Preface

One hundred years ago the University of Minnesota Regents formally established a Department of Sociology, and the 2001-2002 academic year was our Centennial year, or 100th birthday if you will. Actually we defined the year as a celebration of 100 years of sociology in the State of Minnesota. Throughout the year we held mini-conferences with guest speakers, but the biggest event of our celebration was the Sociology Research Institute (SRI), March 29-30, 2002. The second day of this event, Saturday, March 30, was "Alumni Day" featuring our accomplished alumni, former faculty, and otherwise highlighting the history of Minnesota Sociology in the past Century.

The general theme for the 2-day SRI event was the history of sociology in the 20th Century and the contribution of Minnesota to that development. The first day consisted of research presentations with discussions, and featured Craig Calhoun as keynote speaker. The second day featured Sheldon Stryker as keynote speaker and several panels highlighting the contributions of our alumni. The day also provided for many informal discussions among alumni and faculty (both current and former). As in previous years, an evening reception and banquet with entertainment culminated the event. (Photographs are available elsewhere on this web site showing some of the presentations as well as the evening entertainment.)

In order to create a lasting record of the intellectual contributions of this Celebration, we invited alumni and former faculty panelists to provide brief position papers. These have been assembled and can be accessed by clicking here: .........."Perspectives from the Minnesota Sociology Centennial - Brief Papers of Alumni and Former Faculty Panelists, March 30, 2002".

Our Centennial events this past year have taken an enormous effort. We wish to thank all who have contributed to the success of these events. Special thanks are due the invited speakers, the department staff, and the alumni and former faculty who participated. We especially appreciate the contributions of the alumni and former faculty who provided brief papers for this collection.

Minnesota sociology has had an illustrious past. (For a synopsis of this history see the history section on our web site at <www.soc.umn.edu>). However, only a tiny fraction of this history has been researched and interpreted. We seek to increase understanding of the contribution of Minnesota sociology with the Web publication of these brief papers. In celebrating our glorious past, we look forward to a very promising future for sociology at the University of Minnesota.

Ronald Aminzade, Professor and Department Chair

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