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"F. O. Wright
B. Wright
Ritzer
Scott
Fouillee
Van Delinder
Zala
Kelly & Barter"

"Falling into Marxist Sociology
A Parent's View
I Never Met a Theory I Didn't Like
Meta-Sociology: Doings & Reflections
A Road Worth Taking
Streetcorner Sociology
The Tradition Continues
Women and Men from MARS"
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INTRODUCTION

Carol A.B. Warren
University of Kansas

A century of history comes to life on the pages of this issue of MARS; a hundred years of continuity and change in the Sociology Department at the University of Kansas. These articles speak of continuity in the intellectual life and community of KU and of Lawrence, and of change in academia and in race and gender relations in society and in the University. They speak, also, of continuity and change in Sociology itself; of change in paradigms, theories and metatheories, but continuity in the commitment of sociologists to sociology as a vocation.

The context for this issue of MARS is the Centennial celebration held by the department of Sociology on April 5-6 1991. Some of the papers in this issue--those by Erik Wright, Beatrice Wright, George Ritzer, W. Richard Scott, and Gary Foulke--were presented at the Centennial. The papers by Zale, Van Delinder, and Kelly and Barter were written for, but not presented at the Centennial. A keynote speech by William Julius Wilson of the University of Chicago, and presentations by Barrie Thorne (University of Southern California) and Jill Quadagno (Florida State University) are not included in this volume.

The Kansas Department of Sociology, admitted even by the University of Chicago to have taught the first Sociology course in 1889--Elements of Sociology, taught by Frank Blackmar--has had a long tradition of excellence in the kinds of sociology referred to variously in this issue as theoretical, "humanist," interpretive, and ethnographic. The comments by Ritzer, Erik Olin Wright, the oral history of Jack Baur, and the historical analysis of Carroll D. Clark and Mabel Elliott evoke a town, a University and a department in which intellectual and personal connections combine to provide a rich tradition, and shared intellectual home for professors and graduate students.

The connection between Kansas and Chicago is also illustrated by these articles. Many of the Kansas faculty, such as Baur and Warriner, were trained in Chicago and, in turn, sent their most promising students to Chicago to complete the PhD. The breadth and vicissitudes of methodological focus in Chicago are reflected in Van Delinder's oral history of Jack Baur, whose own training and commitments range, in a typically Chicago fashion, from case studies to survey research to reformist activism. W. Richard Scott lists Kansas and Chicago as two of his three great loves (the other, Stanford, seems not to have affected Dick's IQ in the manner predicted by Truman Capote!)

Excellent, dedicated graduate students and undergraduate majors have also been a continuing theme in Kansas history. All the articles by or about faculty mention important ties with students, and the passing on of the vocation of sociology from one generation to the next. The article by Kelly
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and Barter on the editors and experience of graduate students with MARS demonstrates a remarkable level of dedication to sociology, to professional socialization, and to the Kansas tradition, among graduate students from before the inception of MARS to the present day.

Reading history through oral history through biography and autobiography, from Carroll D. Clark to Mabel Elliott to Jack Baur and Chuck Warriner, to George Ritzer, Beatrice Wright, Erik Wright and Dick Scott, the reader gets the sense of changes in the academic enterprise, as well as continuities in Kansas's intellectual life. Both in Kansas and elsewhere, the late 1960s and early 1970s formed a political watershed between the sense of public duty and accountability typical of academia in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the careerist orientations of the 1980s and 1990s. Sociologists such as Carroll D. Clark saw service as the center of their vocation: service to students, to their University, to the community, and to society. Public life and private life, social, domestic, academic and political intertwined.

Resources were scarce, salaries were low, and teaching and service obligations were numerous in the early twentieth century, but this seems not to have affected these early sociologists' public commitments. The late 1960s and early 1970s, a decade of public political commitment, was followed, ironically, by a more privatizing, inward turn in academia. Rather than the language of duty, obligation, community and service, academics became fluent in the linguistics of salary compression, indirect costs, academic stars, publication record, and movers and shakers. Scarcity and high demands today engender resentment rather than commitment.

The late 1960s and early 1970s signaled another set of political changes of great significance to the academy: the politics of race and gender. Jack and Lillian Baur's admirable activism in the Lawrence community of race prior to the 1960s was unusual for those times; just twenty years later the moral, economic and political demands of affirmative action have made the hiring and promotion of women and minorities a key issue for the University and for the academy in general.

There is little beyond Jack Baur's oral history, and some of the earlier Kansas theses, on race in Kansas sociology. However, race has been an important issue for the department, both as an important area of study by people such as Norm Yetman, and as a concern in the recruitment of faculty and graduate students. The recent recruitment of Assistant Professor Shirley Hill to the department demonstrates the commitment of both the department and the College to increasing the representation of Black Americans on campus.

The theme of gender is, both explicitly and implicitly, an important one in this centennial edition. Stephanie Zale's account of the comparatively stellar record of Kansas sociology on the hiring, tenuring and promotion of women is interesting in the context of Mabel Elliott's career, and of the careers of men such as Carroll D. Clark. The dedication to public service exhibited by men such as Clark and Marston McCluggage occurred within a domestic and gendered context that has been thoroughly neglected in the study of changes in academic life. Time is what permits dedication and, implicit in the history of nineteenth and early twentieth century male academics such as Gary Foulke's account of Carroll D. Clark, is a wife who provides time by taking over all domestic and childcare responsibilities, even in those cases where the wife also worked outside the home. It is simply not possible for women academics, or for most men academics today, to have the kind of time that allows the free interplay of intellect, community and social service.

Wright's presentation also indicates the power and significance of male bonding in academic life, something which women have in recent decades sought to enter and--with organizations such as SWS--to imitate. Wright's Marxist group with its all male intellectual and social structure seems to have been, and remain, a significant source of Marxist theory and macrosociological research within the discipline as a whole. The basketball games of George Ritzer's fond reminiscence were not--unlike the golf matches played by corporate lawyers--for business, but for fun.

Paradigms, theoretical debates, and metatheories emerge, flourish, shift and disappear in sociology as in all other disciplines. These authors speak of Marxism and postMarxism, of micro and macro, of quantitative and interpretive, of (my favorite) lumpers and splitters. In sociology in general, one can have entire discourses consisting of postmodern and deconstructionist terms unknown when even the Assistant Professor generation went to graduate school. Discourse indeed changes. But what seems not to change is the sense, both individually and collectively, of sociology as a vocation.

These articles contain a passion; a passion for sociology, for ideas, for a way of seeing, for a tradition and a heritage. From Frank Blackmar to Carroll D. Clark to Stephanie Zale, Mary E. Kelly, Gary Foulke and Laura Barter, we do sociology here at Kansas or elsewhere because we love it. The way we do it, and the reasons we love it, are vastly different, as these articles tell us. But for all of us, sociology is a vocation.