

<sup>16</sup>This paradox is made most apparent in the discussion of female listeners. "The average American woman, just like the average American youth, is not interested in current affairs. This fact has been discovered in so many areas of behavior that we are not surprised to find it reflected also in program preferences. [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.27]" state the authors. They find that, besides the obvious female domination of listenership to the daytime serials, women were also more inclined to listening in the evening to nonserial dramatic programs, quiz shows, and semiclassical music (which is differentiated from "serious music" throughout the study.) [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.27] Yet the study found that there is no sex difference in demands for "serious programs." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.41] Although women consumed far less serious programs than men, they had an equal demand, the authors reported.

Lazarsfeld and Kendall propose little in the way of explanation as to why women are "not interested in current affairs," although a number of possibilities come to mind, such as the traditional systematic exclusion of women from "current affairs" or the targeting of specific, time-consuming tasks (or radio programs) at women so as to leave little time for other pursuits. Alternatively, survey error may be responsible for the finding, in that the study may not have measured interest in "current affairs" but instead measured interest in "current male affairs."

*Radio and the Printed Page*. Nothing has changed in ten years of radio research.

## 4.1 Conclusions and uses

At the end of the ten years of radio research, Lazarsfeld's radio research project was no closer to bringing about a fundamental change in the character of radio broadcasting than it was at the beginning. Although radio had not strictly failed as either a medium of education or in its ability to motivate people politically, what little it appeared to be capable of doing was far less than had been expected of it in the late 30s.

Writing in *Radio Listening in America*, the Lazarsfeld and Kendall report:

“At the time when radio was first developing as a mass medium there was great hope that it would usher in an era of adult education. People who were deprived of educational opportunities in their youth, those who had never acquired too much skill in reading, could now learn just by listening to educational program. But this hope was never realized. Learning from radio required more motivation and more mental training than had been anticipated.” [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.41]

By 1948, Lazarsfeld no longer held a firm belief or fear of radio's political possibilities, at least he no longer comments on the prospect of radio's control of democracy as he did in 1941. One possible explanation for this change in attitude is that Lazarsfeld carefully watched, between 1937 and 1948, as radio failed to live up to people's expectations of its political power. Perhaps people were more sophisticated in listening to radio than the researchers in the early 1940s thought people in general were. Alternatively, perhaps radio's power simply was not there: the necessity to present issues “fairly” and the checks and balances afforded by other radio stations and the print media overriding the possibilities of radio to be used for political purposes.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>In *Radio Listening in America*, the authors write that Americans trusted radio to provide a “fair”

In addition to Lazarsfeld's opinions of radio change between 1937-1948, so did American attitudes towards it in general. Radio was no longer the potentially powerful tool of mass education and political upheaval. "Even [radio's] most controversial feature—advertising—is accepted by the majority of American people." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.113] Americans were also less concerned with the political possibilities of radio. In the concluding chapter of *Radio Listening in America*, the authors write that "When the present study was first being discussed, we knew that the Federal Communications Commission would soon start hearing to determine whether radio stations should be permitted to editorialize as newspapers do. It would be interesting to know what listeners thought about this matter." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.81] What the study learns is that, on questions of quantity of advertising, portraying both sides of public issues (e.g. "fairness"), quantity of educational programs and accuracy in news broadcasts, people felt that radio should either be regulated by nobody or by the industry itself. [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.89] It was unnecessary to regulate radio more closely:

"These findings have practical implications as well as psychological interest. It seems unlikely at the present time that there will be a strong popular movement for further control of radio; but the situation might change and such a movement become more probable if listeners are not satisfied on those issues with which they are particularly concerned." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, pp.103-104]

The authors didn't feel that such a movement to control radio was likely. If developments in the ability to use radio for malevolent causes did arise, the public will be informed of them by reports published in the newspapers. [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.112] The authors write that "The

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portrayal of the news. 79% of the sample said that radio stations are generally fair in giving both sides of public questions. When asked the same questions about newspapers, only 55% responded that they thought the newspapers were fair. (The 1945 numbers were 81% and 39% respectively.) [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.54] If radio was providing fair, unbiased coverage of news events, then it could not be shaping the reporting of events to influence people's opinions.

American public does consider radio an important field and that, furthermore, it looks to the press to give news about the field. In the long run newspapers will find it to their advantage to provide better information about radio, for it will improve their circulation and will make their news coverage more complete." [Lazarsfeld and Kendall, 1948, p.112] The two complementary news media would be a check on each other.

In the internal reports and histories which have been published about the Rockefeller Foundation, Lazarsfeld's work was praised only in that it formed an important picture of the impact of radio on American society. The expectations which were raised for the work were not realized, but the authors of these reports and histories do not seem genuinely concerned. The possibility of using the research to effect a change in the educational level of radio is largely overlooked:

When these studies were undertaken, little or nothing was known of the radio audience and the nature of radio listening beyond studies made for advertisers, primarily interested in reaching an audience likely to buy products advertised. In the published work growing out of these studies at Princeton and Columbia (*Radio and the Printed Page, Radio Research, 1941, and Radio Research, 1942 and 1943,*) there is now available a detailed and accurate portrait of the American listening public - who listens, to what they listen, and how they are affected by their listening. [Stevens, 1948, p.33]

This internal report continues to cite the methodological contributions of the program, which it sees as the most important. The Rockefeller Foundation accepted Lazarsfeld's work as primarily a success in terms of methodological developments, overlooking its failure to engender the political changes:

"These studies are deficient, as Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, who directed them, would be the first to acknowledge, in that they could hardly search out unexploited potentialities: they were, of necessity, limited to listening of existing programs. But they developed new methods of inquiry which are available and readily applicable to testing responses to untried programs, notably in the device known as the Program Analyzer." [Stevens, 1948, p.33]

Inasmuch as Lazarsfeld's work did have political impacts, they were the impacts of people outside the Office of Radio Research using the documents written by the project to legitimize demands that broadcasters provide more serious programming:

"The essential facts about the radio listener, as an individual with tastes and preferences, rather than simply as a buyer of advertised products, are now available. It is still possible for the broadcaster to think primarily of the effects he wishes to achieve in broadcasting, but he cannot totally disregard the available facts, particularly on those occasions when he is reminded of the responsibilities for public service imposed by the terms of his license." [Stevens, 1948, p.34]

Raymond Fosdick, a former chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation, wrote in his book the *Story of the Rockefeller Foundation* that one of the purpose of the Rockefeller grants was to create a center of media research which would compile and maintain profiles of radio listeners:

"The research by the [Princeton and Columbia projects] not only gave a detailed and accurate portrait of the query applicable to forecasting and testing the response of untried programs; and the reports which grew out of the studies have been widely used in the radio industry. Dr. Lazarsfeld's office was increasingly consulted as a source of expert and impartial advice.[Fosdick, 1952, pp.246-247]

In the production of statistics usable by the radio industry, the Office of Radio research performed admirably. However, in so far as Lazarsfeld became a media expert, his answer was frequently that more research needed to be performed before substantive questions could be answered.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>The need to conduct further studies to answer substantive questions is common in the field of sociology, often because of the limited scope of previous studies. For example, In April 1953, Lazarsfeld testified before the Senate Juvenile Delinquency sub-committee. The senators wanted to know if crime and violence portrayed on television was tending to turn youngsters to juvenile delinquency. All Lazarsfeld could tell the Senators was how little was known about the effects of television on children. (See Milton Berliner. The insight into TV programming is dim. *Washington Daily News*, April 8, 1953. , hereafter referred to as [Berliner, 1953].) Lazarsfeld additionally

However, in evaluating the results of the Office of Radio Research, Fosdick does not address the hopes to change radio which he raises when describing the beginning of the Radio Research Project. This last step was never realized by the project.

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attempted to impress upon the Senators that the research he had conducted did not allow one to make value judgments about the field which he studied. For example, when Lazarsfeld was asked what his opinion was on beer advertising, he replied "If someone is a teetotaler, the effect is bad. If you are a beer drinker, it is good. If you are an artist, some of the effects are amusing if they are good and stupid if they are bad." [Berliner, 1953] Lazarsfeld didn't want to touch the political questions.

## Chapter 5

# The Teacher Apprehension Study: 1955-1957

"In the Spring of 1954 Robert M. Hutchins, in a popular magazine, expressed the opinion that the spirit of the teaching profession was being crushed. A few months later the Fund for the Republic commissioned the present study. Russel Kirk and other conservatives voiced skepticism: How could one expect that a study financed by the Fund would do anything but confirm its president's conviction? In the liberal camp Sidney Hook felt that Hutchins' statement was exaggerated. Characteristically, no one raised the question of what the statement meant and by what devices it could be proved or disproved."<sup>1</sup>

—*The Academic Mind*, p. 72

*The Academic Mind* is the one-volume report of the Bureau of Applied Social Research's two year "Teacher Apprehension Study." The report consists of 265 pages of statistics summarizing an in-depth survey which was administered at 165 colleges and universities across the United States. Interspersed with the statistics are quotations from the professors who were interviewed, intended to convey a sense of the threats which these professors saw facing their academic freedoms during the

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<sup>1</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Jr. Wagner Thielens. *The academic mind: social scientists in a time of crisis*. Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1958. with a field report by David Riesman. p.72. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958].

McCarthy period.<sup>2</sup> Lazarsfeld's and Wagner Thielens, Jr.'s<sup>3</sup> work is followed by a hundred page report of a study conducted by David Riesman which analyzed the Teacher Apprehension Study itself, by reinterviewing a hundred of the participants and all of the interviewers.<sup>4</sup>

*The Academic Mind* was funded by the Fund for the Republic, a philanthropic foundation created by the Ford Foundation in 1951 to protect "democratic freedoms." This chapter explores the Fund's motivations for funding *The Academic Mind* and the report which was published.

*The Academic Mind* stands in direct contrast to Lazarsfeld's earlier radio research for a variety of reasons. First, the funding agencies—The Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic—were two very different kinds of philanthropic agencies at the time they contracted the research. While the Rockefeller Foundation was given most of its money during the life of John D. Rockefeller to promote the well being of mankind, the Ford Foundation received the bulk

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<sup>2</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. Letter about *The Academic Mind*. 1957. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. . Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1957].

<sup>3</sup>Thielens was a student of Lazarsfeld's at the Bureau of Applied Social Research. The practice of authoring a research monograph by a faculty member and a student or sometimes by a student alone was quite common. (See Charles Y. Glock. Organizational innovation for social science research and training. In Robert K. Merton, James S. Coleman, and Peter H. Rossi, editors, *Qualitative and quantitative social research: papers in honor of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, chapter 5, The Free Press, a division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1979. p.29, hereafter referred to as [Glock, 1979].)

<sup>4</sup>On a humorous note, one of the reviewers of the *The Academic Mind* wrote:

"An unusual feature of the study is the inclusion of a hundred-page report by David Riesman, who interviewed some of the interviewers and reinterviewed some of the teachers in order to discover their reactions to the original interview. Thus we have not merely the novelty of social scientists for a change studying themselves, but also the intriguing spectacle of another social scientist studying social scientists studying themselves. Someone may now aspire to write a Ph.D. thesis based on reinterviews of the social scientists reinterviewed by Professor Riesman to get their reactions to his interviews." (See D. H. Wrong. McCarthy and the professors. *Reporter*, 19:33-6, December 11, 1958. p.33, hereafter referred to as [Wrong, 1958].)

Thirty years later, it is probably too difficult a task to find the social scientists reinterviewed by Professor Riesman. Nevertheless, Wrong seems to have anticipated this SB thesis, which is based in part on a reanalysis of the returned surveys, by twenty nine years.

of its endowment at Ford's death in order to perpetuate the Ford estate. Second, while the Rockefeller Foundation stayed clear of social science research (with the exception of one incident in 1914) until 1928, and then only pursued research which it thought was non-controversial, the Fund for the Republic began its philanthropic history by funding controversial social science research programs: indeed, funding controversial social science research programs was one of the purpose of the Fund's creation. Third, while Lazarsfeld's radio research was intended to produce a knowledge which could be used to control radio broadcasters—or at least to stimulate educational programming—the Teacher Apprehension Study appears to have been intended solely to produce a political manifesto detailing McCarthyism's impact on academia. The fact that both of these projects enjoyed similar failures and a possible effect of that outcome on Lazarsfeld's intellectual development will be explored in the conclusion of this thesis.

## 5.1 The Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic

Although Henry Ford established the Ford Foundation in 1936 "to advance human welfare," he did not give it sufficient funds to pursue this goal to any great extent. Between 1936 and 1948, the Foundation never dispensed more than a million dollars in any given year due to financial limitations. During that time, grants were primarily given to the hospital which Henry Ford had established several years earlier.<sup>5</sup>

It was Henry Ford's wish never to sell a majority interest in the Ford Motor company to anyone outside of the Ford family. At the time of his death, the estates of Henry and Edsel Ford held ninety percent of the outstanding shares of the Ford Motor Company. Ford's will transferred these shares to the Ford Foundation to

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<sup>5</sup>F. Emerson Andrews. *Philanthropic foundations*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1956. p.27. Hereafter referred to as [Andrews, 1956].

avoid their taxation.<sup>6</sup> In 1949, the previously humble Ford Foundation suddenly found itself the richest foundation in the history of the world.<sup>7</sup> With the final settlement of the estate of Henry Ford and Edsel Ford, the Ford Foundation was able "to expand its programs aimed at the advancement of human welfare."<sup>8</sup> In anticipation of this money, The Ford Foundation formed a study committee, chaired by H. Rowan Gaither,<sup>9</sup> to determine how such a vast sum of money could best be spent.

Rather than compiling a list of projects worthy of funding, the Committee published a manifesto describing the motivations and the goals of the Foundation in pursuing the business of philanthropy. Unlike the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation was committed to a highly charged political existence from the beginning. The Trustees saw their mission as to promote political groups and ideas towards which they were favorably inclined. One such idea was human "political welfare," which meant the strengthening and extending democratic governments and traditions around the world.

The Study Committee believed that "the most important problem confronting the world today is to avoid world war—without sacrifice of our values or principles—and to press steadily toward the achievement of an enduring peace." [Ford, 1949, p.25] Yet at the same time, the Committee wrote, Communism had to be fought, both at home and abroad, since Communism was a threat to "political welfare." Nevertheless, the Committee felt that "National conduct based solely upon fear of communism, upon reaction to totalitarian tactics, or upon the immediate exigencies of avoiding war, is defensive and negative." [Ford, 1949, p.21]

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<sup>6</sup>Waldemar A. Nielsen. *The big foundations*. Columbia University Press, 1972. A Twentieth Century Fund study. p.79. Hereafter referred to as [Nielsen, 1972].

<sup>7</sup>The value of this stock rose over the following ten years from several million dollars to nearly two billion dollars as the corporate worth of the Ford Motor Company increased during that time.

<sup>8</sup>The Ford Foundation. *Report of the study for the Ford Foundation on policy and program*. The Ford Foundation, Detroit, Michigan, November 1949. p.17. Hereafter referred to as [Ford, 1949].

<sup>9</sup>An attorney from San Francisco, Chairman of The Rand Corporation and formerly assistant director of the MIT Radiation Laboratory.[Ford, 1949, p.138]

In other words:

“Subversive activities cannot be condoned in the name of freedom; the nation must be protected from dangers within. But democracy will be imperiled if we stamp out dissent and measure loyalty by conformity. The problem is to rid ourselves of treason without jeopardizing freedom.” [Ford, 1949, p.28]

Democracy needed to be not only defended from the Communist Threat, but also from those within the United States who used The Threat to gain personal power. The committee wished to sponsor a program that encouraged “the elimination of restrictions on freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression in the United States, and the development of policies and procedures best adapted to protect these rights in the face of persistent international tension.” [Ford, 1949, p.62] Social Science could be used to find ways in which the new policies towards national security were limiting democratic freedoms:

“What seem to be required are objective, comprehensive inquiries and analyses—nongovernmental and nonpartisan in character—to draw more reliable conclusions and propose more constructive recommendations. *An independently sponsored survey might be the first step to a broader public understanding of these issues and their implications.* Without such analysis and understanding there is a great danger that we may unintentionally compromise basic aspects of democracy.” [Ford, 1949, p.66] [Emphasis added]

In January 1951 Robert M. Hutchins<sup>10</sup> and W. H. Ferry<sup>11</sup> approached Paul Hoffman, who was then the chairman of the Ford Foundation, to consider establishing a “national commission to protect democratic principles in an era of international conflicts.”<sup>12</sup> In August 1951 Hutchins again advanced the idea in a

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<sup>10</sup>Robert M. Hutchins (1899–). His friends saw him as an abrasive idealist and activist, committed to human freedoms and civil rights of all kinds. He served as an ambulance driver on the Italian front in the First World War. Prior to his involvement with The Ford Foundation, he was dean of the Yale Law School and president of the University of Chicago.

<sup>11</sup>The Ford Foundation’s Public relation’s counselor

<sup>12</sup>Frank K. Kelly. *Court of reason: Robert Hutchins and the Fund For the Republic*. The Free Press, A division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1981. p.18. Hereafter referred to as [Kelly, 1981].

two-page memorandum entitled "A Fund for Democratic Freedoms." Hutchins was worried that the anti-communist crusade in the United States was having adverse impacts on people's civil liberties. Inasmuch as Hoffman and the Ford Foundation had already become a favorite target of the anti-communist crusaders, Hoffman had a direct taste of the threats to personal freedoms which the self-proclaimed patriots represented.[Nielsen, 1972, p.82]

The Fund for the Republic, as the organization was eventually named, was created to combat the rising tide of McCarthyism that was sweeping the United States in the early 1950s. The Fund was intended to act as an independent organization from the Ford Foundation: essentially the Foundation would give the Fund a substantial block grant and then "turn [it] loose and let [it] do the job." [Kelly, 1981, p.18, quoting Henry Ford II]

Creating a separate fund to protect "democratic freedoms," rather than seeking to fund them directly from the Ford Foundation, did not represent a radical departure from the previous work style of the Foundation. Between 1950 and 1960, the Ford Foundation created several independent philanthropic organizations, of which the Fund for the Republic was the least well funded and the most outspoken in its activities. In addition to the Fund for the Republic, the Ford Foundation created the Fund for the Advancement of Education in 1951 with grants totaling \$71.5 million, the Fund for Adult Education (1951, \$47.4 million), the East European Fund (1951, \$3.8 million), the Council on Library Resources (1956, \$31.5 million), and the Educational Facilities Laboratories (1958, \$28.8 million).<sup>13</sup> The idea that the Ford Foundation should delegate its task of promoting human welfare with spin-off organizations was Hutchins'. [Nielsen, 1972, p.81] The motives for creating new organizations, rather than funding the research directly from the Ford Foundation, included:

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<sup>13</sup>Richard Magat. *The Ford Foundation at work: philanthropic choices, methods, and styles*. Plenum Press, New York, 1979. p.49. Hereafter referred to as [Magat, 1979].

- “A desire to keep the Foundation itself out of the “retailing” business;
- “A hope that, especially in politically sensitive fields, a free-standing institution would have trustees who would be more authoritative sponsors of its work than our own could be;
- “A belief that a single-purpose foundation might better attract the specialized staff and leadership to carry out its mission than would a multipurpose one.” [Magat, 1979, p.49]

Hutchins additionally was motivated to create separate, autonomous organizations to allow the work to continue in the event that the leadership of the Ford Foundation changed its agenda. In fact, as attacks on the Ford Motor Company and the Ford Foundation grew as a result of the Fund's actions, this is precisely what happened.

The idea of the Fund was approved by the trustees “in principle” in November 1951 but funding was delayed until after the presidential election of November 1952 due to “public relations considerations.” [Nielsen, 1972, p.84] In December 1952, the Fund was created with an initial grant of \$200,000. [Kelly, 1981, p.19] In February 1953, bowing to the rising public outcry for their actions, the trustees of the Ford Foundation forced Paul Hoffman to resign from the Foundation's presidency. [Nielsen, 1972, p.83] Nevertheless, Hutchins managed to convince the Trustees to give an additional \$15 million dollars to begin the Fund for the Republic's work in earnest.<sup>14</sup>

After the Fund's first chairman<sup>15</sup> resigned to run for a political office in New Jersey, Hutchins assumed control. “The Ford trustees were stunned to learn that

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<sup>14</sup>Actually, the Ford Foundation granted the Fund \$2.8 million with a promise of the remaining \$12.2 million when it received its tax exempt certificate. Although the Fund's tax exempt certificate was constantly in question during the early years of its operation, the additional funds were eventually transferred.

<sup>15</sup>The Fund's first chairman, Clifford Case, “a senior Republican congressman from New Jersey with a reputation as a moderate liberal,” [Nielsen, 1972, p.84] was chosen to deflect some of the criticism surrounding the fund.

the fund board, then headed by Paul Hoffman, had proceeded, without consulting them, to name Hutchins as [the next chairman.]” [Nielsen, 1972, p.85]<sup>16</sup>

With Hutchins at the helm, the Fund immediately began to combat what he believed the current were threats to basic American freedoms, especially those that were emanating from official channels. The list of issues included “blacklisting in the movies and in broadcasting; government secrecy provisions; immigration laws; equal voting privileges for minorities; released time for religious activities in the public schools; freedom of expression for teachers; discrimination in restaurants and transportation facilities.” [Kelly, 1981, p.16]

The Fund’s primary mode of operation was to fund sociological studies designed to demonstrate the damage which McCarthyism was causing.<sup>17</sup> Such a study became a political document which could be used in a variety of ways. Studies could be used by anti-McCarthy politicians in legislative debates to bolster their positions. Studies could be used for background in editorials and articles in newspapers and magazines. In general, studies could legitimize and defend an anti-McCarthy position and form a factual basis for attack. Studies could also convince people that

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<sup>16</sup>Although Gaither, newly-appointed as the chairman chairman of the Ford Foundation, continued to lend support to the Fund for the Advancement of Education and the Fund for Adult Education, the Fund for the Republic did not receive any additional funding. [Nielsen, 1972, p.85] Indeed, Gaither tried to to dissociate the Ford Foundation as far as possible from the Fund for the Republic. In 1955 the Ford Foundation turned its attention to other matters besides McCarthyism, partly because the “red scare” was fading away, [Nielsen, 1972, p.86] partly because of the congressional attacks the Foundation had suffered as a result of the initial grant to the Fund for the Republic. [Nielsen, 1972, p.353]

In 1979, Richard Magat of the Ford Foundation noted that the Experience with the Fund for the Republic had a chilling impact on the Ford Foundation’s willingness to engage in controversial social science. This impact was similar in effect to the impact of the Ludlow Massacre social science research project on the Rockefeller Foundation:

“We have come a long way in our willingness to confront public-policy issues directly. We were wary for most of the 1950s, after our few forays into policy areas (e.g., the Fund for the Republic’s work on civil liberties) provoked an intense reaction in Congress. For several years thereafter, our programmatic attention to government policy was largely oblique.” [Magat, 1979, p.83]

<sup>17</sup>The Fund also published a number of pamphlets with catchy titles such as “The Fifth Amendment Today.”

McCarthyism was a destructive influence on the country.

## 5.2 The study's findings

Lazarsfeld had been involved with the Ford Foundation and the Fund for the Republic prior to the commissioning of the Fund for the Republic's Teacher Apprehension Study.<sup>18</sup> In 1954 Lazarsfeld helped oversee a small, preliminary survey for the Fund aimed at estimating the impacts of Communism and McCarthyism on American so-

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<sup>18</sup>In March 1952 Lazarsfeld was one of 11 participants at a conference designed to "explore ways of improving the training at the post-doctorate level of scholars and scientists working on problems of human behavior." His effort helped refine the development of the Ford Foundation's "Program Area Five" effort in the behavioral sciences, (See The Ford Foundation Behavioral Sciences Program. Proposed plan for the Development of the Behavioral Sciences Program. November 1951. Confidential and Preliminary Draft. , hereafter referred to as [Ford, 1951].) and the establishment of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, (See The Ford Foundation Behavioral Sciences Program. Program: Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. February 13, 1954. Memorandum. , hereafter referred to as [Ford, 1954].) although the center was eventually organized to facilitate advanced study and research by already established scholars rather than for training. [Glock, 1979, p.31] In a memorandum to the President of the University of Rochester, Lazarsfeld reflected on these experiences, writing "I have had, over the years, various contacts with the [Ford] Foundation, many very rewarding and a few disappointing." [Ford, 1954]

A press release from The Fund For the Republic dated February 26, 1953 declared:

"One of the first activities to be undertaken by the Fund is a thorough study into the many difficult concepts and problems which are encountered in the field of civil liberties. We see a pressing need for a clear statement in contemporary terms of the legacy of American liberty. We propose to help restore respectability to individual freedom.

"The major factor affecting civil liberties today, in our opinion, is the menace of communism and communist influence in this country. Coupled with this threat is the grave danger to civil liberties in methods that may be used to meet the threat. We propose to undertake research into the extent and nature of the internal communist menace and its effect on our community and institutions. We hope to arrive at a realistic understanding of effective procedures for dealing with it." (See The Fund for the Republic. Press release. February 26, 1953. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [Fund, 1953].)

Lazarsfeld conducted this survey with Samuel A. Stouffer of the Harvard University Laboratory of Social Relations, during the summer of 1954. For his effort, Lazarsfeld was paid "an honorarium" of one thousand dollars. (See Samuel A. Stouffer. Letter to Paul F. Lazarsfeld. April 17, 1954. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [Stouffer, 1954b].) (See Samuel A. Stouffer. Letter to Paul F. Lazarsfeld. March 23, 1954. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [Stouffer, 1954a].)

ciety at large.<sup>19</sup> The Teacher Apprehension Study was a larger scale effort, in 1955 to provide additional ammunition against the forces of McCarthyism in academia. At the time, the Fund for the Republic announced that it was funding a study to "assess the degree of fear among teachers in such areas as the handling of controversial subjects in the classroom," and related matters.[Andrews, 1956, p.281]<sup>20</sup>The Teacher Apprehension Study was similar in intent to the Fund for the Republic's notorious study of blacklisting in Hollywood report<sup>21</sup> (published a few years earlier): both intended to show disruptive effects that blacklisting and "careful scrutinization for signs of disloyalty"[Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.v] were having in American society.

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<sup>19</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. Memorandum to: Dr. Allen Wallis, President, University of Rochester, subject: Ford Foundation Survey. 1954(?). undated. . Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1954].

<sup>20</sup>While the Apprehension in Academia study was in progress, a BASR internal memorandum (probably written by Lazarsfeld) explored this basic premise of the study:

"When the study was commissioned, it was taken for granted that

"(a) the teaching of controversial issues is very important,

"(b) that the difficult years have reduced this,

"(c) that this is probably a major harm which the study would bring out.

"thus two simple questions on this point were asked (See, below, Questions 15 and 16), and no great difficulties were anticipated. However, already in the planning stages I was wondering why discussion of controversial issues was considered so important.

"Mills assumed that discussion leads to truth, for which there is little evidence. Others think of discussion as a kind of release of tension and, therefore, a way to keep society from breaking up. Some educators think of discussion as a way to getting students interested in major social issues. Others think of it more as an intellectual and civic enterprise. Thorndike wrote that learning how to discuss controversial issues is an important aspect of education, and he gave some advise on how to teach this." (See BASR Teacher Apprehension Study. Notes on the questions regarding education philosophy in the teacher apprehension study. 1956. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [BASR, 1956b].)

However, the memorandum leaves the basic question of why it is important to teach controversial issues in the classroom unanswered.

<sup>21</sup>The Fund's report on blacklisting in Hollywood was designed to show the American people what ill effects McCarthyism and blacklisting were having in the motion picture industry. The report was criticized on the grounds that the Fund For the Republic had given hundreds of thousands of tax-free dollars to communist sympathizing social scientists to demonstrate the problems that communist sympathizing actors were justly having.

The Teacher Apprehension Study was a very large endeavor. The survey sample was selected from a group of 182 colleges chosen at random. The presidents of each of these schools were sent a letter stating the purpose and sponsor of the study, and requested permission to interview professors at their colleges. Eventually, 165 schools gave permission.<sup>22</sup> Depending on the size of the school, some or all of the social scientists listed in the catalogue were interviewed. The interviews took place in April and May 1955 by trained interviewers from two nationally known interviewing agencies (NORC and Elmo Roper). 2,451 social scientists<sup>23</sup> were interviewed. The survey was quite long: most interviews took between two and five hours to conduct; the copy of the survey printed as an appendix in *The Academic Mind* is 26 pages long.

But by the time *The Academic Mind* was ready to be published in 1958, both Senator McCarthy and McCarthyism were dead.<sup>24</sup> Instead of being used as ammunition against attacks on the academic freedom of professors, the document became a historical study of the attacks and the feelings of the professors at the time—a record for future historians and future civil rights activists.<sup>25</sup>

As if to justify the cost and the timing of the study, the authors wrote

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<sup>22</sup>In his study of the survey, David Riesman learned that "most refusals seemed based on fear, and hence proved inferential evidence on issues of academic freedom." (See David Riesman. Ethical and practical dilemmas of fieldwork in academic settings. In Robert K. Merton, James S. Coleman, and Peter H. Rossi, editors, *Qualitative and quantitative social research: papers in honor of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, chapter 16, The Free Press, a division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1979. p.214, hereafter referred to as [Riesman, 1979].) Of course, the schools which refused could not make up part of the Teacher Apprehension Study survey sample.

<sup>23</sup>Lazarsfeld and Thielens used the term "social scientist" broadly and included historians, economists, sociologists, political scientists, geographers, social psychologists, anthropologists, and several other minor interests. [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.4] Social scientists were chosen because it was believed that they would come into contact more often with controversial subject matter than other academics, such as chemists or geologists.

<sup>24</sup>Senator Joseph Raymond McCarthy died in 1957.

<sup>25</sup>Indeed, in a 1956 internal BASR memorandum, one of the project directors (probably Lazarsfeld) noted that "most people interviewed have perceived the threat as having passed, (although interestingly some of the people doing the interviewing—people who read *The new Republic*, *Nation*, and such, may not have.) (See BASR Apprehension in Academia Project. Internal memorandum. September 1956. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [BASR, 1956a].)

in the preface of the importance of conducting a study to record for future historians "the immediate reactions, attitudes, feelings, and expectations of the people involved." [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.v] The study's conclusion could only be appreciated after the incident had past. "No one can yet be sure how the episodes of these years will affect American education in the long run," [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, pp.v-vi] they elaborated. Lazarsfeld and Thielens also stressed the value of the study as the first in-depth cross-sectional study of social scientists using the newly developed survey techniques.

*The Academic Mind* was published in 1958, duly reviewed<sup>26</sup> and then largely forgotten. The authors had produced an academic historical report, not the political document which Hutchins had wanted but no longer needed.<sup>27</sup>

*The Academic Mind* presented two classes of findings: statistical and anecdotal. Throughout the book, the anecdotal findings are used to lend support and give meaning to the statistical ones. For example, the survey asked the question "If a student had told you about some political indiscretion in his youth, but you are now convinced of his loyalty, and if the F.B.I. came to you to check on that student, would you report this incident to the F.B.I.?" [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958,

<sup>26</sup> *The Reader's Guide* lists six book reviews of *The Academic Mind*. The majority were sharply critical and generally unfavorable:

| Journal                             | Reviewer            | Reviewer's opinion |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Saturday Review 41:19-20 N 29 '58   | L. M. Hacker        | favorable          |
| Senior Scholastic 41:19-20 N 29 '58 |                     |                    |
| Harper 217:88-9+ D'58               | P. Pickrel          | unfavorable        |
| Reporter 19:33-6 D 11 '58           | D. H. Wrong         | unfavorable        |
| New Republic 139:18-19 D 29 '58     | D. Meyer            | unfavorable        |
| Commentary 27:179-82 F'59           | Ernest Van Den Haag | unfavorable        |

<sup>27</sup> Different views of Riesman's report highlight the differing agendas of Hutchins and the authors. The authors thought that Riesman's report was important, since it shed light on how the survey was conducted, but Hutchins was unimpressed with the inclusion, and wrote to Lazarsfeld: "Although the Riesman material is not of interest to the Fund, I know that it will greatly enlighten your fellow hippopotamuses." (See Robert M. Hutchins. Letter to Paul F. Lazarsfeld. November 18, 1957. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [Hutchins, 1957].)

p.209][Emphasis in Original] "The distribution of the answers reflect the dilemma of respondents," report the authors, "46 per cent said they would reluctantly give the information; 35 per cent would equally reluctantly withhold it, and the remaining 19 per cent refused to attempt a choice." [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.209] Yet after this statistic is reported, the authors felt compelled to back it up with the following anecdote:

"Oh boy! My first feeling is that I *wouldn't* like to report the incident to the F.B.I. All of us as we grow up and all during our lives have the right to be wrong. I voted for Wallace in '48, but I was wrong. I am glad now he didn't get in, but I would hate to think I couldn't be wrong. If a student during his student days was a member of some left-wing or right-wing political organization, and later on dropped out of that organization in the present climate of fear, I wouldn't like to report that knowledge to the F.B.I. But if the F.B.I. came to me and asked me point-blank, I would tell the truth because I respect the job the F.B.I. has to do in order to safeguard our country." [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.209]

The purely statistical findings of the study also come in two classes: The first class are descriptive, factual variables—statistics which were determined by relatively straightforward questions. These findings include such items as school size, religious/secular orientation, salaries, productivity, and reports on what social scientists believe non-academics feel of as the social worth of university professors. A significant amount of the volume is taken by the the presentation and cross-correlations of these statistics, with associated graphs and discussion.

The second class of statistical findings are correlations between variables not easily measured, such as "caution," "worry," and "liberalness." The respondents' ranking on these scales was determined by their answers to several batteries of questions, which drew their answers from hypothetical situations or past experience. Responses were then added for a quantified rating.<sup>28</sup> For example, one of the

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<sup>28</sup>One of the problems with the study pointed out by several reviewers is that the "permissiveness index" measured only how far to the left of the political spectrum the professors were, rather than how broad a range they would tolerate. That is, a Communist who would only tolerate speakers on

six questions which measured "worry" asked "Have you ever wondered that some political opinion you've expressed might affect your job security or promotion at this college?" [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.76]<sup>29</sup> One of the five questions which measured "caution" asked "Do you occasionally go out of your way to make statements or tell anecdotes in order to bring home the point directly or indirectly that you have no extreme leftist or rightist leanings?" [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.78]<sup>30</sup>

The correlation between "worry" and "caution" is particularly important to this study, since the Fund For the Republic contracted the project under the assumption that both worry and apprehension had increased during the McCarthy years. Surprisingly, the interpretation of the "worry" and "caution" statistical findings of the survey was a point of conflict between the authors and the reviewers of the volume. Lazarsfeld and Thielens thought that their data strengthened Hutchins' argument, while the reviewers felt that the data published with the report refuted the statement. Perhaps even more surprisingly, Lazarsfeld changed his interpretation of the data in later years to reflect that of his reviewers, rather than that of the Fund for the Republic.

The authors defined "Worry" as how concerned the professors were that they might be attacked for being a Communist or a Communist sympathizer. "Caution" was the amount which the professors actually changed their curricula, cut back on their magazine subscriptions, or refrained from speaking out on public issues. In a section entitled "The Interrelation between worry and caution—the apprehension index" [Lazarsfeld and Thielens, 1958, p.80] the authors presented the following table:

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campus that were of a decidedly radical orientation would be rated by the survey as "permissive," whereas the opposite was actually the case.

<sup>29</sup>27 per cent answered this question in the affirmative, 72 per cent answered this question in the negative, and one percent reported that they had never encountered this situation.

<sup>30</sup>Again, 27 per cent answered this question "yes," 71 per cent answered this question "no."

Our Respondents Cross-Classified According to the Number of  
Caution and Worry Items They Answered Affirmatively

| Number of<br>Caution items | Number of Worry Items |       | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
|                            | 0,1                   | 2-6   |       |
| 0, 1                       | 1,184                 | 719   | 1,903 |
| 2-5                        | 125                   | 423   | 548   |
| Total                      | 1,309                 | 1,142 | 2,451 |

There are two ways to interpret this statistical finding. Lazarsfeld and Thielens wrote that the finding meant that teachers who were not strongly worried did not take cautionary action (as they had no reason to be cautious), while of those who worried, some took cautionary action while others did not.

But an alternative interpretation of this table, made by four of the six reviewers, is that professors were (for the most part) not cautious, even when they were worried about the possibilities of being accused of un-American activities. One reviewer wrote "The study's major finding, it seems to me, is somewhat muffled and understressed by the authors: it is that those who worried most about their vulnerability to attack were overwhelmingly disinclined to translate their concern into cautious, "conformist" *behavior*. Thus the study would seem clearly to refute the assertion in 1954 by Robert M. Hutchins, then president of the Fund for the Republic, that "the spirit of the academic profession" was being crushed by McCarthyism..."<sup>31</sup>

The problem with either of these interpretations is that there is no simple way to determine if 423 out of 2451 professors being both "cautious" and "worried" is a lot. Surely the number "423" is statistically significant in a way that "10" is not, but is "423" out of 2451 "a lot?" On one hand, 17% of the survey sample was scared and changed their practices, but on the other hand 83% didn't. Lazarsfeld and Thielens thought that it was important for minority voices in their survey to be heard, but they do not indicate at what level a response is considered "insignificant"

<sup>31</sup>D. H. Wrong. *McCarthy and the professors. Reporter*, 19:33-6, December 11, 1958. p.34. Hereafter referred to as [Wrong, 1958].

rather than merely "minority." The answer to this question is the sort of thing that the statistical approach taken by *The Academic Mind* cannot speak to, since it is an answer which has more to do with conceptions of academic freedom and society than it has to do with "apprehension batteries" and statistical interpretations. But instead of questioning the value of *The Academic Mind* on this basis, the reviewers attacked or defended it on the basis of the statistical presentation and the factual record which the report provides.

One reviewer concluded that the principle finding of *The Academic Mind* is that the difficult years "exacted a toll in "patterns of caution" widespread among teachers, but did not demoralize them."<sup>32</sup> Although the study failed to satisfy the desires of the Fund for the Republic, he wrote, he was pleased by the detailed picture of professional academic social scientists the study provided. But he faulted the study in not telling if the danger which McCarthyism posed to professors was the result of deep-seated problems within the American academic community:

"The book does strongly imply what many academic men felt at the time, that professors were badly prepared, not only legally and organizationally but psychologically, to defend—and even define—their aims and rights. Are they better prepared today? Did they simply survive, or did they emerge from their ordeal full of strategic wisdom? We learn what they felt; what did they learn?" [Meyer, 1958]

The timing of *The Academic Mind* gave it a more critical reception. Most of the reviewers cite the McCarthy period from the years 1948–1955; The Teacher Apprehension Study was conducted during 1955, the results published in 1958. The reviewers were thus forced to see the book as a historical work of research rather than a treatise addressing a current problem. Many could not see justification of the expense of such a massive historical study.

The sole favorable review of *The Academic Mind* was written by Louis M. Hacker. Hacker began by describing the "difficult years" as the time "when

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<sup>32</sup>D. Meyer. Teachers in the McCarthy era. *New Republic*, 139:18–19, December 29, 1958. p.18. Hereafter referred to as [Meyer, 1958].

McCarthyism was terrorizing the country,"<sup>33</sup> conveying his own anti-McCarthy basis. Hacker applauded the service the author's had performed for the nation, and complained only that the study falls short in that it does not prescribe how future "witch hunts" might be averted. But Hacker, a prominent social scientist in his own right, did not praise *The Academic Mind* on the basis of its statistical sophistry. Instead, he stressed the study's finding of the sheer magnitude of McCarthyism's impact on academia. "The statistical record [alone] is disquieting," [Hacker, 1958, p.19] writes Hacker, not citing measures of "worry" and "caution," but instead reporting Lazarsfeld's finding that out of 165 schools surveyed there were 990 incidents of administrative action reported, 188 which led to dismissals, 44 to forced resignations, 118 to withheld promotions, and 99 to other actions of discipline. He continues:

"Within the classroom, teachers qualified, equivocated, and compromised their work and personal integrity; outside, they withdrew from the public at large, eschewing political participation and public appearances, giving up subscriptions to magazines and memberships in organizations that were looked upon as in a way nonconformist." [Hacker, 1958, p.20]

The significance of Hacker's observation is that he was most pleased not on an analysis of "statistical record," but of the anecdotal reports which the study contains. The implicit observation that statistical findings, even highly detailed statistical findings, are not sufficient to give an accurate, detailed picture of the lives and fears of these professors lives during the "difficult years" is one of the most understated yet methodologically important findings of *The Academic Mind*. It remains largely unaddressed except in Lazarsfeld's personal correspondence. [Lazarsfeld, 1957]

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<sup>33</sup>Louis M. Hacker. Review of *The Academic Mind*. *The Saturday Review*, 41:19-20, November 29, 1958. p.19. Hereafter referred to as [Hacker, 1958].

### 5.3 Looking back from the 70s

By the early seventies, Lazarsfeld had changed his opinion of the meaning of the “worry”–“caution” correlation of the Teacher Apprehension Study. The truly remarkable finding of *The Academic Mind* was that professors stood up as much as they did. In a 1971 staff meeting, Lazarsfeld commented this was the key finding of the study:

“...This study on the academic mind, while it was a lot of statistics, essentially the problem was there: How come that so many professors were courageous? You see, it was very paradoxical—the professors turned out to be great heroes. Well, it turned out that the reason they were great heroes was because they were scared of each other. The danger of McCarthy was rather remote—you had a one out of a thousand probability to be caught by McCarthy, but you had a certainty that everyone would look at you with a fishy eye the next morning if you didn’t sign a protest. So, the professors were heroes.”<sup>34</sup>

In 1973, before a group of AT&T executives, he elaborated:

“I myself did [a study] during the McCarthy period in the fifties to find out how College professors responded to the Senator’s attacks on their colleagues. We were surprised to learn that the professors were fairly courageous. Usually professors as individuals are not likely to be heroes—that is not an essential qualification for the profession. Why were they so ready to take a stand? The answer became quite clear. They were more afraid of their colleagues than they were of McCarthy. The probability of being singled out by McCarthy as a Communist was relatively small, though it could, of course, cost a university job. But criticisms from a group of other professors were immediate, and few wanted to risk the danger of refusing to sign a petition or take part in a protest against McCarthy.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Alice Nolen. Transcript of smoker-conflict study, meeting with staff and consultants, 6:00 to 6:45 pm, Columbia University Men’s Faculty Club. October 18, 1971. Presentation by Paul F. Lazarsfeld with comments by David Dunn and Stanley Schacter. p.8. Hereafter referred to as [Nolen, 1971].

<sup>35</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. The use of social science in business management. In *Views from the socially sensitive seventies*, American Telephone and Telegraph Co., New York, 1973. Seminars presented to the supplemental training programs of AT&T. p.3. Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1973].

Forceful statements such as these are suspiciously missing from the 1958 publication. Their omission could only be for one of four reasons: Either they did not occur to the authors, they occurred to the authors but were omitted because Lazarsfeld and Thielens thought that the findings were important enough, they were not included because it was thought that such statements might detract from the political impact of the book, or they were left out so as not to anger the funding agency (or Robert Hutchins, Lazarsfeld's friend).

The possibility that in 1958 Lazarsfeld and Thielens didn't see a major conclusion of their book that was subsequently pointed out by a majority of the book's reviewers seems highly unlikely, although if this was the case it speaks strongly to the process of peer review which brought the finding to light in the late 1950s. Equally unlikely is the possibility that Lazarsfeld didn't think the conclusion was worth comment on, especially since Lazarsfeld's only mention of *The Academic Mind* in the above cited references is to relate this conclusion. The finding that professors stood up for their academic freedoms for fear that if they didn't their fellow academics would express displeasure is surely one of the major findings of *The Academic Mind*, as Lazarsfeld clearly acknowledges in the 1971 and 1973 references. Almost certainly, Lazarsfeld and Thielens did not emphasize this conclusion because they thought that it would detract from what impact the book had left in 1958 and because they did not wish to anger Robert Hutchins.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

*"There is a quaintly modern notion that information will eventually equal knowledge, which is neatly balanced by the cliché that the more one learns, the less one knows. Both ideas are probably more or less accurate, but neither is particularly useful in dealing with the human animal."*

—James Crumley<sup>1</sup>

This thesis has explored two large research projects undertaken by the Office of Radio Research and the Bureau of Applied Social Research between 1937 and 1958. Although the two projects were quite different, they shared a number of similar features:

- Although one motivation for the initial funding of the Office of Radio Research was to examine the possible political uses of radio, the kind of research that Lazarsfeld supervised had little if any direct applicability to this purpose.

In 1936, President Roosevelt's "fireside chats," broadcast live over national radio, proved to be politically powerful tools for maintaining his popularity

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<sup>1</sup>James Crumley. *The wrong case*. Vintage Contemporaries, New York, 1986. p.226. Hereafter referred to as [Crumley, 1986].

with the people. Similarly, president Nixon in 1972 and President Reagan for the tenure of his presidency both used radio in a very successful style. All three of these men must of grasped at some very intuitive level that radio is a powerful tool for speaking directly into the nations minds. Especially after the development of the transistor, radio is pervasive in American society: the garage mechanic listens to it, the hairdresser listen to it, the commuters listen to it when they drive to work. Radio has far many more listeners than even television does. Sometimes these people even vote. But these Presidents didn't need Lazarsfeld's style of sociological survey research to learn how to use radio effectively; indeed, the research effort wasn't directed to that purpose.

- **Neither the Radio Research Project nor the Apprehension in Academia study accomplished the goals desired by the funding agencies.**

In the case of the Radio Research Project, the Office of Radio Research never produced the desired results: educational radio programs which were as popular as the entertainment programs which dominated the airwaves in the 30s and 40s. In both 1939 and 1954, Lazarsfeld wrote that the research project was just two or three years away from having significant impact on the industry, yet these impacts were never realized.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>In the 1950s, in reflecting on the funding of radio research, Lazarsfeld still thought that just a little more research would give a substantial payoff:

"It is a policy of all foundations to support a field for awhile but then to withdraw support under the assumption that worthwhile causes will find support from elsewhere. I do not want to question the general validity of this policy, but I want to suggest one possible amendment. I think it would be the right idea to return from time to time to such a field and to see whether it does not need a new "shot-in-the-arm." Specifically, I have in mind a the whole complex of mass communications and public opinion. While studies in this area were generously supported before and after the last war, most foundations have shied away from it within the last 15 years. And yet, new ideas have come up, and another five years or so of active support seems very desirable." [Lazarsfeld, 1954, p.3]

In the case of the Teacher Apprehension Study, the publication of *The Academic Mind* came years too late for the volume to have any impact whatsoever on McCarthyism, since the red scare had been dead for at least two years.

- **Both of the studied projects left behind a solid, factual, historical record for future academics to build upon.**

The studies on radio in the late 30s and the 40s provided valuable insight into the development and spread of radio and its use by the allied and axis powers during the Second World War. *The Academic Mind* is a valuable repository of information about both professors in the 1950s and their fears of the McCarthyites. The original surveys of the Teacher Apprehension Study are still on file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University and can be reanalyzed for additional insight on that era. The historical record left by Lazarsfeld's projects is not only complete, it is massive.

- **Both of these projects provided ample opportunity for the training of graduate students, which was one of Lazarsfeld's primary objectives throughout his career.**

Lazarsfeld was always concerned with the training of students. In his endeavors in New York, Columbia and with the Ford Foundation he always made the allocation of funds for training a top priority. References to the desirability of incorporating training programs into research organizations litter his writings and personal correspondence. Lazarsfeld's students were more than simply coders or data collectors: "Indeed, once they had learned the basics, they came to fill the role of project director with Lazarsfeld, Merton, and other faculty and staff serving as consultants." [Glock, 1979, p.29]

Lazarsfeld learned personally what three generations of social scientists learned collectively: sociological research findings have little force in the political world. Lazarsfeld's research findings didn't go very far towards helping solve

the problems for which the studies were contracted: Today, as in 1937, radio is used almost solely for entertainment, and the fervor of McCarthyism died while the survey data for *The Academic Mind* was being processed. The value—lasting and otherwise—of these two studies was their methodological contributions and the historical record which they form.

After the conclusion of these projects, Lazarsfeld repeatedly tried in the late 1960s to formulate a theory of how sociology contributes to the formation of policy, with little success.<sup>3</sup> During that time, Lazarsfeld gradually adopted a belief that the importance of sociology was to collect data and continue controversy, rather than having it be applied to solving political problems.<sup>4</sup>

The ultimate value of the research projects explored in this thesis is their

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<sup>3</sup>Ann K. Pasanella. The evolution of a thesis. In Robert K. Merton, James S. Coleman, and Peter H. Rossi, editors, *Qualitative and quantitative social research: papers in honor of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, chapter 6, The Free Press, a division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1979. p.42. Hereafter referred to as [Pasanella, 1979].

<sup>4</sup>In 1971 Lazarsfeld supervised a project at the BASR investigating the reactions of American's to the contradictory media influences for and against smoking. The study was funded by the Phillip Morris Company and generated a small amount of tension within the BASR itself, as Lazarsfeld was a smoker and Alan S. Meyer, the Project Director, was not.

At a group meeting, Lazarsfeld emphasized his position that the purpose of the research project was not to find answers but to preserve the data:

Take 1995. Two things can happen by 1995. Either the government succeeded in eradicating smoking in this country, or the government gave up. There are two possibilities. Either everyone will keep up smoking like before, or no one will smoke. If a historian in 1995 now wants to decide why it happened.... the only source that you have is our study which shows the process in the making. So we are in the perfect situation that we don't have to take sides for or against smoking. (And anyway I don't want to. Meyer can't stand my smoking; I smoke; he doesn't.) But our problem is the perspective of 1995. It will either have gone one way or another, but we will be the only ones who will know how people reacted to this sudden massive assault on the habit, you see; and we are *not* concerned why people smoke we are not *really* concerned why people quit.

... We are concerned with the reaction of the mass population to the massive assault on an ingrained habit. That's what we are studying on a microscopic level. What we will finally contribute to the story of 1995 isn't quite clear in 1971 but that is really the issue of our study; not smoking or not-smoking, though all that we study in detail, but the reaction of the population, a specific group of people, to a massive assault on an established. [Nolen, 1971, p.5]

lasting contribution to our intellectual understanding of these periods in our nation's history. Hopefully, by understanding the past, we will be able to have some lasting impact on the future.

## Appendix A

### Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901-1976):

#### A biography from 1901-1949

*Senator Langer: How old were you when you left Vienna?*

*Dr. Lazarsfeld: Thirty.*

*Senator Langer: What's the difference in children in Vienna and in the United States?*

*Dr. Lazarsfeld: Tremendous. Comparing middle class children, American children are much more socially developed. They have better civic education. But if you don't mind my saying so, the Austrian children know more.*

*Senator Langer: In what way?*

*Dr. Lazarsfeld: In straight matters. My children were raised here. I don't talk with them about Homer or the medieval world. (He reflected a moment, and added)*

*But why should I—come to think of it.*

Paul F. Lazarsfeld before the Senate Juvenile Delinquency sub-committee, April 7, 1953.<sup>1</sup>

(The information in this chapter is largely based on the two autobiographical

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<sup>1</sup>Milton Berliner. The insight into TV programming is dim. *Washington Daily News*, April 8, 1953. . Hereafter referred to as [Berliner, 1953].

essays which Paul F. Lazarsfeld wrote, [Lazarsfeld, 1972b] and <sup>2</sup>. The two essays largely resemble each other both in content and language, although they stress different aspects of the his life.)

(No complete biography of Paul F. Lazarsfeld exists at this time. Lazarsfeld never would have authorized one during his life.<sup>3</sup> The man was too humble to believe that his life was of any significance apart from the research which he was able to accomplish.)

Paul F. Lazarsfeld was born in 1901 in Austria. His family was actively involved in the Social Democratic Party: his mother often hosted intellectuals from the party in their home, while his father "gave free legal advice to activists charged with political crimes." [Pollak, 1980, p.158] In high school he helped establish a socialist youth movement and, with Robert Dannenberg, administered socialist education in Vienna.[Pollak, 1980, p.159]

Lazarsfeld entered the university of Vienna at the age of eighteen.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.13] In college, he continued his political activities. He took jobs as a counselor in socialist children's camps and as a tutor in high schools for working-class youngsters.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.247] His first publication (*Gemeinschaftserziehung durch Erziehungsgemeinschaften*), at the age of twenty-three, was a report on a summer camp which Lazarsfeld had organized to develop the socialist spirit in young people. Lazarsfeld did this early work with Ludwig Wagner.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.13n]

Lazarsfeld's interest in psychology was stimulated by the prospect of using it as a tool to explain the failure of the Austria's socialist movement in light of the

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<sup>2</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld. An episode in the history of social research: a memoir. In *The varied sociology of Paul F. Lazarsfeld: writings in honor of Paul F. Lazarsfeld*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1982. Previous published in Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, eds., *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America 1930-1960* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). Copyright ©1968 Perspectives in American History. . Hereafter referred to as [Lazarsfeld, 1982].

<sup>3</sup>The Oral History Project at Columbia University recorded and transcribed an extensive oral history from Lazarsfeld. Upon reviewing the transcript, Lazarsfeld was so upset that he refused permission for the document ever to be released. The history is now in the possession of Patricia L. Kendall, Lazarsfeld's wife.

“growing nationalistic wave:”

We were concerned with why our propaganda was unsuccessful, and wanted to conduct psychological studies to explain it. I remember a formula I created at the time: a fighting revolution requires economics (Marx); a victorious revolution requires engineers (Russia); a defeated revolution calls for psychology (Vienna).[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.247]

While Lazarsfeld was a student, he occasionally worked in the field of labor education, where he “often lectured on ‘how to read a newspaper;’ what is a news service, how does one take into account the sources of news, what should one watch for in different countries.”[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.14] Lazarsfeld was interested in the ways people interpreted information; he wrote a pamphlet entitled “Behind the Schools’ Backdrops,” (*Hinter den Kulissen der Schule* as an attempt to alleviate anxiety by helping families to understand “how schools are organized, how report cards come about, how teachers differ from each other in their perceptions of their students.”[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.14]

Lazarsfeld graduated from the University of Vienna with a Ph.D. in applied mathematics.[Lazarsfeld, 1973, p.8] The department of the degree was “almost accidental,” as he had also been studying towards a doctorate “in *Staatswissenschaft*, a modified law degree with a strong admixture of economics and political theory.”[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.248] Immediately after graduating, he began teaching mathematics and physics in a *Gymnasium*. [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.14]

Lazarsfeld’s interest in social science was stimulated by the arrival of Charlotte and Karl Bühler at the University of Vienna in 1923. After studying with them, he was asked to give a course in statistics. As his interest in social and applied psychology grew, he decided to create a division of social psychology for the purpose of pursuing paid contracts, in order that he might earn “a small but adequate salary.”[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.248] The Vienna Research Center<sup>4</sup> was cre-

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<sup>4</sup>In german, *Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle*, “a term connoting broadly the application of psychology to social and economic problems.”[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.15]

ated in 1927 with Karl Bühler as president. Lazarsfeld directed the applied studies of the Center and supervised dissertations.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.248] However, Lazarsfeld considered his position at the Psychological Institute "rather vague and insecure," and merely took an extended leave of absence from the secondary school system.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.15n]

Lazarsfeld's major endeavor while at the Center was the 1930 study of Marienthal,<sup>5</sup> "a village south of Vienna whose population was almost entirely unemployed." [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.249]<sup>6</sup>

The Marienthal study brought Lazarsfeld to the attention of the Paris representation of the Rockefeller Foundation, who recommended Lazarsfeld for a Rockefeller traveling fellowship to visit and study in the United States.<sup>7</sup> The fellowship was awarded in 1932 to begin in September 1933.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.249] Lazarsfeld believed that the fellowship was awarded on the basis of the recommendation from the Paris representative alone:

"Living in the pessimistic climate of Vienna at the time, I was sure I would not get the fellowship, and did not apply. In November 1932 I got a cable from the Paris Rockefeller office informing me that my application had been misfiled and that they wanted another copy. They had obviously decided to grant me the fellowship on the recommendation of their representative and it had never occurred to them that I had not applied. I mailed a 'duplicate,' and the fellowship was granted." [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16n]

The alleged purpose of the fellowship was to observe techniques of psychological research in the United States.[Lazarsfeld, 1973, p.8] Across the Atlantic, The Rockefeller Foundation arranged for Lazarsfeld to join the Federal Emergency Relief

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<sup>5</sup>Marie Jahoda, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Hans Zeisel. *Marienthal: the sociography of an unemployed community*. Aldine, Atherton, Chicago, 1971. Translation from the German by the authors with John Reginald and Thomas Elsaesser. . Hereafter referred to as [Jahoda et al., 1971].

<sup>6</sup>Lazarsfeld's two main collaborators in the study were Hans Zeisel, later a professor at the University of Chicago, and Marie Jahoda, later a professor at Sussex University in England.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16]

<sup>7</sup>Pollak writes that it was Lazarsfeld's market research which led to the fellowship.[Pollak, 1980, p.161]

Administration's (FERA) first research unit.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.250] While there, he worked on a FERA monograph which correlated levels of unemployment, age and education.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.251] Lazarsfeld additionally occupied his time traveling about the United States to the "few places in which empirical social research was taught." [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.251] Apparently, one of his major purpose in these travels was to attempt to find contracts for the Vienna research center after he returned to Europe. During the first year of his fellowship he met Luther Fry of the University of Rochester, the person who wrote the first book on techniques of social research, the Lynds, and many other prominent American sociologists. Lazarsfeld was well received.

"In February 1934, the Conservative Party in Austria overthrew the constitution, outlawed the Socialist Party, and established an Italian-type fascism. My position in the secondary school system was canceled and most members of my family in Vienna were imprisoned, but my vague position as assistant at the university was nominally unaffected. This gave the sympathetic officers of the Rockefeller Foundation the pretext for extending my fellowship another year, nominally obeying the rule that it was necessary for a Fellow to have an assured position to which he could return." [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16]

Lazarsfeld spent the summer of 1934 with John Jenkins, an applied psychologist from Cornell. During that summer, they "discussed the idea of a 'new look' in applied psychology," [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.254] which was to incorporate elements of market research while remaining academically respectable. The focus of the "new look" was to be motivational analysis: attempting to decide why people pursued particular modes of behavior.<sup>8</sup>

Lazarsfeld contacted many of these researchers during his first year in the United States with the hope of establishing ties between them and the Vienna Re-

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<sup>8</sup>An example of this style of research is a study which Lazarsfeld organized at the University of Rochester under Luther Fry aimed at discovering "how people decide which movies to attend." [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.251] "Later the questionnaire served as the model for the Decatur study that resulted in Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence* (Glencoe, Ill., 1955). [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.251n]

search Center.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.254] Because of the political situation in Vienna, Lazarsfeld decided to stay in the United States if at all possible.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16]

Lazarsfeld contacted many of these researchers during his first year in the United States with the hope of establishing ties between them and the Vienna Research Center.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.254] In light of the political events in Austria, however, Lazarsfeld began to look for work in the United States to begin when his Rockefeller fellowship expired in the fall of 1935.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.255]

During the second year of his fellowship (1934-1935), Lazarsfeld spent two months at David Craig's Retail Research Institute at the University of Pittsburgh. Lazarsfeld organized a number of studies with titles such as "How Pittsburgh Women Decide Where to Buy Their Dresses," and "How Pittsburgh Drivers Choose Their Gasoline." [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.255] With the help of both Robert Lynd at Columbia [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16] and Craig, Lazarsfeld was able to obtain a promise for a position at the University of Newark in the fall of 1935. Craig arranged for Lazarsfeld to receive a temporary appointment at the Retail Research Institute and then resigned his directorship to be research director of a "large trade association of major retail stores" in Washington.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.255] The official offer of a position to Lazarsfeld was therefore delayed until the summer of 1935.

In the summer of 1935, Lazarsfeld was required to return to Vienna, both according to the regulations of the fellowship and so that he might apply for an immigration visa to the United States.[Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.259] It was while in Vienna that he received notification of the tenuous nature of his position at the University of Pittsburgh. He used the remaining \$150 of his fellowship "to buy a third-class ticket on a slow American boat. I thus arrived in New York as the classic immigrant, penniless. A few weeks later, I began the work which led to the establishment of the University of Newark Research Center." [Lazarsfeld, 1972b, p.259]

Lazarsfeld was initially a "supervisor of student relief work for the National Youth Administration, whose headquarters were at the University of Newark." [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16] In the fall of 1936, he established a Research Center at Newark patterned on the research center in Vienna. [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16] Lazarsfeld spend the 1936-37 academic year "raising money, supervising studies, and training staff at Newark." [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.40] One of the studies which Lazarsfeld worked on surveyed the impacts of unemployment on youths between 16 and 25 in Essex County, New Jersey.<sup>9</sup>

During the Spring of 1937 Lazarsfeld learned that the Rockefeller Foundation was about to establish a large project to study the effect of radio on American society. Again with the personal help of Robert S. Lynd, Rockefeller was awarded the directorship of the Radio Research project, with the headquarters at the University of Princeton. [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.41]

Lazarsfeld was unsuccessful in his attempts to get the Rockefeller Foundation to move the grant from Princeton to the University of Newark. In fact, however, the *de facto* headquarters of the project were where Lazarsfeld was at the Newark Research Center<sup>10</sup> until he moved to New York City in the fall of 1938. [Lazarsfeld, 1982, pp.44-45]

In the spring of 1939 Lazarsfeld was forced to supervise the production of *Radio and the Printed Page* to persuade the Rockefeller Foundation to renew the grant for another two years. "It was a grueling task to assemble the manuscript in a short period of time; we worked day and night literally, in relays, to accomplish it." [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.64] The Office of Radio Research was transferred to Columbia University in 1939 [Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16], largely due to personal prob-

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<sup>9</sup>Arnold Beichman. Study points need of youth security. *The New York Times*, 4, January 24, 1937. . Hereafter referred to as [Beichman, 1937].

<sup>10</sup>The financial aspects of the operation were moved back to Princeton University in Spring of 1938. (See Hadley Cantril. Letter to Paul F. Lazarsfeld. March 28, 1938. On file at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. , hereafter referred to as [Cantril, 1938].)

lems which had grown between Lazarsfeld and Hadley Cantril.<sup>11</sup>[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.65] Lazarsfeld was a lecturer at Columbia for one year; after which he became an associate professor.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.16]

“As far as work and administration were concerned, the move to Columbia made very little difference. We were located in a condemned building, the former site of the medical school on 49th Street and Amsterdam Avenue – a neighborhood then called Hell’s Kitchen. (It is now part of the Lincoln Center area.)”[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.65]

In 1941, the Office of Radio Research was incorporated into the Columbia Bureau of Applied Social Research and Lazarsfeld became the bureau’s director.[Lazarsfeld, 1973, p.8] It was incorporated into the university’s structure in 1945.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.17]

During World War II, Lazarsfeld was a consultant to the Office of War Information, the War Production Board, and the War Department. “He advised these professional groups on the role of American public opinion in the shaping of foreign policy.[Lazarsfeld, 1973, p.8]” These contacts were largely a consequence of Stouffer becoming research director for the United States Army.[Lazarsfeld, 1982, p.66] One of the purposes of the research program during the war was to train students for working in government agencies, “for tasks ranging from the collection of simple statistical information to interpreting trends in public opinion and morale.”<sup>12</sup> The majority of wartime work was devoted to testing propaganda with the program analyzer tracking morale of civilian and military populations, resulted in the publication of *The American Soldier*.

In 1949, Lazarsfeld resigned as the director of the bureau to devote more time to writing, particularly writing about the uses of mathematics in the social

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<sup>11</sup>Cantril’s association with the Rockefeller Foundation continued for many years. After leaving Princeton, he established a special opinion research agency, financed by Nelson Rockefeller. This office fulfilled a variety of contracts detailing for Roosevelt the state of public opinion within the United States and abroad before and during the Second World War.[Lazarsfeld and Reitz, 1975, p.6]

<sup>12</sup>Research course opens. *The New York Times*, July 18, 1943. . Hereafter referred to as [Times, 1943].

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