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Featuring:
Winter 1968 Issue
In Honor of
Carroll D. Clark

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Volume IV, Combined Volumes

Including:

	Page
Number 1, Winter 1968	3
Number 2, Spring 1968	51
Number 3, Summer 1968	89
Number 4, Fall 1968	157

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TO CARROLL D. CLARK*

Our honored guest this evening is a "man for all seasons." The committee organizing this recognition of a distinguished career invited letters of appreciation in honor of the occasion. I have had the pleasure of reading nearly one hundred of these replies and it is now my privilege and responsibility to see if I can convey to you some of the content and flavor of these messages.

He is portrayed as a man of many roles: as teacher, departmental chairman, scholar, colleague, servant of the University, as neighbor, friend and community member, as a jazz man, as a person, and as immortal.

The most frequent phrase in these letters was that he was "a scholar and a gentleman" or "he was distinguished by scholarship and humanness." One said "One could go into the office any time to ask a question. He would sit quietly for a minute collecting his thoughts, then out would come a perfectly composed flow of words. It was like tapping a fount of wisdom."

A former student wrote "I remember complaining to another graduate student that 'Dr. Clark never answers what I ask.' 'Yes' was his immediate rejoinder, 'he answers a better question than you ask.' He was implying that he never had any trouble seeing the forest for the trees."

Others comment on "your encouragement and the example set for graduate students" — "your intellectual inspiration" — "Inspiring students to seek out knowledge" — "The warmth, the regard shown for and the interest taken in students." The warmth of your teaching is mentioned repeatedly. Your teaching was not only a matter of communicating subject matter, but more importantly the encouragement, and support of the dignity of wisdom.

Some commented on the elegance of your calabash pipe and the monumental numbers of matches required to keep it going. Alas, these were days of long ago!

An important department head in Washington mentions the encouragement given to explore new ideas and the patience shown at fumbling efforts. He says that the ideas obtained in class were not only interesting and exciting then but they have proved to be unusually applicable in his work.

Others refer to the vistas of social service you opened to them. Some are grateful to you because when they went on to graduate schools at

Chicago and Harvard, they found they were well prepared and could hold their own with other students. One said your "ideas were like a breath of fresh air," but perhaps the most impressive comment was from an executive trainee who said "You taught from the heart rather than the book."

Colleagues both at K.U. and at other institutions testify to the influence you have had on their careers. A sociology teacher in a liberal arts college writes "I shall always be grateful for the morning you spent with me just before I started teaching. I was scared to jump into this new role and felt so inadequate. Your help and moral support from our visit was invaluable." A department head at Menninger's writes of "How the ripples of your influence have made it possible for people like me to make a contribution." A professor at Stanford says "It was under your inspiration and guidance that my sociological imagination was first stirred."

A research associate, now at Missouri, recalls how you scrounged \$50 for a research project — one, as he says, "our colleagues would need \$50,000 for today."

Many wrote of the lively influence you had upon Midwest Sociological Society meetings; of the versatility displayed in extempore discussions when other discussants stole your material, of the subtle humor displayed in many presentations. The President-elect of the Midwest writes that "Our life was enriched by your presence — it was one of the more important 'happenings' at the annual meetings." Others spoke of the "leadership and sophistication which you brought to K.U." One of the last acts of the President-elect of the American Sociological Society, before his untimely death, was to send Carroll this message: "Through the years, we sociologists have learned to appreciate your insight, your wisdom, your calm appraisal of things, and your wit."

Colleagues at varying periods during your thirty years as chairman testify to your support under trying circumstances. One recalls how you appeared with him before an irate local minister whom he had aroused by a thoughtless remark. Another, in this room tonight, recalls how you defended her against an unscrupulous landlord in a local court. A professor at another Big-8 university, a former member of the Department, is grateful for "the serenity I enjoyed, the calm that gave me an opportunity to think and work things out for myself." A chairman of a department on the West Coast says "I count it as one of the rare privileges I have had that I was for a time a member of the department that you assembled. I don't know if another department like it ever existed. I'm sure that under present conditions there will never be another." Still another speaks of "the wisdom and tact with which you guided the Department."

Our honored guest has been a builder of the University of Kansas. He

was responsible not only for the development of the Department of Sociology but also for the departments of Social Work, Anthropology and the early work in Human Relations.

The recent chairman of Social Work, true to psycho-analytic theory, writes that "you were the father of Social Work at K.U. — Esther Twente was the mother." The anthropologists, looking back, "wince at the problems we caused you" but now credit "your patience, vision, encouragement and guidance in the formation of a separate department."

When Chancellor Malott wished to introduce Human Relations training at K.U. he chose Carroll Clark, the most respected member of the faculty, to go back to Harvard and bring us the word. I remember thinking back in those days that some of the ideas were rather peculiar, but if Carroll sponsored it, it must have something worthwhile in it. Several students commented in their letters about how much they obtained from those early Human Relations courses.

Colleagues here have commented on the contributions made to University Committees, to the Senate, to the AAUP, and to the Faculty Club. "You brightened many a faculty meeting with your wit and humor." Chancellor Wescoe states you are "one of my stalwarts on the University faculty, the personification of institutional loyalty that has made K.U. a standout among the universities of the nation."

A quite different comment comes from an activist social worker in New York who says "You've helped immeasurably to build the University's social consciousness ... and given your students a biting edge to their crusades."

Time does not permit detailed quotations from many letters commenting on other facets of this unusual career. Some pay tribute to the ideas obtained in public opinion courses and a 1933 article differentiating special and general publics. There is the contribution to high school social science with a 1928 book on *Major Problems of Democracy*. There was an early demographic study on *The People of Kansas*. There has been a long continuing interest in religion and the campus ministry.

There are letters of appreciation from neighbors. Many comment on the contribution to the community, and especially to Pearl's activities in public health work, pure milk ordinances, rat control, school board activity, community planning and the preservation of "Old West Lawrence." This community owes a tremendous debt to the "earnest women" of Lawrence, among whom Pearl was foremost. As John Hankins says "The city is a better place because of your impact."

Ray Mack, the President of the Midwest Sociological Society writes "I am confident that you will receive numerous letters commenting on your contributions to the University of Kansas and to the discipline of sociology. I, of course, consider you a top-flight alto sax man who

moonlights as a sociologist. Others may comment on you as a scholar and professional sociologist, if their view of you is so limited. When I hear the name 'Carroll Clark,' what springs to mind and ear is that great chorus on 'Sweet Georgia Brown.'"

Others of us recall that great skill as a sport spectator who knows the name and number of every player through the third string and who can watch blocking in the line and the ball carrier at the same time.

Finally, for your attributes as a person, I can only repeat the phrases continuously encountered: "your kindness and friendliness," "sly humor," "a rare gentleman," "your spirit and gentle character," "the wisdom and sympathy of men like you," "intellectual honesty, humor and compassion for others," "your concern for people," "control of emotional reactions in the face of intellectual differences," "you add class to any gathering."

I wish to conclude with quotations from two letters. "I owe you a special debt, for over the years you have had a profound influence on my life. For more than ten years, off and on, I had the privilege of studying with you both on campus and in extension courses.... Because you as a teacher and friend have touched and deepened so many lives, as long as any of us still live, you will live."

My own letter concludes, "We have admired your intellectual qualities, mixed with generous doses of common sense. This is symbolized by the most extensive vocabulary I have ever encountered entwined with Kansas colloquial expressions. Your sense of humor, your simplicity and warm humanness have made a profound impression on me and on countless students and associates. It has been a remarkable experience to have known you so intimately for almost forty years — an experience that has made a great impression on me and for which I will be eternally grateful."

* Remarks prepared by Marston M. McCluggage in honor of Carroll D. Clark and presented on the occasion of his retirement banquet on May 4, 1968.

This issue of *The Kansas Journal of Sociology*, is humbly dedicated to Dr. Carroll D. Clark, on the occasion of his retirement from active teaching at the University of Kansas. The first portion of Dr. Clark's latest work, "My Sociological Stewardship," introduces Dr. Clark to those who have yet to make his acquaintance and introduces the issue. (Additional portions of this most delightful writing will be published in future issues of the journal.) Brief comments on a few of Dr. Clark's many contributions to the discipline of sociology and to the art of teaching by Noel P. Gist and George H. Weber and a bibliography of Dr. Clark's previous professional publications complete the issue, but barely begin to detail the substance of Dr. Clark's impact on sociological inquiry and upon those who have studied under and with him. An adequate exposition of Dr. Clark's good works and an adequate expression of thanks from his beneficiaries would require far more than a single issue of a scholarly journal. This small collection of articles (particularly the article by Dr. Clark) does add to our knowledge of the history of American sociology and makes good reading. But it does not and cannot fully express the appreciation for Dr. Clark of those of us who are just commencing our study of sociology. He has not only shown us a road to follow, but also has given us hope that it is a road worth taking.

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In This Issue:

	Page
<i>Carroll D. Clark</i> My Sociological Stewardship: Part I	5
<i>Noel P. Gist</i> Some Retrospective Musings	37
<i>George H. Weber</i> Reflections on Dr. Clark's Teaching and Applied Sociology	41
Publications of Carroll D. Clark	47
