

## **Our First and Next 100 Years**

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As this Department has renown historical sociologists, it is only befitting that we use historical methodologies on ourselves. I am not by any stretch of the imagination a historical sociologist, however, as all of our historical sociologists were busy, I took on this historical overview. My brief presentation has two parts. The first part is a mostly visual portrait of our first 100 years using the photographs that can be viewed elsewhere on this Department web site as a PowerPoint presentation. The second part is a mental speculation on the second 100 years of our Department. Specifically, given the rapid changes in the way we've done our work in the past 100 years, how might we do our work differently in 100 years from now, or even 10 or 20 years from now?

The Department historians of the past, most notably Fine and Severance (1985), have tended to structure our story by who happened to be chair or "head" of the Department. That certainly makes sense except for the last 30 years when the chairperson changed every two to three years. As you will see I have chosen to organize our past by decade. This emphasizes how external events tended to impact our evolution. After compiling our history by decades, I asked myself what cyclical periods best characterized our past, and I concluded that our cycles seem to run in 20 to 30 year blocks. These most distinct time periods or cycles are: the pre-Chapin era, the Chapin era, the post-Chapin aftermath, and the last 30 years of rotating chairpersons. Such cycles make sense also because it seems to take us about 25 years to completely forget our past and to totally reinvent ourselves. Of course, we forget our past at our own peril, which may account for some of our past misfortunes.

## The First Decade

Our visual history begins with a 100-year-old photograph of a typical St. Paul urban neighborhood. The horse-drawn farm carts on muddy streets gives us a hint of the hardships and inconveniences of living and working 100 years ago. The second picture gives a glimpse of the century old U of M campus revealing an austere view of the environment and lifestyle into which this Department was born. Given this austerity it is not so surprising that the first lead sociologist, Samuel Smith was a PhD in religion and taught courses in "Biblical Sociology." The second key figure, and second Head of the Department, was Albert Jenks, an anthropologist. This union between sociology and anthropology remained for the first two decades.

The first permanent home of the Department was Folwell Hall, then Jones Hall and Ford Hall, and in 1963 we were moved across the Mississippi River to the Social Science Building, which may be our home for ever.

## The WWI Era

Before the reign of Samuel Smith ended, the sociology profession gave the University a great President, George Vincent. While he did not teach courses, he co-authored, along with Albion Small, the first American textbook in sociology. He was very well known in the profession and about the time he left the University to head the Rockefeller Foundation, he became President of the American Sociological Society.

The third Head of the Department was Arthur Todd. The department he headed actually was called the "Department of Sociology and Civic Training." This name anticipated what our current Chair, Ron Aminzade, says is our "civic-mindedness," our involvement in addressing social and community issues.

## The Roaring Twenties

The third decade of the Department can be described as the "roaring twenties" because of the splash that F. Stuart Chapin made when he was brought in to head the Department in 1922. In the 29 years he headed the Department, Chapin was passionate, precise and prolific. The graduate students claimed he filed himself under "C" when he went to bed at night. This orderliness undoubtedly helped him to write some 10 books and to build one of the strongest departments of sociology in the country. Among the famous sociologists that he recruited in his first decade were Pitirim Sorokin, George Lundberg, Edwin Sutherland, and Clifford Kirkpatrick. Mildred Parten in 1929 was one of the first women to get her PhD in the Department, and she went on to do widely recognized, pioneering research in child development.

### **The Depression Era**

In the 1930s Chapin brought in criminologist George Vold and rural sociologist Lowery Nelson. Stuart Chapin's famous PhD advisees included Conrad Taeuber, William Sewell, and Delbert Miller, as well as George Lundberg, Louis Guttman, Llewellyn Gross, and Arthur Johnson.

It is surprising that sociologists like Guttman and Sewell, who contributed so much to quantitative sociology, received their PhDs prior to the invention of the digital computer. And the rabid empiricism of the Chapin era was all conducted on punch cards or even more primitive technology.

### **WW II Decade**

The ending of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war was marked by the tenure of noted sociologists Theodore Caplow, Don Martindale, and Arnold Rose. Theodore Caplow got his PhD in 1946 and stayed on for 14 years on the Department faculty. Don Martindale joined the

faculty in 1948 and remained until 1983. During that time he served as advisor for an enormous number of PhD students. Arnold Rose served on the faculty from 1949 to 1968, and during that time he was a role model for sociologists seeking to influence social policy. Professor Rose won seats on the State Legislature and on the St. Paul City Council. And he conducted numerous social surveys to use for both his University research and his policy-making roles.

### The Decade of the 1950s

In the 50s the Korean War was followed by the entry into the Department of George Donohue, who was on the faculty between 1955 and 1992, and Reuben Hill, who served on the faculty from 1957 to 1983. Reuben Hill's role in the Department is legendary and he worked with many other faculty including Roy Francis and Arthur Johnson. During his tenure he founded the Family Study Center and served as President of the International Sociological Association. It was during this era that Sheldon Stryker received his PhD.

### The Sixties, A Time of Change

The Social Sciences building was constructed in 1962. The Dept was headed by Elio Monachesi during the 1960s as well as the 50s. The following well known sociologists all joined the faculty during the 1960s: Joan Aldous, David Ward, Irv Tallman, Robert Fulton, Richard Hall, Bert Ellenbogen, Don McTavish, Carolyn Rose, Roberta Simmons, and Ira Reiss. This decade was also marked by student protests and considerable change in the structure of the Department.

### The Decade of the 1970s

Not only was the society in rapid transition during the 1970s, but there were many changes in the Department personnel. The Department took the rotating chair concept seriously as it cycled many through the role including George Bohrnstedt, who served as Chair from 1970 to 1973; John Clark, Chair from 1973 to 1976 and again from 1983 to 1984; Richard Hall, Chair from 1976 to 1977; and Donald McTavish, Chair from 1977 to 1980. New faculty toward the end of the decade included Joe Galaskiewicz, who remained until 2001, Gary Fine, who served until 1990, and Candace Kruttschnitt, who is still on the faculty and served as Chair from 1998 to 2001.

### The 1980s

The Chairs continued to rotate in the 80s: David Cooperman, 1980 to 1983, David Ward, 1984 to 1988, Joe Galaskiewicz, 1988 to 1989, and David Knoke, 1989 to 1992. Perhaps the most noted accomplishment during that decade besides the establishment of the Life Course Center, was the start of the annual Sociology Research Institute (SRI), which was instituted by David Knoke.

### The 1990s

This past decade has been a time of major change with an incredibly large number of newly recruited faculty. Half of this year's full time faculty joined the Department within the past decade. One of the few group pictures of the Department faculty was taken in

1995. It is an impressive image of the Department as everyone looks happy. Surely this must be a sign that the Department will be a good place to be during the decades ahead.

Before wrapping up the history of the Department, I want to add a note about the Rural Sociology Department. Rural Sociology had a major presence at the University for several decades. During the past two decades the Department became smaller and evolved into the Center for Rural Sociology and Community Analysis on the St Paul campus. The Director of the Center now is Dario Menanteau-Horta, who obtained his PhD in our Department in 1967. Rural sociologists George Donohue, Philip Tichenor, and Clarice Olien retired during this past decade after many years of community research as well as teaching..

### The Next 100 Years

This centennial has given us reason to revive our common history. It would be unfortunate to wait another 100 years to work on this history, particularly because the next 100 years will be a time of even more rapid change. Consider a few speculations on the future of sociology with some perspectives gained from our past. Some images of our past reveal how dramatically the technology for research and writing has changed even in our life times, to say nothing of the past century. For example, in the age of Stuart Chapin it took several hours of running a "counter sorter" machine using punch cards to produce a single cross tabulation table from a large social survey. Only 50 years ago a single factor analysis might have taken several months. And the Web, which is now used extensively for surveys and other social research, is only about 10 years old.

It is my prognosis that major methodological opportunities for sociology will emerge from technological advances in at least three areas: photography, wireless, and live or biological computing. The wireless and live computer technologies will likely yield major advances in data collection and measurement. These two technologies also are likely to generate issues regarding the applicability of current theories for people whose behavior is modified by implanted computing devices.

(1) Convergence of Digital Still Photography and Digital Video. Still photography will likely be replaced by motion photography so that both amateur photographers and researchers will be able to select the best possible photographs, before saving or printing images. Photographic images will be stored and managed in huge Internet-based digital warehouses. Consequently there will be vast collections of digitized images that can be analyzed for sociological research purposes.

(2) Wireless Technologies. Ubiquitous wireless computing and recording devices will also contribute to rapidly expanding data warehouses. Of particular interest will be intelligent recording devices that are embedded into most consumer goods as well as into people's bodies. Many implanted processors will include GPS devices that make it possible to locate and track children, prisoners, and people suffering from medical problems. These implanted devices could greatly aid sociologists in their research by making the collection of many kinds of data more feasible. Data on how people spend their time, as in time-budgets (Robinson and Godbey, 1977), could be collected much more rapidly and with greater precision.

(3) Live Computers. A third and more radical technology with many implications for sociological research is the biological computer processor. Molecular electronics, a

sub field of nanotechnology, already has made significant progress on this technology (Reed and Tour, 2000) and self-reproducing computers are forecast by 2025 (Joy, 2000). Biological researchers now can use live cells to build mechanisms for storing or controlling information. As progress moves rapidly in molecular electronics, scientists have noted the revolutionary implications of a convergence of molecular electronics with genetic engineering and robotics (cf. Kurzweil (2001). Speculation also continues on the possibility of human cell uploads and downloads between people and machines (Bell and Gray, 2001). Brain cell downloads to computers will make it possible to measure peoples' thoughts and feelings much more precisely. Uploads of artificial cells to human brains will make possible not only innovations in brain surgery but methods to correct behavioral and emotional problems. This technology will make possible brain implants of sensors that transmit wirelessly many of the measurements needed by social scientists.

These three new technologies have enormous potential for sociological measurement and data collection. Minnesota sociology is widely know for its contribution to measurement. Chapin pioneered measurement scales and Guttman's contributions to measurement are legendary. In recent decades Robert Leik pioneered the use of mini and microcomputer simulations for family measurement. It would be surprising if our Department did not yield pioneers in measurement during the decades ahead. Of course the challenges will be different and heavily dependent upon information and communication technologies (cf. Wellman, 1996).

Methodological advances will not be the only advances forthcoming because the need for new or improved theoretical models will be even greater than it is today. Minnesota's strength in several domains of theory will undoubtedly thrive in the future

and hopefully the theorists will collaborate with the methodologists and continue to lead the field with contributions that address not only instrumentation and methodology but improved theories about the nature and function of social worlds in a context where the boundaries of that which is "social" evolves rapidly.

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