Sociology and value-neutrality a study of conflict in the sociological enterprise.

Susan Forrest

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SOCIOLGY AND VALUE-NEUTRALITY: A STUDY OF CONFLICT IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL ENTERPRISE

by

Susan Forrest

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada 1986
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the issue of value-neutrality in terms of how it has affected sociology from its beginnings. A key issue in the sociological enterprise, the debate on value has resulted in the establishment of conflicting camps in sociology. Although there has been considerable discussion on value-neutrality, much of the discourse has been dominated by debate between these camps. Division into opposing factions has had an effect on sociology's character, from the original raising of the issue by Weber to modern-day sociology's continuing effort to define itself and its place.

Tracing the issue from its historical origins, this study examines the consequences of protracted debate on values for the development and present state of sociology.
In The Restoration of Hell, Beelzebub, the chief of the devils, received reports on the state of the contemporary world from various of his cohorts. To distract men from spiritual things, one reports:

"I have devised for them...sociology, which consists in studying how former people lived badly. So instead of trying to live better themselves...they think they need only study the lives of former people, and that from that they will be able to deduce general laws of life, and that to live well they need only conform their life to the laws they thus devise...

...And as soon as those who are considered the promoters of science become persuaded of their infallibility, they naturally proclaim as indubitable things that are not only unnecessary but often absurd, and having proclaimed them they cannot repudiate them".

Leo Tolstoy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Theory and Outline</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A History of the Value Problem</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Continuing Crisis</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Responsibility and Accountability of Sociology</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Desirability and Attainability of Value-Neutral Sociology</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Attempts at Reconciliation</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Directions in Contemporary Sociology</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Appendix I: Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1
Theory and Outline
Introduction

This study will examine value neutrality in terms of how it has affected sociology. Value neutrality was first defined as problematic by Max Weber. Although he devoted only about thirty of his thousands of pages of written work to this discussion (Strauss, 1962; 444), the issue has had, and continues to have, a profound effect on sociology.

Rollo Handy (1963; 43) observes that discussions about value sometimes lack clear or specific accounts of the author's use of 'value'. Strauss (1963; 423) asserts that even Weber never explained what he meant by values. Although he insisted on value neutrality in social science research, Weber (1968; 117) advocated the research method he called "verstehen" and allowed, intentionally or otherwise, for subjectivity in investigation through this method. Weber (1968; 117) called for the investigator to "understand how to relate the events of the real world consciously or unconsciously to 'universal 'cultural values', and to select out those relationships which are significant for us."

It is the intention of this work to show how this key sociological issue has resulted in the establishment of conflicting camps in sociology. For this purpose, value will be defined by this author as something regarded consciously or unconsciously as desirable, right, or intrinsically worthy. Value neutrality will be defined as freedom from, or independence of, personal feelings or opinions, and dealing with external phenomena only.
Although there has been considerable discussion on the value-neutrality issue, much of the discourse has centred on the debate between the major camps in sociology. Little has actually been written on how these camps came into existence, and how the schools of thought differ in their underlying perceptions of what sociology is and should be based on differing perceptions of value's place within it.

While such a study is not, admittedly, going to settle the issue of values or create a solution which would serve to re-integrate the sociological camps, much remains to be written on the underlying nature of such a basic division in the discipline.

**Theoretical Framework**

Reynolds and Reynolds (1970; 3) state that the intellectual roots of attempts to analyze sociology from a sociological perspective are to be found in the sociology of knowledge, of which the sociology of sociology is a subfield. The sociology of knowledge can be defined, in a broad sense, as that branch of sociology which studies the relationship between thought and the society which produces it (Sprott, 1954; 141).

Particular kinds of knowledge arise from particular types of societies, and specialized knowledge such as science or magic is understood by only certain members of a society. In modern western society, a high value has been placed on scientific knowledge, although it may be true that in recent
years there has been a decline in an earlier faith in science (MacRae, 1976; 33). Such a decline in faith, however, may be at least partially attributed to the types of investigations and speculation arising in fields like the sociology of knowledge and philosophy of science. There has been, certainly, growing awareness that science is founded on moral premises and that it takes place in a specific moral context (Reasons, 1980; 80).

In addition to its location within a societal context, knowledge expands or varies over time. As Karl Mannheim (1949; 3) notes, "Every epoch has its fundamental new approach and its characteristic point of view, and consequently sees the 'same' object from a new perspective." This process of viewing objects from new perspectives may be said to have been the inspiration which resulted in the birth of sociology as a distinct discipline.

Unlike other branches of sociology, the sociology of knowledge treats knowledge itself as a social phenomenon (Bjorn, 1979; 30). Knowledge, then, is viewed as a product of society. As Merton (1973; 23) observes, "The sociological character of all knowledge, of all forms of thought, intuition, and cognition is unquestionable." Sociological knowledge itself is no exception to this. It emerged in response to the crises of a new type of society in Europe, a society in which science had dispelled magic and replaced it with reason (Bjorn, 1979; 26).

Sociology, however, holds a rather peculiar relation to
society in that it is embedded in the context of that which it wishes to study. The sociology of knowledge narrows this relationship even further in that it questions the social conditions under which science most effectively performs its function, the effects of scientific knowledge and its application to the rest of society. It also questions the nature of the values of a society which make it possible for science to exist as an activity (Storer, 1966: 5).

In encompassing the subfield of the sociology of sociology, then, the sociology of knowledge allows for the examination of sociology itself from a sociological perspective. In justifying such an enterprise, Merton (1973: 70) claims that social scientists have been so busy examining the behaviour of others in society that they have failed to examine their own situation. In neglecting such study, notes McKee (1970: 106), "our sociological consciousness has been deficient in failing to appreciate how much of what happens to sociology as it changes and develops is part and parcel of what is happening to the larger world into which we are inextricably woven."

It is within this context that Alvin Gouldner (1970) detects the potential of a movement toward what he calls a reflexive sociology. He envisions this sociology as an effort to contribute to a more general theory about social theorists (Gouldner, 1970: 481). In postulating such an undertaking, Gouldner (1970: 489-90) insists that at present we know little or nothing about ourselves or about other
sociologists, asserting that reflexive sociology's mission is to transform the sociologist, penetrating into his daily life and work to enrich them with new sensitivities, and to transcend sociology as it now exists.

C. Wright Mills (1959; 196) observes that scholarship is a choice of how to live as well as a career choice. He indicates by this that he does not believe it is possible to separate the scholar from the person. Weber (1971; 220) held that such separation was not only possible, but necessary to the attainment of scientific objectivity, and that this objectivity was essential in order to safeguard the scholarly enterprise. Gouldner (1963; 48) calls value neutrality a myth, viewing it as a modern extension of the medieval conflict between faith and reason.

The argument continues unabated, appearing no less significant today than it was in Weber's time. As an issue, value-neutrality has had a profound effect on sociology. It is, as this study proposes to illustrate, an issue which has divided sociology into opposing camps and factions, and created the crisis in western sociology whose coming Gouldner (1970) predicted. The crisis, in reality, already existed when Weber began his discussion of value-neutrality. Although it cannot be called the only divisive factor in sociology, it is of major importance. As Edel (1964; 218) observes:

"When the intellectual history of...social science comes to be written, one of its major themes will be the relation of social science to value."
Merton (1973: 56) notes that the division into sociological camps has an effect on sociology's character, observing that,

"The sociologists of each camp develop selective perceptions of what is actually going on in the other... Each group of sociologists becomes less and less motivated to study the work of the other, since there is manifestly little point in doing so."

Modern-day sociology, then, continues to wrestle with its legacy of traditional issues, and value-neutrality is a key to the state of the modern discipline. Sociology itself, through the sociology of sociology, provides for the study of such issues. Although an apparently incestuous undertaking in intellectual terms, it is an important part of the work of any profession of an intellectual character (Hughes, 1971: 447).

Methodology

To investigate the questions raised in connection with the issue of value neutrality, this study will be conducted through literary review. Research of this type provides an opportunity for the collection and comparison of divergent views and ideas on the nature of issues arising out of the value-neutrality debate. These issues affect the character of sociology.

In conducting research in this manner, the basic analytical requirements as set forth in Robert Merton's (1973) paradigm for the sociology of knowledge (See Appendix I) have been encompassed. Analysis will include the following major areas divided in the following ways:
Chapter 1: Theory and Outline

This chapter describes the theoretical orientation of the study, and outlines the basic plan for the following chapters.

Chapter 2: A History of the Value Problem

Durkheim and Weber can be called the original exponents of the value problem. In spite of the fact they both insisted that sociology must be scientific, their methods for attaining scientific precision and status differed considerably. While Durkheim wished to imitate the natural sciences, Weber worked on developing methods exclusive to sociology.

It was Weber who clearly defined the problem of value-neutrality. His methods included the values, meanings, and motives of the individuals under study (Rossides, 1978: 379).

Although the issue was, to a large extent, ignored for some time, there were a handful of sociologists who recognized and attempted to deal with value-neutrality as an issue. Those who are mentioned in this chapter are Robert Lynd, C. Wright Mills, and Alvin Gouldner.

Sociology may have attained the status and legitimacy it desired, but in the process it has discovered that the value issue remains unsolved. A historical analysis serves to locate modern-day sociology in terms of present trends, tendencies, and attempts at redefinition. Such analysis will illustrate that although the arguments may have grown in sophistication the issues have not really changed.
Chapter 3: The Continuing Crisis

This chapter will examine the issue of value-neutrality in many of its implications for and application to contemporary sociology. While even Weber's formulations were not easy to understand, the issues for present-day sociology are infinitely more complicated.

Although the paradigm employed for such analysis in this chapter is, of course, not exhaustive, this author has attempted to apply it in terms of its implications and assumptions, as well as various derivatives of the issue important to contemporary social science.

Chapter 4: The Responsibility and Accountability of Sociology

No one attempts to assert that scientific method is perfect. Many social scientists, however, defend their positions with regard to scientific responsibility with arguments like the one advanced by Rollo Handy (1970; 8):

"The self-correcting character of scientific inquiry and the tentativeness of the results gained through that inquiry deserve strong emphasis; the 'quest for certainty' is abjured."

Others disagree that scientific inquiry is automatically self-correcting, and claim that a disinterested social science has never existed (Myrdal, 1958; 1).

If social science is not disinterested, though, where do its interests, and thus its responsibility, lay? Storer (1966; 141) asserts that when a society supports an activity it expects something in return for that support. It follows that supporting persons or agencies of social research expect
some kind of return and become, at least temporarily, those to whom the researcher is responsible. Mills (1980, 19) argues that to the extent that a social science researcher becomes dependent on bureaucracies for his work, he loses his autonomy, and that to the extent that social science research becomes bureaucratized it tends to lose both its social and political autonomy. This argument assumes that social scientists can fall prey to corporate pressures with which they may be unfamiliar (Goldenberg, 1980, 29).

The sociologist as social scientist in a university setting may feel he is in less danger of such pressure. This, too, can be disputed on the grounds that the universities are prime locations for an elite of the knowledgeable and are integrated in the system of power (Birnbaum, 1971, 417). The scientist doing pure science in a disinterested manner within a university has been unable to avoid the issue of responsibility completely. Social scientists need to develop an awareness of the implications of their work.

It is easy to call for accountability but much more difficult to decide who should actually be accountable, and to whom. This chapter will discuss the issue of accountability in terms of both society and the scientific community of which sociology is a part.

Chapter 5: The Desirability and Attainability of Value-Neutral Sociology

This chapter will deal with the question of whether value-neutrality is possible in sociology and, if so,
whether it is a desirable goal for the sociological enterprise. Attitudinal neutrality with regard to one's own society conflicts directly with life - one's society in its multitude of forms must be dealt with daily.

Ralph Thomlinson (1965: 24) notes that sociological findings have frequently been criticized on the basis that because no one can eliminate values from his thinking, social research can never be considered truly scientific. He goes on, however, to assert that if he wishes to be identified as a scientist, a scholar must remain neutral in performing research (Thomlinson, 1965: 23).

Having integrated the norms, values, beliefs, and ideologies of his particular social world, can the sociologist as scientist disregard them to proceed scientifically? If this is possible, a further question arises: is it necessary, or even desirable, for sociology to aim at value neutrality as an ideal?

Chapter 6: Attempts at Reconciliation

A state of crisis cannot be maintained indefinitely in sociology without efforts toward reconciliation. Both George Ritzer and Alvin Gouldner have made major contributions in this area. In this chapter, the efforts of both these important sociologists toward resolution of the value issue will be examined.

Chapter 7: Directions in Contemporary Sociology

To discover if the important issues in sociology are any closer to resolution than before, this chapter will
examine contemporary writing in this area. The question of sociology's present direction will be inquiry into, and include some speculation on possible future directions for the discipline.
Chapter 2
A History of the Value Problem
Introduction

No single account of sociology's beginnings can be called a complete one, despite the fact that some histories trace the subject matter to ancient Greece. Although the ideas advanced by Auguste Comte may not be original, it was he who is responsible for the synthesis of thought which created a new science of society.

The ideas of Spencer, Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Pareto, Simmel, and others reflect the atmosphere of the nineteenth century, a century of upheaval and unrest which created the technological advances of the Industrial Revolution. In North America, writings of a sociological nature were being produced at the same time as those in Europe. It is difficult, however, to pinpoint a specific beginning in the way that European sociology traces itself to Comte. North American sociology does not lay claim to intellectual giants as European sociology has done, and writers disagree on whose work can be considered most significant in the early stages.

The crisis of sociology (Gouldner, 1970) existing today is perceived as a relatively recent phenomenon (Sztompka, 1979; 16). The only new thing, however, is the perception. The crisis, if it can properly be labelled such, is nearly as old as the discipline itself, and centres on the issue of values in sociology. To understand the nature of its beginnings, it is necessary to trace the historical development of the crisis, beginning with its initial representatives, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber.
A History of Crisis

Beginnings: Durkheim and Weber

Emile Durkheim's principal objective was to extend scientific rationalism to human behaviour (Coser, 1971: 142). For Durkheim, observes Aron (1967: 71), scientific thought was the only form of thought valid in his age. Sociology was to be completely free of philosophy (Benoit-Smullyan, 1948: 500), and was to be guided by facts and data (Turner and Beechley, 1981: 322).

Although Durkheim did not deal explicitly with the issue of values as they pertained to the sociological enterprise, his methodological writings are considered the best representation of the positivist school of sociology.

Durkheim asserted that society was a reality which could not be reduced to psychological or other factors (Gould, 1963: 39). His basic methodological postulate was that one should treat social phenomena as facts (Benoit-Smullyan, 1948: 501). Social facts could not be explained on a biological or psychological level because they were external to individuals, enduring over time as individuals came and went (Coser, 1971: 129). Sociology was to Durkheim not an individualistic science, but instead tended to concentrate on the sources of social order and disorder, and the forces which create order and disorder in society (Coser, 1971: 133). Society was not merely a sum of individuals to Durkheim; he felt that the system formed by the association of individuals represented a specific reality, that is society (Aron, 1967: 119).
Social reality was ascribed to the group, then, rather than the individual, and social facts were not reducible to individual facts (Timasheff, 1955: 106).

A social fact could be recognized by the fact that it forced itself on the individual (Aron, 1967: 62). Durkheim (1950: 13) defined it as "any way of behaving, fixed or not, which is capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint", or "any way of behaving which is universal throughout a given society and has an existence of its own independent of its individual manifestations". Such facts could consist of laws, norms, roles, institutions, currents of opinion, regular patterns in statistics such as crime or suicide rates (Papineau, 1978: 6). Sociology, for Durkheim, was a study of social facts, the science of the genesis and functioning of institutions (Timasheff, 1955: 107). He felt that sociology must be rigorously scientific in its investigation of social facts:

"All that is given, all that is subject to observation has thereby the character of a thing. To treat phenomena as things is to treat them as data, and constitute the point of departure of science. Social phenomena are things... They are the unique data of a sociologist (Durkheim, 1950: 27)."

It was Durkheim, according to Coser (1971: 140), who clearly established the logic of the functional approach to the study of society. Durkheim asserted that it is not enough to show the cause on which a social fact depends, that one must also show the function of a social fact in the establishment of social order (Coser, 1971: 141). This concept, that is the
separation of cause and function, was a key part of Durkheim's method (Rossides, 1978; 276). He attacked the procedure of explaining social facts in terms of their utility or the satisfaction they yielded to individuals, insisting that only an explanation in terms of cause was acceptable as science (Barnes, 1948; 503).

Social facts, then, must never be explained by individualistic actions or processes (Barnes, 1948; 502). Durkheim stated that the determining cause of any social fact had to be sought amongst antecedent social facts, and never by a fact of a lower order (Barnes, 1948; 502). Social facts must be analyzed only in terms of other social facts, then, and the sociologist must employ the comparative method (Elias, 1978; 279). Durkheim was most insistent on this point, asserting that comparative sociology was not a particular branch of sociology, but constituted sociology itself insofar as sociology ceased to be purely descriptive and aspired to account for facts (Elias, 1978; 179).

Durkheim viewed sociology as a scientific enterprise (Lengermann, 1974; 196). He can, notes Lengermann (1974; 196), be called the chief spokesman for the pro-science or positivistic position. In sharp contrast to this position, Weber can be pointed to as the chief critic of positivism in his time (Lengermann, 1974; 196).

Max Weber's achievements are considerable and varied. It has been argued that no sociologist before or since has
displayed Weber's intellectual range or sophistication (Turner and Beeghley, 1981: 193). His extensive writings have included the topics of religion, various aspects of economic life, political organization and authority, bureaucracy and other types of large organizations, and class and caste (Inkeles, 1964: ?). It is Weber's work in the area of methodology and value-neutrality, however, which has had the most profound and enduring effect on sociology.

While Durkheim concentrated on patterning social science after the natural sciences, contending that social facts could be studied as rigorously as physical facts, Weber pointed to those things which differentiate the two. He never doubted that value was an intégral part of sociology. Unlike Durkheim, Weber did not discuss social facts as objective. He asserted that theorists cannot be without presuppositions, cannot avoid attaching meaning to whatever they do, even in science, and that values are what prompt people to do science in the first place (Rössides, 1978: 380).

Like Spencer (1891), Weber dealt with sources of bias. In Weber's investigations, however, the issue is examined both more critically and at a deeper level of understanding. Until Weber, no extensive attempt had been made to separate the science of sociology from the values of the individual seeking to define it.

Weber contended that research can and should be value-free (Turner and Beeghley, 1981: 196). These authors (Turner and Beeghley, 1981: 196) assert that his goal was "to show how
objective research is logically possible in academic disciplines that deal with subjectively meaningful phenomena". Weber outlined a scheme to make such a social science attainable.

The selection of a research problem, asserts Weber (1949: 47), has a value element which is unconnected with questions of scientific validity, but is, rather, a value-relevant task. The research process, however, should not be affected by the researcher's values (Turner and Beeghley, 1981: 212; Dawe, 1971: 39), and the interpretation of findings should reflect what is, that is existential or factual knowledge, rather than what one felt ought to be, that is normative knowledge (Weber, 1949: 51). This means that once the sociologist chooses a problem, he must hold his own and others' values in abeyance to follow what is revealed by the data. The researcher, then, must not impose values on the data, but instead follow the guidelines revealed by the data whether or not the results agree with his own or with the prevailing values (Coser, 1971: 221). Value-neutrality implied, for Weber, that science could never tell anyone what he should do, but only clarify what he can or wants to do (Weber, 1949: 54).

Despite his insistence on value-neutrality, Weber did not advocate the use of natural science methodology in the social sciences (Zeitlin, 1968: 115). He felt, rather, that the social sciences could accomplish something which is not possible in the natural sciences, that is the subjective
understanding of the action of an individual (Înkeles, 1964; 96). This understanding, which he proposed as social science methodology, he called verstehen (Coser, 1971; 220). Verstehen was not simply to be an attempt to understand human behaviour by observing and interpreting it, but also to include the subjective aspects of the meaning and motivation of the behaviour on the part of the actor (Coser, 1971; 220). Such understanding, however, was not to be a private affair of the observer which could not be verified by others (Schutz, 1963; 239), but must be gained by procedures subject to verification by others (Aron, 1967; 192).

Reaction to Weber's writings on value has been strong, and it is his insistence on value-neutrality which has come to be one of sociology's most divisive forces. This is not to imply that Weber was the only sociological writer of his time to deal with such an issue. The idea was scattered throughout the writing of this period (Lengermann, 1974; 167). While Durkheim concentrated on patterning social science after the natural sciences, contending that social facts could be studied as rigorously as physical facts, Weber pointed to those things which differentiate the two. He never doubted that value was an integral part of sociology. Durkheim posited the existence of social facts; while Weber insisted that social facts existed only by virtue of the concepts used to define and organize them (Parkin, 1982; 31). Weber did not emphasize the facts of social reality, but reality's defining quality, that is value (Sahay, 1971; 2).
It was his view that human beings live lives of meaning, and that therefore social scientists must study social relationships as patterns of meaning (Rossides, 1978: 379). In today's language, observes Rossides (1978: 379), one would say instead that all behaviour is cultural, energized by values and norms.

Weber not only pointed to the existence of values within the objects of social science investigation, however, but also to their existence within the social scientist. It is values which prompt the very establishment of science, and science, according to Weber (1949: 110), is a value which is peculiar to our culture. He viewed science as part of the process of increasing rationalization which is characteristic of modern Western society (Aron, 1967: 183).

If science itself is culture-bound, and the result of a particular set of values, then the scientific investigator must be wary of the intrusion of personal values into his work. Weber saw differences in the natural and social sciences as arising from differences in the intentions of the investigators, in the different aims and interests of the scientist (Coser, 1971: 219). These aims differ in that the natural scientist is interested in those aspects of events which can be formulated into abstract laws, while the social scientist is also interested in the particular qualities of people, and in the meanings they ascribe to their behaviour (Coser, 1971: 219). Weber argued that if the social sciences imitated the natural sciences in seeking to discover general
laws of behaviour, then little useful knowledge would be produced by the social sciences (Turner and Beeghley, 1981; 201). It was, finally, the fact that the significance of cultural events presupposes a value orientation toward such events which differentiated the natural from the social sciences (Zeitlin, 1968; 115).

Weber went on to enumerate two specific applications of value as it relates to the social sciences (Coser, 1971; 19). The first he called value-relevance, referring only to the investigator's initial choice of research problems (Weber, 1949; 21).

It is his discussion of value in its second application, that is as it relates to investigation itself, which requires further exploration and explanation. Weber asserted that in making observations, research must be value-free in the sense that is concepts must be clearly defined, agreed-upon rules of evidence followed, and logical inferences made (Turner and Beeghley, 1981; 196). In other words, the validity of science requires that the scientist not project his value judgments, or his aesthetic or political preferences, into his work (Aron, 1967; 184).

His specific demands on this score, however, were modest and limited in scope (Parkin, 1982; 32). Despite his contemporary title of arch-priest of value-neutrality (Dawe, 1971; 37), all Weber (1949; 6-8) actually insisted upon was that scholars refrain from proclaiming their personal and political views in the classroom. It is,
however, in the area of methodology that Weber’s concept of value becomes less clear.

Weber called sociology a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects (Timasheff, 1955; 181). He insisted on concentrating on individual action as the unit of sociological analysis, and viewed social entities such as the state, class, institution, etc., as the results of the organization of particular acts of individuals (Benton, 1977; 113). He rejected the search for general laws (Turner and Beeghley, 1981; 214) in favour of interpretive understanding while, at the same time, insisting that the social researcher should have the capacity to distinguish between reality and value (Weber, 1949; 58). The researcher had a scientific duty to see the truth (Weber, 1949; 58). Weber specified the task of sociology as interpretation of action in terms of its subjective meaning, and claimed that its function was the understanding of typically differentiated individuals (Timasheff, 1955; 181). These strictures differ radically from those laid down by Durkheim and other positivists, not only on the subject of research, but on the entire conception of sociology itself.

Weber argued that social action exists only insofar as the acting individual attaches meaning to his behaviour. The method of verstehen he proposed for studying this action (Coser, 1971; 221) did not actually originate with Weber, but with William Dilthey (Turner and Beeghley, 1981; 215).
Weber, however, altered the concept from one of intuitive understanding to one of empathetic understanding (Coser, 1971: 220). This method was particularly applicable to the social sciences, according to Weber, because comprehension of human action may be immediate rather than occurring through intermediate mechanisms such as mathematical propositions or previously established laws (Aron, 1967; 184). Such immediate comprehension and ability of explanation meant that the dimension of the motivations, interpretations, etc., of subjects under study became part of the explanation (Lengermann, 1971; 177). It also allowed the investigator to place the behaviour into the subject's larger context of meaning (Lengermann, 1974; 180).

Despite his insistence that sociology be value-free, then, Weber (1949; 110) acknowledged that values were necessarily part of the research process when he explained that:

"The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests exclusively upon the ordering of the given reality according to categories which are subjective in a specific sense, namely in that they present the presuppositions of our knowledge and are based on the presupposition of the value of those truths which empirical knowledge alone is able to give us (Weber, 1949; 110)."

Weber's (1949; 90) solution to this aspect of the value problem was the use of ideal types. An ideal type is a mental construct formed by the exaggeration or accentuation of one or more traits or points of view (Timasheff, 1955; 177). According to Weber (1949; 90), the ideal type...
"...was formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct... In its conceptual purity, this mental construct...cannot be found anywhere in reality. It is a utopia (Weber, 1949: 90)."

A conceptual tool such as the ideal type was sufficiently inclusive to comprehend both rational schemes and historical generalizations (Lachmann, 1970: 27). It was meant to serve not as an average or an 'ought to be', but rather as an accentuation of the essential characteristics and tendencies of the phenomenon or event under examination (Zeitlin, 1968: 120).

Weber's ideas and propositions were a radical departure from the current of mainstream sociology as conceived by Durkheim and others of the time. By raising the issue of values and attempting to construct a sociology which took values into account, Weber set himself against the positivistic thrust of the beginning sociological enterprise. Although he insisted that social science be value-free in conducting its researches, he was also adamant that it take values openly into account as societal phenomena. His methodological writings may be termed an effort to understand and explain the values in which people believe (Aron, 1967: 187). He made a serious attempt to create an objective science, rather than one distorted by value judgments (Aron, 1967: 187).

**Beyond Durkheim and Weber**

No immediate sense of crisis appeared to have affected sociology as a result of the widely divergent views of Weber and Durkheim. Weber's ideas appeared in North American sociology,
but tended to reproduce the arguments between a value-laden and a value-free sociology at a lower level of sophistication (Horowitz, 1968: 41). Independently of Weber, but at approximately the same time however, C.H. Cooley, W.I. Thomas, and G.H. Mead argued that the study of human actions must be concerned with the meanings that people attribute to the situations in which they find themselves (Coser, 1971: 310). Cooley (1971: 311) argued that the difference between knowledge of a horse or dog and knowledge of a person is rooted in a person's ability to have a sympathetic understanding of motives and reasons for acting.

Such ideas cannot be said to have made serious inroads on mainstream sociology, however, in terms of how most sociological study was actually taking place. It was a fact that almost all the early sociologists agreed that sociology was an empirically oriented science (Lengermann, 1974: 196). Sociology at this time can be identified as largely Durkheimian in the sense that it shared a decidedly positivistic outlook. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an era which saw rapid industrialization in western society, increasing rationality, as expected, was reflected in the sociology which studied it.

Motwani (1967: 137) asserts that after sociology's inception and optimism in the nineteenth century, twentieth century sociology came to a pause, and that intellectual decay began in the early years of this century. This pause was marked by:
"...an intense preoccupation with static sociology to the neglect of dynamic... a feeling that the only scientific models worth cultivating were in natural sciences which led to a slavish imitation of certain forms unfitted to sociology... an unhealthy and useless preoccupation with abstruse methods... with renaming old things and ideas with new words... and the use of statistical methods to 'prove' things readably intelligible to the human mind without such devious time-consuming methods (Motwani, 1967, 138)."

Horowitz (1968, 41) calls this period fateful for studies in sociological theory, and claims that "American sociology during this decade digested and disseminated a hundred years of European intellectual experience."

But not everyone viewed this period in such negative terms; some, in fact, saw it as "the ending of the first long formative period of the making of sociology... the significant ending of a period of achievement... the significant beginning of a new period of development (Fletcher, 1971, 8)." This new period of development in sociology, however, ignored the issue of values.

Such neglect does not mean that value ceased to exist as an issue; it does imply, however, that certain values and assumptions were so entrenched amongst sociologists as a group that they were unable or unwilling to regard them as specific sociological objects which were themselves in need of examination. MacIver's *Society: A Textbook of Sociology* (1937), which was widely used in its time, perhaps expresses best the dominant viewpoint:

"(1) Science is concerned not with the establishment of ultimate ends or values, but only with the relation
between means and ends; the ends can never be demonstrated, but only the relevance or adequacy of means to postulated ends. (2) Science is concerned with what is, not with what in the last resort ought to be; and it must always avoid the confusion of the is and the ought, of the fact and the ideal. (3) Social science has as part of its subject matter the valuations operative in social institutions and organizations but not the valuations of these valuations on the part of those who investigate them. (4) Social science in investigating the instrumental character of institutions and organizations, that is, their services and disservices as means to postulated ends, must always guard against the danger that the bias of the investigator will magnify those aspects of service or disservice which give support to his own valuations (MacIver, 1937: 520).

Social science was fascinated by the model of natural science, and tended to accept as natural all that exists and is subject to observation, as they assumed the existence of a hidden order that the scholar has to discover (Szacki, 1979: 457). In taking this positivist direction, social science had ignored Weber's insistence that imitation of the natural sciences would fail to produce very much useful knowledge (Turner and Beeghley, 1981: 201). They ignored, too, the demand that the social researcher have the capacity to distinguish between empirical knowledge and value judgments (Weber, 1974: 77).

Recognition of the value problem was possibly rendered more difficult, too, by the dissimilar view of science generally held at the time Weber raised the issue:

"The scientism from Comte to Durkheim, from Spencer to Peirce, from Marx to Weber, was still soaked in moralism. Even Weber's passionate insistence on a value-free science was fuelled and victualled by a belief in honour, integrity... (Pelz, 1974: 7)."
In contemporary terms, science is much less engaged with the society in which it operates. The first major critic of such a stance was Robert Lynd. Lynd dealt with the issue of values within the social sciences and the values revealed or concealed by the social science of his day. His discussion of values and social science has much in common with Weber, and follows Weber's thought closely. He observes, as did Weber:

"...values may be and are properly and necessarily applied in the preliminary selection of 'significant', 'important' problems for research. They may be but should not be applied thereafter to bias one's analysis or the interpretation of the meanings inherent in one's data (Lynd, 1939; 183)."

Lynd (1939; 184) adds, however, that this does not justify the social sciences in their wholesale and official rejection of values. Lynd (1939) agrees with Weber's (1982; 33) belief in the social scientist's capacity to distinguish between empirical knowledge and value judgments, asking:

"Why do we train scientists? To give them refined techniques of observation, analysis, and control, to be sure. But, even more important, the outstanding characteristic of a well trained scientist, is his ability to distinguish 'significant' from 'insignificant' problems and data (Lynd, 1939; 183)."

At the time that Lynd was making such assertions, he felt it was particularly important that social science clarify its values within the society which created and nurtured it. Until 1929, the social sciences were considered only the poor relations of the natural sciences (Lynd, 1939; 3). The depression of 1929, however, reversed the relative emphases of natural and social science, creating intense
demands for knowledge and analysis of critical social problems (Lynd, 1939; 7). The fact that most social science research in our culture is done within colleges and universities by people who make their living as teachers means that the teacher-researcher carries a heavy responsibility (Lynd, 1939; 9-10). Under such conditions, Lynd (1939; 8) insists that it is inconceivable that anyone would consent to conduct his research under demonstrated restrictions once the restrictions had been recognized. The restriction he recognized as major was an over-ready acceptance of the major assumptions of the existing systems (Lynd, 1939; 4). This included the adoption and imitation of natural science methodology contributing to the positivistic thrust of mainstream sociology (Lynd, 1939; 4). In common with Weber, Lynd (1939; 178) insisted that a social scientist has no place, as a scientist, as a party to power politics.

Despite Lynd’s effort in this direction, his concern with the search for the proper goals of sociology, and the first testimony of the ideological and theoretical crisis in American sociology (Szacki, 1979; 457), there was little or no immediate effect on mainstream sociology. No sense of crisis was evidenced at this point. No major alterations in the conduct of social science took place. The social sciences remained fascinated by the model of natural science (Szacki, 1979; 457).

This did not mean that sociology ceased to be self-critical. The next major work on the issue of values,
however, and one which seemed to have much more impact in terms of the attention paid to it, did not appear until twenty years later in 1959, when C. Wright Mills broached it in *The Sociological Imagination*.

In this book, Mills (1959) pointed out that,

"...no problem can be adequately formulated unless the values involved and the apparent threat to them are stated. These values and their imperilment constitute the terms of the problem itself (Mills, 1959: 129)."

He insisted that social scientists do their work on the basis of certain values, and agreed with Weber when he wrote that the values of social science have been selected from the values in Western society (Mills, 1959: 178).

Mills (1959: 196) went a step further than either Weber or Lynd, however, in discussing scholarship as a choice of how to live as well as a career choice. In insisting that sociological work is a lifestyle in which all aspects of one's life become part of such work, Mills (1959: 123) was calling for less emphasis on formal methodology in the strictly scientific sense. He was, in essence, asking for exploration in search of new and more suitable methods which would make the values of sociology explicit and demonstrable.

Although Mills has been referred to as the sociologist who has made the greatest political impact (Collins, 1981: 297), the next major figure to deal in this area, Alvin Gouldner, may actually have had more of an impact. His initial attack was on Max Weber (Gouldner, 1961). Gouldner (1961) struck, initially, at Weber's advocacy of a value-free
sociology, calling it part of the ideology of a working group and ridiculing it as a myth. In this discussion, however, Gouldner (1961) concentrates on the moralizing aspects of sociology, such as Weber's (1982; 33) stricture that the classroom was not to be used as a platform for political proseleyzing. He does go on to discuss the deeper implications of insisting on value-neutrality, probing into the uses that have been made of it. He points out that a doctrine of value-neutrality is taken, by some, to mean that the market on which they can vend their sociological skills is unlimited (Gouldner, 1961; 42). If this is true, he notes, then there is no reason why the sociologist cannot sell his knowledge to help spread a disease just as easily as he could to fight it (Gouldner, 1961; 42). It allows sociology to ignore current human problems and remain estranged from the larger world (Gouldner, 1961, 43). Such estrangement, states Gouldner (1961; 43) means that sociologists no longer feel free to criticize society and therefore avoid the potential dangers which such criticism could create for them.

Although Gouldner (1961; 46) is quick to deny that all sociologists assume this stance, and names a handful of those who have not, he insists that sociological tradition has led to increasing involvement with the intellectualization and professionalization of sociology at the expense of moral and ethical concerns. Even in educating students, he insists, value neutrality is inadequate to the task of sociology, and he asks:
"If sociologists ought not express their personal values in the academic setting, how then are students to be safeguarded against the unwitting influence of these values which shape the sociologist's selection of problems, his preferences for certain hypotheses or conceptual schemes, and his neglect of others (Gouldner, 1961: 51)."

Gouldner did not restrict his critique to Weber, however, but expanded on the topic at great length in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (1970). In this work, he does a critical analysis of the major traditional and theoretical approaches to sociology through his concern with how these approaches contain implicit value stances which he calls domain assumptions (Gouldner, 1970). It is not only theoretical stances which contain domain assumptions. Sociologists themselves operate on the basis of unconscious domain assumptions, as do we all, which affect the character of their work (Gouldner, 1970: 36-8). This aspect of value neutrality, that is whether neutrality could be violated unknowingly in spite of the sociologist's intentions to the contrary, was not dealt with by Weber.

In attempting to elaborate on and further define the problems around the value issue, sociologists like Mills and Gouldner attempt to come to terms with Weber's methodological pronouncements. Their attempts have brought the issue to the fore, and attention to it has created the perception of crisis in western sociology.

**Conclusion**

The founders of sociology tended to make far-reaching
claims for the scope and potential of the new field (Lengermann, 1974; 79). In seeking both differentiation and legitimacy, sociology ignored the values issue and concentrated instead on attaining the status of a science. Despite such concentration, however, the issue of values continued to surface from time to time.

This is not a new issue, then, and not a new crisis. The values of sociology reflect the culture in which it operates, and have done so since its beginnings. The perception of crisis occurred at a time when crisis and discontent were becoming widespread in western society (Sztompka, 1979: 16). The fact that such discontent existed in society, no doubt, assisted in raising the consciousness of sociologists to the necessity of examining traditional assumptions about the value-neutral nature of sociology.

Along with the desire of some sociologists to openly include values in sociology, however, came the effort to preserve sociology from such contamination. Having at last come within reach of attaining the status of a science (Madge, 1962: 1), many sociologists saw the issue as one which had the potential of destroying all that had been accomplished to reach such a position. Sociology, maintains McKee (1970: 98), lives in an eternal tension between two polar thrusts: a concern for the relevance of sociology in providing an understanding of society and of the times, and a conscious determination to create a science of sociology.
main, somewhere between these extremes. Division into camps seems to rest, in part, on the interpretation of value neutrality as originally raised by Weber.
Chapter 3
The Continuing Crisis
Introduction

Interpretation of what Weber wrote regarding value-neutrality ranges from accusations that he was rationalistic, positivistic, and empirical (Pelz, 1974: 7), to praises of his many-sided attempt to bridge the gap between science and value (Dawe, 1971: 39). Despite the profusion of renditions and interpretations, Weber must be credited, at least, with recognition of the issue.

General agreement on the value-relevance of task/problem selection seems to exist, and this issue, therefore, requires no elucidation. Agreement, however, ends here; the various ways in which values may apply at this juncture are still being analyzed and re-analyzed. The positivist position holds that whether or not values exist is essentially irrelevant, as values are not amenable to observation or measurement, either in the subject or the investigator. At the opposite extreme is the position taken by Gouldner (1970), which not only concedes that the researcher has values but holds that these values affect, and should therefore become part of, the research. Some who take this position also attempt to account for the subjects' values, recommending that as researchers we should utilize the subjects' values rather than our own (Etzioni, 1969; 137).

Such extremes exist as a result of the entrenchment of viewpoints on the value question. Since Weber's time, however, the value issue has come to involve far more than a simple exhortation to avoid political proselytizing in the
classroom. Issues upon which Weber touched only lightly, such as the researcher's duty to see scientific truth, have become major points of controversy between the camps in sociology.

By ignoring the value issue and modelling sociology after the natural sciences to gain respectability and authority, its originators created the perception that sociology had validity only as a science of society. It would be difficult to take issue with this ideal. Sociology was, after all, no more or less than what these sociologists thought it was. By raising the issue of values as it applied specifically to the social sciences, Weber had called the sociological enterprise itself into question. As science, sociology requires the use of a value-neutral procedure such as scientific methodology. Weber agreed that sociology was indeed a science, and that it must, therefore, be value-neutral. He differed, however, in the area of methodology and on what type of methodology can be considered value-neutral, or scientific, in the social sciences.

Mainstream North American sociology simply ignored Weber's ideas for some time. When the argument resurfaced, however, it had become infinitely more complicated. Values were not only a part of the subject matter of sociology, but existed as part of the sociological researcher as well. These values could be conscious or unconscious - and positions with regard to handling them ranged from completely laying one's values aside for research purposes to not only admitting,
but acting upon, the basis of these values. Resurfacing called into question whether it was possible to ignore values - and, if not, whether sociology could then be considered objective and, if not, whether sociology was a science at all or merely a collection of interesting descriptions of society. Value-neutrality, then, had come to be equated with objectivity and science, and values with subjectivity and commitment. In trying to incorporate value and still keep sociology scientific, Weber has earned both vilification and praise from each side of the dispute, being interpreted according to the particular proclivity of each writer.

The question in contemporary sociology has not actually altered perceptibly, despite these complicating factors, from that raised in Weber's time: is a science of society possible? It is not possible to attempt an answer without examining how this argument is expressed in contemporary terms. Such examination must take into account those derivatives of the issue which are so hotly disputed now - matters as basic as perception and language, and how they reflect one's values or the values of one's society, and whether sociology can be legitimated as a value-neutral science in light of the potential effects of these values.

**A Paradigm for Analysis**

To analyze the concept of value in its contemporary implications for social science is most appropriate within a framework which allows its numerous implications to be fully investigated. Economist Franz Machlup (1963) has
constructed such a paradigm, specifying four categories of analysis of potential value influence, which will be used in an attempt to convey an overview of the issue:

1) The analyst's judgment may be biased for one reason or another, perhaps because his views of the social 'Good' or his personal pecuniary interests in the practical use of his findings interfere with the proper scientific detachment.

2) Some normative issues may be connected with the problem under investigation, perhaps ethical judgments which colour some of the investigator's incidental pronouncements - *obiter dicta* - without, however, causing a bias in his research.

3) The interest in solving the problems under investigation is surely affected by values, since, after all, the investigator selects his problems because he believes that their solution would be of value.

4) The investigator in the social sciences has to explain his observations as results of human actions which can be interpreted only with reference to motives and purposes of the actors, that is, to values entertained by them (Machlup, 1963: 162)."

Although this set of categorizations is by no means exhaustive, it can be considered adequate for the purposes of this analysis due to the implications and assumptions contained in it which will be investigated and included in the examination.

**Biased Judgment**

That the investigator's judgment may be biased by his views of social good or by financial interests is a supposition with equal application to the natural and social sciences. The natural sciences are as susceptible to ideas of good to be done or profit to be made as the social sciences. Natural science, for instance, experienced accelerated advancement
resulting directly from the rise of capitalism when merchants turned to rapid production techniques (Turner, 1975: 1). The momentum engendered by the Industrial Revolution has increased, and the nature of many of the inventions and discoveries of physical science is reflective of the profit-seeking societies from which they arise. Few would deny that such inventions, on the whole, are and have been of great benefit to mankind in some ways, and a disadvantage, at least temporarily, to others. The invention of the machine in the Industrial Revolution was highly beneficial in that previously unavailable goods were now available to many. At the same time, however, the machine put many craftsmen out of business.

Leveling criticism toward the natural sciences on this issue, however, does not nullify its relevance to the social sciences. Sociology and other social sciences are equally subject to such pressures and interests. John Galton's effort to validate his belief in the genetically grounded superiority of the wealthy and thereby justify their claim to power, has led to the development of the present-day I.Q. test (Heidbreder, 1933: 21). The sociologist is as susceptible to ideas of what is good, right, or ought to be, as the social worker, or to ministering to his own financial needs as the factory owner.

Although not specifically alluded to as part of the scientist's view of good, right, beneficial or profitable, the location of both the sociologist and sociology within society also bears on this issue. The sociologist's views
of the social good are those, presumably, drawn from or endemic to these locations. As part of a specific social class, race, sex, or age group, the sociologist has certain perceptions of good which will probably conflict with the ideas of other groups. Moreover, sociologists as a group are themselves members of a profession which has a specific location in academia, government, politics, and the mass media (Berger and Kellner, 1981: 165). What is considered good may be very different in such settings than outside them, and what is good for sociology or science may not be seen in as positive a light by the society in which it operates. Sociology's best-known example of such conflict is Project Camelot which, as mentioned in a previous chapter, investigated the causes of revolutions and insurgency in underdeveloped areas of the world (Horowitz, 1968: 288), and caused a great deal of anti-American feeling in Chile. As part of any bureaucratic structure, sociology and sociologists may come to be perceived as intellectual supporters of the status quo, if only through their efforts to maintain a value-free position with respect to research done within a specific setting or on behalf of specific agencies.

Normative Issues

Machlup's second category of subjective meaning - normative issues directly connected with the problem - may be somewhat more abstracted from the more immediate, pragmatic
issue but can, nonetheless, affect research in various ways. Decisions on normative issues within the problem itself are more easily resolved by the natural sciences, where these considerations are most often either non-existent or seen as relatively clear-cut. Even the deliberate crippling and maiming of animals, for example, is viewed as more humane than allowing disease to go unchecked due to lack of research. In many natural science investigations, too, normative issues are simply not relevant to the subject matter because the subject matter is considered inanimate (Cotgrove, 1978: 34).

As a contextual aspect of the research process, values are seen as problematic for only the social sciences. The elucidation of human affairs requires their examination in context, that is within the society in which they appear. Because the structure of any society is a reflection of the values within it, its study is laden with value implications. To begin with, it is inferred that social science necessarily utilizes the values of the larger society as a starting point. Outside of values, then, sociology has no starting point, and is tainted with values by the very nature of the enterprise it has undertaken.

As a starting point, however, value may be seen as having tainted all scientific endeavour (Cotgrove, 1978: 35). Astronomy and mathematics have histories as strewn with questions of value as the social sciences, when their researches touched upon areas previously considered the
domain of the church (Heidbreder, 1933: 22). The acceptance of such fields as pure science, regardless of their value-laden beginnings, may be attributed simply to the fact that they have been around longer than sociology (Turner, 1975: 1-2).

Despite these issues, however, Machlup (1963: 162) maintains that the researcher may lay aside the normative considerations of the problem without causing a bias in his research. In light of Gouldner's (1961) assertion that it is impossible for the sociologist to be value-free, however, this aspect of subjectivity bears further examination, and relates to one of the most problematic aspects of the value issue. The issue underlying this is human perception itself, and whether such perception applied to other human beings can be considered objective in any sense. Applied to research, the perception issue is relevant both to the collection of data, or observation, and the interpretation of information after it has been collected.

It might be said that the value-free collection of data is an impossible task simply because of the nature of human perception. Through socialization, we learn to categorize and assign meanings to the world around us in particular ways. This implies, as Scheffler (1967: 25) notes, that we can never separate data from construction, and never observe in the sense that we merely register unconceptualized content which is interpreted in a later phase. While this may be held to be valid in one sense, it must be noted that persons capable of absolutely objective perception in Scheffler's sense must
be persons who know nothing whatsoever and are therefore incapable of performing science. To observe scientifically is to observe in a certain manner which has been agreed upon by scientists. Weber (1963: 380) observed that even the natural sciences cannot proceed without qualitative categories. C.I. Lewis (1967) disputes the notion that perception need even be an issue:

"...the mind may be as thoroughly active as you like; it may reach out to grasp the data... and may begin its processing from the very first instant of contact with them; yet its own active contribution may remain analytically distinguishable from the data themselves (Lewis, 1967: 25)."

Perception, however, can also be raised as an issue in the interpretation of findings. Facts, once it has been agreed that information collected in a specific manner constitute facts, must be ordered in some way to become science. Perhaps it is at this level that the social sciences are most severely self-critical.

Examination of data is subject to two types of analysis through unconscious value positions: the selective perception of facts which serve to validate a hypothesis, and the interpretation of those facts toward a particular viewpoint.

Given that the data are as objectively neutral as possible, the analyst must then step in and make decisions determining which facts are meaningful for his purpose. His choice of what is most significant in the data places him uncomfortably in the position of intellectually selective perception. The task of transforming quantitative into
qualitative data must, of necessity, involve a judgment. Various attitudes may be adopted toward any set of empirically gathered facts in the evaluation of their meaning. This implies that various interpretations or theoretical stances may be of equal import in soliciting facts from data and the various possible interpretations of equal validity, regardless of possible variation in meaning.

Formal scientific method provides no rational or empirical procedure for such decision-making in the social sciences. Such a method, instead, merely assumes the existence of a hypothesis as the beginning point of the investigation. Those facts which go against the hypothesis may tend to be unconsciously ignored or regarded from the outset as insignificant in the occurrence of the phenomenon in question.

In the same manner, interpretation of facts toward a particular viewpoint may occur as discussed with regard to Machlup's first category, that is as the result of what a researcher considers good or right. This type of value judgment may also occur without conscious intent on the researcher's part. To reiterate, the sociologist as a member of a particular group or class of people may adopt a stance as a result of such membership which unconsciously affects his perception of what is important. Gouldner (1974, 23) insists that the sociologist's special competence and training entitles him to make value judgments. This may be
regarded as a valid point provided that sociological researchers are both technically competent and are not operating in the realm of bad faith (Berger, 1963; 154).

Machlup mentions a further point in his second categorization which may not be as significant in terms of the value judgment of data, yet nonetheless bears mention: the deliberate injection of bias in a normative addendum to interpreted results. This question bears equally on the physical sciences, which have discovered and dealt with the invention of dynamite and the tools of biological and gas warfare (Lundberg, 1961; 37). In the presentation of such findings, natural scientists may remark on the potential usage of these tools without invalidating the findings themselves, as the same process is regarded as doing in the social sciences. It can be argued, then, that the deliberate evaluation of collected facts on a personal level is, in this sense, an unfair and ineffective condemnation of social science presentation.

Problem Selection

Machlup's comments on the task of problem selection in social science necessitate critical comment as well, both for their assumptions and the obvious implications of these assumptions. He states that the social science investigator selects his problems because he feels their solution would be of value (Machlup, 1963; 162). It is presumptuous of Machlup to assume that problem selection in the context of sociological investigation need necessarily imply application
in a social problems sense. Such an assumption would place
social science within the strictures of the drastically
reduced and consequently narrow field of social problems,
and such a focus would ultimately have to be used to justify
its existence. In its restriction to social science, such
an assertion serves as an implied justification of its
existence. Unavoidable as the question of problem selection
may be, the rationale of direct application of solutions is
neither required nor sufficient justification of investigatory
choices. Such justification, instead, leads to the necessity
of justifying more than the selection of a certain area or
topic for exploration. It implies that social science as an
enterprise requires such utilitarian justification. A
sociology aimed at seeking solutions as its primary goal is
thus deprived of other value and loses its status within the
bounds of science. The sociologist would then assume the
role and function of societal engineer or, at the least,
function only to provide information to those who would do the
engineering. Discovery and diagnosis of social ills and
concomitant recommendation of appropriate social therapy,
then, is insufficient justification for sociology's existence,
or the choice of task in a sociological context.

W.H. Werkmeister (1960; 4) maintains that knowledge
obtained in any field is of value to us in a twofold sense.
Initially, he posits the value of knowledge in the fact that it
satisfies man's innate curiosity (Werkmeister, 1960; 4).
William Foote Whyte selected his particular investigation
entitled *Street Corner Society* (1938) for such reasons. Man
is endlessly fascinated with himself in all contexts. Seeking
to satisfy such curiosity fails to abjure the practice
of social investigation, despite its potential lack of
direct usefulness in the formulation of social policy.
Werkmeister's (1960) premise may be criticized with respect
to the fact that, in a sense, it purports to advance philosophic
insight into the true nature of man in assuming that curiosity
is an innate characteristic of human beings. Historically,
however, this curiosity may be assumed to exist; it is, after
all the foundation on which science has been built. Whether
this interest and curiosity merit the status of values in
themselves is a separate issue for philosophical and semantic
debate, and not the crux of the issue as it affects sociology.

Werkmeister's (1960; 4) remaining proposition in the
twofold value of knowledge is more pragmatic in scope, without
the expedient justification of reference to diagnosis and
therapy of social ills: social science is valuable because
knowledge and understanding are crucial as the basis for
rational decisions and reasonable action (Werkmeister, 1960; 4).
While it is true that, as applied to society, one cannot deal
intelligently with any matter about which one is ignorant
(Huxley, 1937; 323), Werkmeister's (1960; 4) statement serves
to remove the sociologist from the area of direct formulation
of social policy and places him solidly within the scientific
community, nonetheless admitting to the potential utility of
scientific knowledge in the larger society. It follows, then,
that the sociologist is capable of promoting good in a societal context. As Berger (1963) notes:

"It is gratifying from certain value positions... that sociological insights have served in a number of instances to improve the lot of groups of human beings by uncovering morally shocking conditions or by clearing away collective illusions or by showing that socially desired results could be obtained in more humane fashion (Berger, 1963: 7)."

It also follows, however, that the implementation of social policy lies outside the realm of science, and thus beyond the control of scientists. As a pure scientist, the sociologist has no need to justify the selection of his problem. The performance of task selection contains obvious value judgments. The physical sciences may again be cited; few, if any, question the validity of choice by the chemist or biologist when selecting a particular field of study as worthy of investigation. Regardless of the researcher's motives for a choice, each scientist admits to particular fields of interest, and in the final analysis can remain loyal to science quite apart from selection. Weber (1971: 220) called the process value-relevant, and it is relevant. As Coser (1971: 220) notes, "What is considered 'worthy to be known' depends on the perspective of the inquiring scholar."

Interpretation of Findings

A more crucial issue has been advanced by Machlup (1963) with respect to the need of the social scientist to interpret observations in terms of the values of those he has observed. The existence of values within the observed phenomena does not
arise in the physical sciences. No consideration needs to be given to the value systems of atoms or molecules. It is in this respect that the physical and social sciences are most widely differentiated, and this issue toward which the social sciences find themselves subjected to their most rigorous criticism.

In this formulation, Machlup (1963) has essentially agreed with Weber's position with regard to how social science should be carried out. Weber (1971: 220) felt that the researcher must grasp the subjective meaning of an activity in order to fully understand it, while holding his own values in abeyance. He did not view this method as invalidation of scientific objectivity (Weber, 1971: 220). He maintained, in fact, that this empathetic understanding was not incompatible with the formulation of hypotheses and theoretical pronouncements, and took the position that this method did not undermine sociology as a science (Weber, 1971: 220).

If values are indissolubly bound up to time and place, however, the problematic issue of relativism must be examined. Mannheim (1977: 38) accepted Weber's proposition concerning the method of verstehen, noting that the human situation could only be understood when one also takes into account the conceptions which the participants have of it. He pursued the problem of relativism in terms of how it could be dealt with scientifically. "If knowledge is socially dependent, the objectivity of research is, at best, only partial, that is, knowledge from one perspective. Mannheim (1977: 38)
attempted to solve the dilemma of partial and dependent objectivity through his concept of relationism, in which he posited that knowledge, or truth, is dynamic rather than static, and therefore all viewpoints could complement each other in an openness to totality. Although this position can be interpreted as a purely semantic distinction, sociologists like C. Wright Mills (1959) have accepted the basic proposition. In support of his position, Mills (1959: 150) asserts that there is no law stated by any social scientist that is trans-historical, and that must not therefore be understood as having something to do with the specific structure of some period.

The problem of objectivity in this sense remains unsolved. Scientific methodology per se calls for the complete elimination of values from research, whether they be held by the researcher or by his subjects. This position, held to firmly, leads to a sociology which examines behaviour without reference to meaning, structures without reference to the process of interaction, and calls into question whether it is possible for sociology to be a science at all, as values are inextricably mixed into the data. Objectivity is seen to be both desirable and attainable in the natural sciences, but to postulate an objective social science may be to ask for something which is probably unattainable (Madge, 1965: xxi). A totally non-scientific approach, carefully taking all value positions into account, leads to research which is merely descriptive in an individualistic sense, and appears to be as
unproductive in its purist position as an absolute adherence to scientific methodology.

Conclusion

The issue of values cannot be ignored, but has become extremely complicated in terms of the number of areas which are affected by it. It appears, as a matter of fact, to call into question all over again the matter of sociology's attainment of scientific status. Although values as an issue touches all scientific endeavour, physical and social, it is particularly difficult to find methods for the social sciences which could account for values in a scientific way.
Chapter 4

The Responsibility and Accountability of Sociology
Introduction

Gwynn Nettler (1980, 52) claims that sociologists are seldom, if ever, held responsible for what they teach or advise. He does not state, however, what form he feels such responsibility should take or to whom it should be given.

The responsibility and accountability of sociology deals, basically, with the issues of morals and ethics, or the values of sociology itself. Three aspects of these values must be examined in order to determine the values of sociology:

1) how the sociologist conducts and performs his research,
2) what the sociologist claims are his results,
3) what action the sociologist either takes directly, or advises others to take as a consequence of his results.

Conducting and Performing Research

Although the purpose of conducting sociological research is presumably the gathering of information, treatment of the subjects of such investigation is important. Shils (1959, 123), for example, notes that:

"Sociological investigators do not always inform their interviewees of the true intention of their inquiries. Some deliberately falsify their roles as sociological investigators and tell less than the truth in order to avoid arousing resistance to the disclosure of the information sought."

Such methods may, indeed, lead to easier access to information for the sociological researcher. They may not be ethical, however, although justification for lack of disclosure by a
researcher to his subjects has been sought in a so-called higher morality of the bottom-line — that is, the ethic oriented to the line which totals profit and loss (Lee, 1978: 180). What may be gained in information possibly unavailable by other means might be lost in terms of the self-esteem of the investigator.

This, surely, is an ideal view. The sociological investigator using such methods may assume he is acting in the cause of a higher morality: that of gaining knowledge, which he views as a positive value. W.H. Werkmeister (1960: 4) maintains that knowledge obtained in any field of inquiry is of value to us. Such a belief, carried to an extreme, could easily serve as the justification for many less-than-open methods.

Disclosure of one's purpose can also be carried to an extreme, and finding some middle ground is not as simple as it might appear. To inform all of one's subjects what one is seeking to know may create insurmountable problems in certain types of sociological investigation. Participant observation is an excellent example. When William Foote Whyte undertook the study he published as Street Corner Society (1943), he was introduced into the community he wished to study by one of its informal leaders, and told only such leaders the true nature of his study (Whyte, 1943: 301). It cannot be said, however, that it was dishonest of Whyte to fail to inform everyone of his purpose. To do so would have defeated his purpose of gaining information in an
informal way. To inform no one of the purpose of such a study or project, however, can be equally problematic as informing everyone. This was the case in the study entitled Changing Attitudes Through Social Contact (Festinger and Kelley, 1951), which was an attempt to change the attitudes of a particular community about itself. Concurrent with the work to change community attitudes was the study, which was to examine how attitudes can be and are changed. The project leaders hired by the research team were not, however, informed of this double purpose, and the project eventually failed due to community suspicion of the research team (Festinger and Kelley, 1951).

Evidently, then, conducting research is not as simple as it may first appear. The issue is significant enough that in 1951 a Committee on Standards and Ethics in Research Practice of the American Sociology Society was formed to deal with it. Although the committee disbanded and reorganized several times and with several titles over a period of years, the American Sociological Association finally adopted a formal code of ethics in 1971 (Lee, 1978; 180-6). Even this code was adopted over the protests of some members. Friedrichs (1978; 186) predicted that the code would contribute to the divisiveness in sociology by baring even further the conflict between the value-free and the normative amongst sociologists.

The adoption of a code of ethics can be taken as evidence that the researcher must adopt a value of some sort with regard to conducting research and the treatment of research
subjects. Those who choose the stance of value neutrality in this regard implicitly accept the status quo of whatever situation they may have under study. This viewpoint could lead to the consequence, for example, that one would be permitted to give a strictly factual account of overt acts which could be observed in a concentration camp, and an equally factual analysis of the motivations of those involved in these acts, while not being permitted to speak of cruelty (Strauss, 1963; 433). While it may be true that, in such a situation, the sociological researcher does not create the cruel situation in which he finds and studies his subjects, he condones the existence of such conditions merely by his failure to condemn them. Becker (1970; 210) asserts that a sociologist who favours officialdom will be spared the accusation of bias, claiming that an apparently value-neutral stance is actually research from the perspective of those in power. Such a stance is so easily mistaken for value-freedom because, states Becker (1970; 207), members of the most powerful group in any system of ranked groups have the right to define the way things really are.

While taking a perspective, as Becker (1970; 207) claims, may be inevitable, it is necessary to be aware that all research is from some point of view. In this sense, it may be extremely important for the individual sociologist to be fully aware of his own values before embarking on a piece of research, at least insofar as they pertain to such investigation. It is, at least in part, in this sense that Alvin Gouldner (1970; 483)
claims that sociologists' prior assumptions will affect the character of their sociology. Gouldner (1970; 507) asks sociologists to develop an awareness of themselves, their historically evolving character, and their place in a historically evolving society.

Scientific method may be value-neutral as a procedure, but the issue of viewpoint arises before its use proceeds. The question of whose perspective the research will inevitably reflect may be viewed as intervening between the task of problem selection and the actual performance of the research. Whether this can be called value-relevant or value-neutral would depend very much on how it is handled.

Research Results

The researcher's perspective also impinges on the presentation of research findings. Norbert (1978; 153) claims that,

"...the sociologist should not be required or expected to express his convictions about how society ought to develop. Sociologists ought rather to free themselves from the notion that there is or even will be any necessary correspondence between the society they are investigating and their own social beliefs, their wishes and hopes, their moral predilections or their conceptions of what is just and humane."

C. Wright Mills (1959; 79) disagrees:

"Whether he wants it or not, or whether he is aware of it or not, anyone who spends his life studying society and publishing the results is acting morally and usually politically as well. The question is whether he faces this condition and makes up his own mind or whether he conceals it from himself and from others and drifts morally."
If all research is done from a particular perspective, as Becker (1970; 207) claims, or is a political and moral act as Mills (1959; 79) states, the question of whether one's values with regard to particular pieces of research ought to be made explicit in some way in its presentation arises. It is simple to answer yes to such a question; what place, though, is such revelation to be given? One might proceed by asking if it would even be possible for many sociologists to make overt statements regarding their values on certain issues. After all, the social scientist is part of the culture in which he lives, and never successfully frees himself completely from dependence on the dominant preconceptions and biases which exist around him (Myrdal, 1958; 119). The sociologist may be unaware of the underlying values of his research and/or unable to articulate them in a meaningful way.

Can it not be assumed that the values underlying any piece of research, the perspective from which it largely draws, are implicit in the presentation of findings and need not be declared in a specific manner? Thomas (1979; 134) raises this issue in asking if two social scientists, one of whom described Britain as a liberal democracy and the other of whom described it as a capitalist state, would advance the same explanations and evaluations of the British political processes. The answer, obviously, is that they would not. The point, however, is that the researcher's perspective in the case of either description reveals a great
deal about his values, without the addition of a specific and separate explanation. Without a thorough examination of a great deal of social science research, it is not possible to state emphatically that the values of their authors are, on the whole, implicitly evident to their readers. It would not be difficult, however, to analyze research in terms of such implicit perspectives.

The question, unfortunately, is nevertheless more complicated than Becker (1970) implies in advancing his superordinate/subordinate dichotomy. There are several other possible sources of distortion of findings in presentation.

To begin with, a researcher must select out those facts he perceives to be most pertinent before he can begin to present his findings. Again, the problem of human perception arises, but in this case it can be seen to be a dilemma which has yet to be solved for the social scientist. Scheffler (1967: 25) notes that we can never separate data from construction, and never observe in the sense that we merely register unconceptualized content which can be interpreted in a later phase of research. Observation, however, can be structured in a particular way. A consensual style of interpretive perception, after all, is the substance of scientific methodology. The researcher can be aware of whose point of view his research will best be capable of perceiving. To be presented, however, certain facts must be selected out at the expense of others, and ordered in a certain way. Such examination of collected data allows for two types
of value analysis: the selective perception of facts which serve to validate the hypothesis, and the interpretation of facts toward a particular viewpoint.

The choice of what is most significant in the data places the investigator in the position of deliberate selective perception, without the structure of scientific methodology to guide him in an enterprise which involves subjects who have values. The task of transforming quantitative into qualitative data involves a judgment by the researcher. Those facts which appear to go against a hypothesis may be regarded, unintentionally, as insignificant in the occurrence of the phenomenon in question. As Martin (1978; 142) asserts:

"Scientists are human; like everyone else their behaviour and even their perceptions are sometimes affected by their value commitments. Their values and beliefs may induce them - either consciously or unconsciously - to overlook evidence or to misconstrue evidence that might go against their well-entrenched views and commitments."

This could be viewed as the final possible step which goes into what is called the experimenter's effect, first described by Rosenthal (1978; 171) - that is, that the expectancy an experimenter has about the outcome of an experiment unwittingly affects the outcome of the experiment in the direction of the expectancy. Scientific facts do not exist per se, waiting to be discovered by scientists. A scientific fact, according to Myrdal (1958; 153) is "a construction abstracted from a complex and interwoven reality by means of arbitrary definitions and classifications." While
judgment may be required in fact selection, and such judgment may not be as neutral as might be ultimately desired, the research enterprise would most certainly be unmanageable without it. This, presumably, is one of the reasons for the many years of training demanded of sociologists - to ensure that their ability to make such judgments is equal to the task. In research, one could then assume that a judgment implies a reasoned selection, a calculation of costs, a weighing of alternatives in terms of some standard or ideal (Meehan, 1969; 28). Gouldner (1963; 23) insists that the sociologist's special technical competence entitles him make such value judgments.

The interpretation of facts after they have been selected and ordered is an even more complicated task. Language itself presents a real difficulty in this area. Freedom to utilize words, either positive or perjorative, as implicit evaluative statements of interpretation contributes to a great deal of speculation on the veracity and accuracy of much social science research. This is, in one sense, a metaphysical argument based on the nature of reality as opposed to the linguistic forms used to represent that reality. If the Whorfian hypothesis is basically correct, and language is not just an encoding process for voicing one's ideas and needs, but instead is a shaping force which provides habitual grooves of expression, and thus predisposes people to see the world in a certain way (Haviland, 1978; 103), then all efforts to seek objectivity in social science must necessarily fail unless
and until we all speak a common language. Such a language would have to clearly define all common meanings in order that an agreement analogous to scientific methodology be reached.

The linguistic representation of value concepts, in particular, can become highly difficult. A simple illustration of this dilemma can be found in the description of a quality attributed to various persons in the statement, "I am firm, thou are obstinate, he is pigheaded (Merton, 1980; 38). This description, on closer examination, represents primarily the value concepts of the speaker and not those of the others described. A proposed solution to interpretation through the values of the researcher has been interpretation through the values of the research subjects themselves. This, according to Rothbard (1960; 173), is even less satisfactory and amounts to abiding by a Gallup poll of other, even less informed subjective opinions.

If the sociologist's special competence entitles him to make value judgments, then surely this competence entitles him, also, to select and utilize the words he thinks best suit the purposes of the research being reported. Value-laden words may be defined as closely as possible, or eliminated from interpretation to the extent of the researcher's linguistic ability. Again, the education of the social scientist may be said to create this special competence. As Sandywell (1975; 185) observes, "The production of sociologists is first and foremost the production of those who can organize their speaking
and writing in professionally acceptable ways." If one's values are implicit within research and it is therefore unnecessary to make them explicit through a specific addendum, then it is through language and the way in which it is used that values are evidenced to the reader.

The use of mathematical and statistical formulations to describe research facts may be viewed as an attempt to avoid entirely the issue of the implicit values of language. Such an approach may succeed only in making research unilluminating and uninteresting to the extent that it approximates precision (Felz, 1974: 234). Filmer (1972: 98-9) asserts that quantification is politically convenient for the sociologist because it obscures the meaning of his projects, and insists that the static and logically consistent properties of mathematical language seem remarkably inappropriate for sociological explanation. Both the presence of values within the subject matter and the inconsistency of much human activity and thought make mathematics as a tool unequal to the task of much sociological explanation. This does not necessarily negate the use of statistics entirely. Such tools have been and are of obvious use when conducting and reporting large-scale researches such as those on the voting behaviour of a nation or the average salaries of all female workers. The numbers, however, contain no meaning in and of themselves, requiring linguistic interpretation in order to be meaningful.
The Uses of Research

Having conducted his research in an ethical manner, defined concepts as well as possible, and arranged and reported his findings with a view to making his own values evident, however, does the researcher continue to be responsible for his investigations? Is he responsible, in other words, for what use/s could be made, or actually are made, of his work? In the presentation of findings, a researcher may deliberately inject his moral bias in a normative addendum, in no way affecting the results as they are ordered. This question bears equally on the physical sciences, which have discovered and developed the tools of biological warfare and the nuclear bomb. The inclusion of normative statements as adjuncts to research in no way affects or invalidates the results of the research. It does, however, raise the issue of responsibility with regard to what is done with scientific findings. In other words, is the scientist responsible for the uses to which his research is put?

Such responsibility is not as easily designated as it might appear. One might begin by asking if the individual sociologist is to be held responsible for the use of research results. Although it may seem obvious that he is not, one must question the purposes of the individual in undertaking research, and what such purposes imply in terms of the use of results. While in one sense the motives which impel scholars to engage in certain types of research are irrelevant, it would be difficult to imagine a situation in which all
sociologists were completely devoid of humanitarian feeling, even though the task of sociology as a discipline is not to choose amongst various moral imperatives (Bates, 1967; 76). This is not meant to imply that sociological investigators must or should be preoccupied or motivated by humanitarian ideals; such a situation would be equally unimaginable.

W.H. Werkmeister (1966; 4) maintains that knowledge obtained in any field of inquiry is valuable, and that the initial value of knowledge is that it satisfies man's innate curiosity. The satisfaction of such curiosity may not be as aesthetic and superfluous a goal as might initially be assumed. William Foote Whyte (1962; 211), for example, claims to have selected the investigation entitled Street Corner Society simply for reasons of curiosity. Such curiosity may, historically, be assumed to exist. This, after all, is the basis on which the development of science itself exists. It would be naive, however, to assume that such curiosity constitutes the raison d'être of all research. As a value in and of itself, such curiosity allows the investigator to take no responsibility whatsoever for the ends of his research.

Machlup (1963; 162), unlike Werkmeister, feels that the social science investigator selects his problems because he feels their solution would be of value. This is a very pragmatic view of sociological research which, although also serving as a justification, forces the sociologist to assume responsibility for the ends of his society and places sociology
squarely within the confines of functional utility. Such a motive implies that the sociologist is not, and can not, be a scientist at all, but instead assumes the role and function of societal engineer. This is precisely the kind of future Comte envisioned for sociology. Sociologists, in Comte’s (1921; 13) vision, were to become the ultimate social engineers in their roles as scientist-priests of the religion of humanity. North American sociology, indeed, received much of its impetus from interest and involvement in social amelioration and reform (Bates, 1967; 69). As Myrdal (1958; 9) observes, "The social sciences have all received their impetus much more from the urge to improve society than from simple curiosity about its working."

Is the rationale of usefulness either required or sufficient justification for the sociological enterprise? Ultimately, it could be said that all knowledge has some use. This seems to lack import, however, if one examines some of the more obscure studies which appear to have focused on situations so trivial that their meaning is questionable, if it exists at all. Again, Myrdal (1958; 46) observes, "There is a tendency...that more and more effort is devoted to less and less important problems." Usefulness need not, however, be viewed as immediate or even as apparent in order for research to proceed. To ask for such utility is to take sociology as far in the direction of cynicism as a search for pure knowledge takes it in idealism.
It cannot be denied, however, that some research is useful. Responsibility for its use has not, up to now, fallen on the shoulders of its producers. Nettler (1980: 66) asserts that it would be inappropriate to ask for such a move:

"...sociologists are not moral experts... They have no greater qualification as moral guides than any other interested persons... One should be chary of sociologists as societal engineers."

It is much easier, of course, to abdicate such responsibility. The difficulties involved in accepting it, however, may be insurmountable. Bryant (1976: 317) agrees, noting that washing one's hands of the uses to which one's ideas or findings might be put may be irresponsible, but it is very difficult to suggest what form responsibility for the predictable or probable consequences of these intellectual products might take.

C. Wright Mills (1959: 177) suggests that there is no necessity for working social scientists to allow the political meanings of their work to be determined either by the accident of its setting or the purposes of others. It is quite within their power, he feels, to discuss its meanings and decide upon its uses as matters of their own policy (Mills, 1959: 177). He does not delve into the mechanisms which would need to be put into place in order to establish such a policy. The American Sociological Association could presumably assume such a responsibility were it to be given the mandate. The responsibility, however, is enormous, and monitoring would be almost impossible. It would be necessary, for instance, to be
aware of all new research being published in scholarly journals, in itself an unwieldy task.

The individual researcher lacks the power to do more than suppress the results of his own work. Formal social science organizations lack both the manpower and the ability, not to mention the mandate, to monitor the uses to which results might be put. The issue becomes more pressing as more social scientists are produced and become employed in more diverse areas of society. Although studies of sociologists done before 1967 indicate that only one in four was employed in a non-academic setting (Inkeles, 1964: 106), such employment was, and in all probability still is, on the increase. Spreading diversity in employment may be due simply to the fact that academic employment prospects are depressed and are likely to remain depressed for at least the decade of the 1980's (Lamy, 1980: 21). As early as 1958, however, predictions of the increasing use of social scientists in the practical matters of business and government were being made (Myrdal, 1958: 40-1). Sociology's location in the present, then, is not just in academia but also in other intellectual settings such as government, politics, and the mass media (Berger and Kellner, 1981: 165).

The implications of such a situation are numerous. The sociologist in the employ of business or government is faced, one can assume, with a very different set of expectations and circumstances than a sociologist in academia. Storer (1966: 141)
claims,

"It is a basic fact that when society supports an activity, it expects something in return... When the federal government supports research, it must be able to give a satisfactory accounting to the voters of what it expects to receive in return for this expenditure of tax money. Similarly, a corporation must be able to persuade its stockholders that their money is being invested in research."

The sociologist in such employment, then, is under pressure to produce results. Even more than this, however, he is expected to produce results which suit the purposes of his employer. This can become an extremely complex moral and ethical dilemma for the individual social scientist. He cannot assume, in the case of either business or government, that the purposes of his employer are either benign or evident. This is well illustrated by the situation of Project Camelot, a United States army project in Chile which had as its official purpose the measuring and forecasting of the causes of revolutions and insurgency in underdeveloped areas (Horowitz, 1968: 288).

This project raised a plethora of ethical and political questions unsettled even now in terms of the fact that, as Horowitz (1968: 301) asserts, in nearly every page of the working papers of the project, there are assertions clearly derived from American military objectives rather than scientific method.

It would be unwise to assume, however, that this is necessarily a negative situation. If one tends to a liberal humanist position, the fact that the welfare system has been a tremendous area of growth for social science, and the social
sciences have, in turn, reinforced the 'socialist' tendencies within the societies in which they operate (Horowitz, 1968; 264), takes on a very positive character. It appears, indeed, to be the ultimate working relationship between science and policy. In this sense, there is no hard and fast line between pure and applied science; they are so inextricably bound together that they should be treated, more or less, as a unit (Wendt, 1959; 74).

If one accepts the fact that scientists are no more qualified than anyone else to discern the good of mankind (Jonas, 1963; 126), it may then be left up to the individual's ability to determine whether his own and his employer's purposes are suitably matched in terms of ethical objectives. Lerner (1959; 30) insists that nothing in the social sciences increases the ability to manipulate individuals against their will. If this is true, no sociologist need feel responsible in the same sense that Oppenheimer and his associates felt responsible for having developed a tool of ultimate manipulability. On the other hand, if one believes that scientists and engineers should not be indifferent because citizens need their trained and informed help (Douglas, 1959; 35), the issue remains unsolved. Horowitz (1968; 286) observes:

"The social sciences are challenged and tested as never before by their involvement with policy organs. This association increased the chances for meaningful research and knowledge that scientists may acquire about the workings of the world. It also makes possible the corruption of social science on a scale hitherto unimaginable, through the submerging of the tasks of inquiry into contract fulfillments."
The majority of sociologists, however, are not actively engaged in this type of employment, but in academia. Approximately three fourths of individuals who hold a Ph.D. in sociology make their living in teaching or research, or in some combination of these two (Inkeles, 1964; 110). Responsibility would appear to be a simpler issue in this setting, as a result of the lack of direct policy implementation by colleges and universities. Myrdal (1958; 143) calls universities places of refuge for those who wish to withdraw from direct policy responsibilities. Bryant (1976; 322), on the other hand, claims it is not that easy to avoid such responsibilities:

"...University departments which are controlled by national or state governments, either directly or indirectly through the provision of finance, and their agencies, can be expected to produce sociology which serves the interests of their paymasters."

This may be a more relevant statement with respect to Canadian sociology than it is to American, as the institutionalization of academic social science in this country is more recent and both the federal and provincial governments played a much more direct and important role in Canada (Lamy, 1980; 22). In either country, however, one can assume that the directive to maintain value neutrality is implicit within the academic setting, and ethical considerations are consequently simpler.

That such considerations as funding affect even academic research is attested to by Daniels (1980; 38), who states that,
"...as the economic trends continue to look bleak, and as patterns of research and education continue to get their share of the cuts...the opportunities for risk taking decrease. When large allocations of resources are at stake, either in good times or bad, conservative judgments are expected."

Conservative judgments are not necessarily bad judgments. They may, as a matter of fact, be more desirable than less cautious pronouncements. Scientists, as a group, tend to be conservative in accepting new discoveries (Storer, 1966; 119). Only when a contribution is acceptable under scientists' shared canons of proof is it welcomed (Storer, 1966; 119).

Perhaps such caution is less desirable, however, when in the face of an obvious need for research certain areas of investigation are avoided because of possible political consequences. Such consequences could involve present and/or future funding considerations or career advancement. Conditions like this create restraints for individual sociologists - restraints created by the desire to maintain good standing within the university community, and by reliance on government contracts and grants which fund university research. Inkeles (1964; 115) reported in 1964 that some of the leading American universities, among them those with large private endowments, were receiving as much as forty percent of their total annual budgets through grants and federal government contracts.

Evidently, then, responsibility for research cannot be given to the individual, the universities, the government, or private industry. Must the individual hand over this responsibility to such agencies in the future simply because
he presently has little or no control over what they might do, or does the existence of a community of sociologists create its own controls? Research, after all, is generally published. It can be read and replicated by anyone who chooses to do so. This implies that social science itself, in the form of the scientific community, acts as the control. Such a community, however, cannot control the use of such knowledge. If Hiroshima and Nagasaki are held up as examples, there is no control over the use of scientific discoveries even in the physical sciences. This remains true; medical advances are sought through such operations as replacement of the human heart with an artificial or animal heart without consultation of higher medical authorities, government, or society in general regarding the morals or ethics of such moves. Society's reactions to such events as become public may be construed as the final placement of responsibility in such cases. Yet this, too, is inadequate. The public has been unable to halt the proliferation and testing of nuclear weaponry despite widespread protest.

Conclusion

Perhaps Hans Jonas (1963; 141) most clearly summarizes the actual conditions with respect to responsibility and accountability in stating that the course of knowledge must not be stopped, if not for its gains, then at least in spite of its costs. While this might appear to serve as a final and complete abdication of responsibility, it is surely
the most succinct statement of the reality of the situation. At this point, no single person or group can encompass all of knowledge or exercise a set of controls which would determine the future of society (Wendt, 1959: 76). The physical sciences have wrestled with such issues and, so far, found themselves unable to exercise control over the uses of their discoveries. The social sciences must grapple with similar issues. If, so far, social science's contributions to the great problems of our age have been less than notable (Millikan, 1959: 159), then sociology's problems with respect to responsibility are just beginning. Society itself has helped to create this situation.

Lazarsfeld (1973: 75) claims that one of the major impediments to the development of sociological research is based on the failure of society to recognize the necessity of applying its research results to policy problems. Many of the predictions about the future of social science, however, state that social science will be increasingly called on to develop a social technology, and the tools for social engineering (Myrdal, 1958: 14). The ideal of such a science would be exact knowledge which would be the basis on which we might act without further consideration or research (Kariel, 1960: 246).

Such an ideal, of course, would be long in coming if it is ever to come at all. In the meantime, awareness of the enormous effects of science and responsibility for its future course must be imparted to the scientist and the
engineer (Ostrach, 1959: 65). This awareness must be part of the scientist's education and training. It is inadequate to allow science to run amok in the future as it appears to do in the present, excusing the scientist from both policy and decision-making considerations. Such a standard of value-neutrality allows complete avoidance of the consequences of discoveries. Responsibility, if it is ever to be part of the social scientist's task, must be assumed in co-operation with other agencies and with the public, and must be imparted to upcoming generations of scientists.

The need to maintain value neutrality as a necessary condition of scientific objectivity is, as Gouldner (1963: 37) insists, different from moral indifference. Humanism, then has a place in sociology, as it does in all science. It is possible, to the best of one's ability, to be both humanitarian and scientist (Becker, 1968: 302) by making responsibility and accountability increasingly a part of one's occupation.
Chapter 5

The Desirability and Attainability of Value-Neutral Sociology
Introduction

The fact that sociology's founding fathers aimed toward the goal of scientific objectivity might be seen as an effort to get a value imputed to sociology rather than an attempt to arrive independently at a definition of sociology or to state the nature of the subject (Weaver, 1980; 83). In the era of sociology's formulation, science bestowed the highest prestige on everything done under its auspices (Inkeles, 1964; 93). Sociology is thus, as Pelz (1974; 179) observes, one of the children of positivism. Positivism can be defined as "that position in sociology which argues that sociology should attempt to constitute itself as a discipline in the same manner as the natural sciences (Filmer, 1972; 16)".

The natural sciences are seen to be objective and value-free in two senses, in our opinion. The first of these is the use of the scientific method, and the second that natural sciences study matter, which is not itself imbued with values.

In its attempts to gain legitimacy and prestige, sociology has uncritically adopted natural science methods for its study of the social world, often ignoring the differences between physical and social relationships (McIver, 1967; 18). Social relationships involve consciousness, which is clearly missing in the physical sciences. It can be argued, in fact, that the society which sociology seeks to study exists only in human consciousness, and not as a reality which is available for measurement.

Before it is possible to decide whether scientific
methodology is adequate to the task of such investigation, however, it is necessary to examine the purposes of using such a method.

**Purposes of the Scientific Method**

No science can be called a copy of fact. Bronowski (1975; 14) notes that order must not only be discovered, it must be created because what we see is merely disorder. He goes on to relate a fable by Karl Popper (1965; 14) which makes this point very clear:

"Suppose that someone wished to give his whole life to science. Suppose that he therefore sat down, pencil in hand, and for the next twenty, thirty, forty years recorded in notebook after notebook everything that he could observe. He may be supposed to leave out nothing; today's humidity, the racing results, the level of cosmic radiation and the stock market prices and the look of Mars, all would be there. He would have compiled the most careful record of nature that has ever been made; and dying with the calm certainty of a life well spent, he would of course leave his notebooks to the Royal Society. Would the Royal Society thank him for the treasure of a lifetime of observation? It would not... It would refuse to open them at all, because it would know without looking that the notebooks contain only a jumble of disorderly and meaningless items."

The imposition of order, then, is implicit in both the physical and social sciences, as it is in a lesser sense in everyday thought.

The order which has been imposed on the natural world by science has, however, become widely accepted. Natural science gained legitimacy much sooner than the social sciences, at least in part due to the fact that it fastened on the easiest matter, that is the observable world (Bruckner, 1968;
5).

Although the natural sciences underwent the arguments, explorations, discussions, false starts, and opposition that the social sciences are undergoing at the present time (Bruckner, 1968; 6), techniques subject to verification by others were eventually developed and agreed upon by the scientific community. The set of techniques arrived at as suitable constitute a measure of objectivity in science. Objectivity, then, must be regarded not as a characteristic of things, but as a specific way or set of ways of responding which can be corroborated by others (Lundberg, 1964; 6). In the natural sciences, these responses are formalized in the rules which constitute scientific methodology.

Suitability of the Scientific Method to Sociology

Sociology's adoption of this methodology may have been, at least partially, at attempt to legitimize itself. Those who initiated the positivist stance, however, were moved by a great deal of admiration for the success achieved by the physical sciences through this method (Lengermann, 1974; 172). Sociology's founders were convinced that following the same procedures and guidelines as the natural sciences would lead sociology to similar success (Lengermann, 1974; 172).

Filmer (1972; 94) asserts that this stance contains the assumption that the natural and social worlds are essentially similar. This charge is levelled by many of the opponents of the use of scientific methodology in sociology. Sociological findings produced in this way are called scientistic.
"Scientism", writes Rothbard (1960: 159), is "the profoundly unscientific attempt to transfer uncritically the methodology of the physical sciences to the study of human action." This method is seen not only as adequate for the understanding of social phenomena, but as constituting the paradigm for all social science inquiry by its proponents (Natanson, 1963: 272).

The critics of scientific sociology level many claims at its advocates. The use of a natural science model in sociology, they claim, ignores the difference between a physical relationship and a social relationship (McIver, 1967: 18). Such a transfer of method also ignores the fact that what sociologists attempt to study is qualitatively different from the objects, which are studied by natural science (Lengermann, 1974: 172).

The objects under study by natural science are seen as precisely that - objects. Sociology, however, is the study of people (O'Neill, 1973: 18). Sociology must deal with phenomena which involve a type of causation which is unknown in the physical realm, since such phenomena are not only motivated but are actually brought into being by human mentality (McIver, 1967: 19). Because such mentality is subjective, it is not possible to study people in an objective way unless one deals solely with external behaviour which can be observed. To be objective in this sense is to neither deny nor confirm the existence of values which motivate the behaviour of those under study, but simply to ignore them as unavailable for study.

In displaying such preference, however, science can be
said to betray its own values. All science, according to Becker (1968; 284), prefers certain aspects of the world to others, and can be said to define and delineate those aspects as a result of such preference. Others agree, noting that science mirrors only certain aspects of experience to the exclusion of others (von Bertalanffy, 1960; 203).

If scientific methodology, then, is constituted by a general agreement on a specific way to order knowledge, and science defines what aspects of the world such knowledge is to be gained about, then science itself becomes a closed system into which no new aspects or methods, and therefore no new knowledge, may enter. Such a system denies the point of its own existence, which is, after all, to gain knowledge of the world (Thomas, 1979; 138). As Werkmeister (1960; 5) points out, "...science as science - and this includes the social sciences - does not define the ideals or value norms that constitute the overall framework of valuations within which we make our decisions concerning ends and goals in relation to which the facts of science are themselves appraised."

Adequacy of the Scientific Method in Sociology

If science must be open to new methods and areas of study, sociology becomes admissible for scientific study. It is still, however, accompanied by the problem of the adequacy of scientific method to the task of uncovering knowledge about human beings.

Scientific methodology involves a specific series of steps:
"The scientist begins by formulating a theory, or hypothesis, and proceeds to test the hypothesis by making potentially falsifying observations. If the theory is falsified, it must be abandoned, and another one formulated to replace it (Keat and Urry, 1975; 16)."

Feyerabend (1978; 40) has asserted that any attempt to lay down rules for rejecting theories will only serve to repress scientific advancement. From this viewpoint, scientific methodology, in defining how the world is to be examined, denies its own purpose - that is, to gain knowledge - and remains a closed system.

To proceed without such rules, however, is to negate the possibility of ever achieving any kind of objectivity. Science cannot demand absolute objectivity. It must be granted that ultimate or absolute objectivity is beyond human reach (Werkmeister, 1960; 21). What can be demanded, however, is a reliable method, as objective as possible, which can be put to use for the discovery of knowledge. Historically, the scientific method has proved highly successful in this regard (Rudner, 1974; 43).

What must be dealt with in this context is the adequacy of the scientific method to the social sciences. While it may have proved useful in gaining information in sociology, it was, as a method, devised for the study of matter. To transfer such a method to a discipline in which values are operative in the subject matter and treat it as the sole method acceptable as scientific, however, is to distort the legitimate value of science (Werkmeister, 1960; 21). The
method was more than adequate to the purposes of physical science
due in large part to the fact that the nature of what was to
be studied was allowed to dictate the method. If the subject
matter of sociology is differentiated by the existence of
values within it, then methods which take this into account
must be developed. Only extreme positivists, surely, would
deny the need for such methods. As Meehan (1969; 64) asserts:

"Any set of perceptions can in principle be
patterned in an infinite number of ways.
There is no 'prime' description, and the
adequacy of a description depends on the
purposes of the observer."

The Attainability of Value-Neutrality

The problem at this juncture becomes what method or
methods are to be used. This problem becomes particularly
difficult in the social sciences in terms of the fact that the
researcher himself has values and that these values arise from
the very society he wishes to study.

Weber made the first serious attempt to develop a new
approach while remaining objective in advocating the method of
verstehen. He did not, as popular belief holds, view this
method as an alternative to positivism and the scientific
method, but rather as a corrective against too rigorous or
mechanical an application of scientific method (Parkin, 1982;
21). Weber's demands for the exclusion of value judgment
from research were actually quite limited and modest in
scope. All he actually asked was that scholars refrain from
openly proclaiming their personal views about matters of
social fact (Parkin, 1982; 32).

Weber's advocacy and explanation of the *verstehen* method touched off a debate which continues to rage. Thomlinson (1965; 24), for instance, observes that sociological findings are frequently criticized on the grounds that, because no one can eliminate values from his thinking, social research can never be considered truly scientific. The debate, however, appears to centre on a great deal of confusion. Weber did not insist that the individual researcher either be free of values or that he not employ values in his work. Strauss (1963; 423) asserts:

"[Weber] insisted very strongly on the role played by values in social science; the objects of social science are constituted by 'reference to values'. Without such reference, there would be no focus of interest, no reasonable selection of themes, no principles of distinction between relevant and irrelevant facts. Through 'reference to values' the objects of the social sciences emerge out of the ocean or morass of facts."

The confusion surrounding such value-neutrality seems to be what lies at the hub of the controversy. Bryant (1976; 309) claims it is a case of many who confuse the idea of value freedom contained in the Weberian tradition with a commitment to a scientific sociology which is central to positivist sociology. It is not possible, however, to insist that a researcher remain neutral in the performance of his research as it must be carried out in sociology and the other social sciences. Meeshan (1969; 25) asserts that without values, all human actions become equally significant or equally meaningless,
and that all human actions are explicitly or implicitly expressions of value or assertions of preference. This can be compared with the imposition of order which makes scientific method necessary in the physical sciences, and makes science itself a value. Value judgment, in this sense, is an intellectual instrument or tool which is actually no different in its purpose from an explanation or a description (Meehan, 1969; 3). This implies a reasoned selection, a calculation of costs, and the weighing of various alternatives in terms of some standard or ideal (Meehan, 1969; 28).

It is not possible, in reality, for any researcher to be value-free. It is not impossible, either, for the researcher to do science under these conditions. This does not imply that a value premise should be arbitrary, rather that it must be relevant and significant in terms of the society which is being studied (Meehan, 1969; 28).

A call such as this for the actual use of value judgments in research, or the suggested absence of value-neutrality, is seen as a major impediment to a sociology which is scientific. Rudner (1974; 40) claims that this is based on the use of the words objective and subjective as polar opposites to mean psychological and non-psychological, and an accompanying identification of psychological and subjective with biased. He points out that no one has ever demonstrated that the psychological, per se, is identical with biased (Rudner, 1974; 40). Certainly, it has yet to be demonstrated that psychological is non-scientific, especially in light of the fact that science
itself is a sociological construct. Science as science, however, does not demand value-neutrality from its practitioners as individuals. It provides, instead, a method which provides knowledge not otherwise obtainable on a continuing and reliable basis. Popper (1978, 181) expresses this idea in claiming that the objectivity of science is not a function of the individual scientist but rather a function of the social character of science itself. The social character of science is provided for in the stricture that scientific observations and conclusions be verifiable or falsifiable (Papineau, 1978, 52). This might be called the ultimate rule of science.

If verifiability or falsifiability are science's ultimate rules, then the scientific method is a collective agreement about the most reliable way available to seek and provide such verification or falsification. This has certainly been so in the physical sciences. It cannot be said, however, that such a method has yet been discovered for the social sciences. Weber can be said to have made the attempt to provide this with his method of verstehen. The efficacy of the method is as yet, however, unproved, as is the efficiency and verifiability of other methods employed exclusively by the social sciences.

It is evident then, that sociology cannot aspire to value-neutrality if such neutrality is to consist of the direct implantation of natural science methods into its highly differentiated subject-matter. Neither can sociology meet its purpose and aspiration if value-neutrality is demanded of
the individual sociologist. In order to attain value-
neutrality, then, sociology must provide its own special
and appropriate methodology and its own standards of verification
and falsification. Methods such as verstehen are attempts to
meet such standards.

The Desirability of Value-Neutrality

Sociology can be seen as employing values as a research
tool in order to meet the standards of verification implicit
in its efforts as a science. At this point, the question of
whether sociology can be value-free becomes strictly one of
definition. If to be value-neutral means elimination of
values from the subject matter, then it is not possible.
To have values implies the existence of consciousness, and
consciousness has been rejected by behaviourists as inappro-
priate for scientific study regardless of whether it actually
exists or not. To behaviourists:

"Mental processes, consciousness, souls, and
ghosts are all of a piece, and are altogether
unfit for scientific use. The existence of
consciousness is a plain assumption. It cannot
be proved by any scientific test... Even if
it exists it cannot be studied scientifically,
because admittedly it is subject only to private
inspection. A belief in the mental is allied
to modes of thinking that are wholly incompatible
with the ways of science (Heidbreder, 1933: 235)."

The elimination of values, then, already exists in behaviourism
and needs no duplication. If to be value-neutral means to
eliminate the values of the researcher, however, the task
can still not meet with complete success. The individual
researcher may hold his values in abeyance in the performance
of his research, but he cannot entirely eliminate them. As Park (1969: 175) comments:

"On pragmatic grounds alone, sociology should be kept free of values, as much as possible. The success of this program depends on breaking the conceptual mold in which present-day sociology is held captive. This is not to say... that sociologists as human beings should be value-free automatons."

If, on the other hand, it can be agreed that there is nothing intrinsically sacred about a value-free sociology, or even about value-free science, then sociology can employ values in its methodology. It can then be seen as value-neutral in terms of its own values, in much the same way as science is viewed as objective according to its own rules.

The question of whether or not it is desirable for sociology to be value-free then becomes a choice between two equally untenable extremes: one claims that the methods of the natural sciences are not only adequate for the understanding of society, but should constitute the methodology for all sociological inquiry (Natanson, 1963: 272), and the other which makes no attempt to be neutral, claiming that value-neutrality is a myth (Gouldner, 1963) and that it is impossible to perform research that is not contaminated by personal or political values (Becker, 1974: 107). Such a choice, finally, might come down to one's definition of science, and what constitutes both the purpose and practice of science.

If science is essentially a symbolic system ordered in such a way that it describes certain aspects of experience
(von Bertalanffy, 1960: 203), then sociology can be said to have attained the status of science in terms of its organizing principles. Science as science, however, strives for more than this. Zusman (1973: 25) states that the goals of science are threefold: to understand, to explain, and to predict. The apparent unpredictability of human action, however, makes prediction elusive, if not impossible, for sociology. Prediction may at least temporarily be relegated to the physical sciences, which examine a great deal of lawlike behaviour in their subjects. There is no real necessity for sociology to accept prediction as a goal and, indeed, it has not accepted it completely (Biesanz and Biesanz, 1973: 13). Sociology's goals are understanding and explanation (Cotgrove, 1967: 34). Although prediction need not be eliminated as a future aim of sociology, understanding and explanation have proved more than enough as goals so far due to the intricate and complicated nature of the subject matter.

To accept understanding and explanation as legitimate goals does not negate the possibility of an objective social science. Felz (1974: 217) argues that it is absurd to treat objectivity as an end in itself. It is equally absurd, surely, to demand that the sociologist enter into a kind of sociological psychoanalysis which would enable him to better know himself, his place in the world, and the forces which influence him simply in order to bare his soul in the context of his research, so that others can more easily see its biases.
Conclusion

Somewhere between the extremes of scientific method with its demand for absolute value neutrality, and a sociology which asks for complete value commitment, there needs to be created a sociology whose methods can both account for value and be subject to the verification/falsification principle which makes it science. Only if science itself has begun to stagnate in its unwillingness to grow and expand will the adoption of such new methods be rejected as unscientific. To reject science for sociology would make sociology nothing more than a series of descriptions of unique events, interesting to some but unrevealing. Incorporation of scientific methodology as it stands, however, would turn sociology into a science of the trivial.

Until a middle ground is discovered or created, however, the assumption that sociology can become a science must be proved by producing a science of sociology (Park, 1969: 173).
Chapter 6

Attempts at Reconciliation
Introduction

Since Weber, much sociological theorizing and practice may be viewed as a series of attempts to resolve the values issue. Durkheim and Weber are considered to have set the tone for this task. Braude (1974) comments:

"...operating with an orientation largely set by Weber and Durkheim, the sociologist was to observe and analyze and do all the things he did before, but dispassionately, with a studied aloofness precluding any emotional involvement in the phenomena studied. He would be ethically neutral and thereby would unearth the truth (Braude, 1974: 134)."

Weber's (1967: 184) exhortation to the scientist that he not project his value judgments, aesthetic or political preferences into his research, his (1981: 196) insistence that research can and should be value-free were taken to mean that all values were to be eliminated from sociology. Sociology was to proceed in a purely scientific manner. Durkheim's (1955: 107) definition of sociology as a study of social facts and his insistence on the objective reality of these facts contributed further to the perception of sociology as an objective, value-neutral, scientific enterprise.

In this manner, value-neutrality came to be equated with scientific detachment and objectivity, and sociology proceeded in accordance with these principles. To be neutral with regard to values came to imply one was positivistic, even behaviouristic and deterministic. Everything which fell outside these categories came to be labelled subjective and unscientific. "By the first quarter of the twentieth
century", notes MacRae (1976: 60), "the foundations were
laid in social science for a stress on facts at the expense
of valuations." Horowitz (1968) agrees, pointing out that,

"For the postwar, post-Depression generation
of American sociology, all talk of the
valuational implications of social science
research seemed part of a watershed long
since crossed. There came into focus a
strong current that identified social science
not only with value neutrality, but with a
scholarly aloofness from moral issues...
Methodology came to be a substitute for
values as such (Horowitz, 1968: 44)."

Not until C. Wright Mills (1959) was any serious
suggestion made that values not only were, but should be,
part of the sociological enterprise. Mills proposed to
solve the problem by having sociologists admit their
value positions and search for new subject matter and
methodologies based on these values. His ideas were
taken very seriously. Many sociologists began to explore
the possibilities of including values in scientific work.

Mills' The Sociological Imagination (1959) was a
plea to sociologists to expand their vision and use
various perspectives. He asks sociologists to stop thinking
along previous formal lines and expand their sociological
imaginations into as many areas and in as many ways as
can be found.

Beginning Resolutions

Gouldner

Alvin Gouldner's The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology
(1970) is a descendent of The Sociological Imagination (1950) in that both represent a rejection of the currently accepted versions of social science (Collins, 1981; 315). Gouldner (1970; 490) proposed a reflexive sociology as necessary because he felt little or nothing was known about sociologists. The ultimate objective of reflexive sociology was to contribute to a more general theory about social theorists (Gouldner, 1970; 483).

In his description of Gouldner's efforts, Strasser (1976) alleges that,

"Gouldner, unlike social scientists who stress the empirical quality of their science, takes a rather unorthodox approach to the question of the character of sociology. He maintains that the very fact that men attempt an empirical study of the social world indicates that they have certain conceptions of it and that these prior assumptions will affect the character of their sociology (Strasser, 1976; 165)."

Gouldner (1970; 495) envisions reflexive sociology as viewing the social world not simply through the discovery of external facts found by looking outward, but also by opening inward. Such opening, he contends, does not discount empiricism within the field, but incorporates it (Gouldner, 1970; 491). Reflexive sociology requires an empirical dimension. Gouldner (1970; 491) notes, however, that while he believes this empirical dimension is required, he does not conceive of it as providing a factual basis which would determine the character of its guiding theory. This is not to say, either, that reflexive sociology is to join the ranks of theory already in existence, to become
just one more specialization or another topic for panel meetings at professional conventions (Gouldner, 1970: 489).

Such observations, it is true, have become common in sociology. Reflexive sociology, however, must be viewed as Gouldner conceived it if it is to be understood. The mission of such a sociology, asserts Gouldner (1970: 489), is "to transform the sociologist, to penetrate deeply into his daily life and work, enriching them with new sensitivities [and] to transcend sociology as it now exists." In stating such a purpose, Gouldner asserts that it is not simply reflexive, but radical in character. Radical, in this context, is not to be construed negatively. Gouldner applies it in its most optimistic sense. Reflexive sociology as a radical discipline seeks identification, awareness, and understanding of the conditions under which sociologists work, and goes beyond these to demand integrity from the sociologist. In this sense, it becomes impossible to separate what sociologists do and who they are. A demand for such integrity means a total commitment, not simply a commitment on the job. A narrow, career-focussed commitment by sociologists, according to Gouldner (1970: 506), leaves certain parts of themselves unexpressed: their playful impulses, unverified hunches, and their speculative imaginations. As Mills (1959: 211) also termed it, "the sociological imagination can...be cultivated..., yet there is an unexpected quality about it... a playfulness of mind."

Gouldner (1970: 103) assumes, in postulating a radical
and self-aware sociology, that value-free sociology is a myth. Within the context of reflexive sociology, this assumption implies that no sociology has ever been value-free, and the examination of values in and of themselves is thus made an appropriate subject of investigation. Values, then, are to be investigated not only as part of the enterprise with which sociologists concern themselves, but as part of their everyday lives. Gouldner (1970; 41) broadens such investigation even further when he asserts that sociologists seek to study something in the social world that they take to be real, but seek to explain it in terms of something they feel to be real. He thereby asserts that acceptance of certain theories has an intuitive element based on personal experience and attempts to explain this experience. Separation of the sociologist as a professional from the sociologist as an individual is, therefore, impossible.

If one worked on the assumption that personal values have a profound effect on the professional life of the sociologist, one would be forced to agree with Howard Becker (1970; 107) that it is impossible to do research which is uncontaminated with personal or political sympathies. Analysis, in this case, would become an examination of how these values affect sociology, rather than whether or not values affect sociology.

The fact that such assumptions are built into Gouldner's reflexive sociology make it far less appealing as a solution. It is not, in this sense, a solution at all, but merely the
other side of the positivist coin. Positivism seeks to eliminate values entirely. As Thomlinson (1965) asserts,

"A scholar must be neutral in the performance of his research. Certainly he can and does have opinions, but they cannot be allowed to influence his research operations (Thomlinson, 1965: 24)."

Gouldner (1970) on the other hand assumes that value-neutrality can be easily dispensed with, and rids himself of it entirely by calling it a myth and proceeding from that position. Reflexive sociology, then, is not the answer to sociology's value problem. Gouldner (1970: 503) can be said merely to have called for more critical self-examination of sociology in advocating open and involved value positions by sociologists. Such a call, in reality, is not a new sociology at all, but a partisan one. Involvement in such self-examination, resulting in confession of partisan stances and biases would involve sociology in an entirely new set of problems, and serve to deflect it from its task of investigation. It may, as Hauser (1971: 429) claims, only prove that sociologists can be as frail, emotional, irrational, and silly as anyone else. This does not imply, however, that sociology would necessarily become irrelevant as a serious academic concern. Sociologists may select any problem for study which interests them, and are free to choose from the trivial to the politically significant.

Gouldner's reflexive sociology, then, amounts to asking for an about-face by sociologists. He has requested that
they turn from absorption in scientific method and procedure to personal and inward-looking commitment. While this may amount to an over-simplification of his intentions and exhortations, it is essentially accurate. In advocating such behaviour, Gouldner may simply be displaying too much involvement with the situation and atmosphere of the late 1960's and early 1970's (Collins, 1981; 318), an era of political activism and unrest. Sociologically, then, he becomes an advocate on the side of total involvement rather than the leader of a new sociology. He asserts that because sociology operates on the basis of values, those values must not only be made explicit but acted upon as well (Gouldner, 1970; 509). While it is accurate to state that reflexive sociology looks inward and addresses the possibility of its own production (Phillipson, 1975; 169), Gouldner demanded far more of it. To move beyond such self-examination into activism negate the scientific potential of sociology which, after all, cannot be discounted or discarded without more justification. The case for a social science is, at this juncture, stronger than the case Gouldner has built against it. As Thomas (1979; 23) asserts, "the practical case against social science is unproven."

Ritzer

Gouldner's was not the only solution, or type of solution, offered in an attempt to unify sociology, to mend the gap revealed as a crisis. Ritzer's (1981) effort toward
construction of an integrated paradigm is another serious response to the same issue.

Unlike Gouldner, Ritzer does not comment directly on the issue of sociology's relationship with the society it studies. He does deal, however, with how sociology operates through a number of different paradigms, and examines what this means for sociology. He defines a paradigm as a fundamental image of the subject matter of a science (Ritzer, 1981: 3). The existence of a number of paradigms, according to Ritzer (1981: 12), creates a great deal of unnecessary political conflict amongst the adherents of each. He attempts to create an integrated paradigm through the use of levels of social reality as a device to deal with the complexities of the social world (Ritzer, 1981: 13). Such an idea, he admits, is so foreign to most sociologists that it is likely to encounter considerable opposition and become the subject of much controversy (Ritzer, 1981: 13). This will happen, Ritzer (1981: 13) believes, in spite of the fact that he is actually only making explicit what has long been implicit in sociology. Controversy between paradigms, he believes, has merely been a difference in focus on what is the most important level of reality in the social world (Ritzer, 1981: 13).

To create his integrated paradigm, Ritzer (1981: 28) examines a number of well-known sociological writings to allow him to bring out heretofore unnoticed aspects of these works, and extract as many useful ideas as possible from
each. This would allow him to develop an initial sense of the image of the subject matter required for an integrated approach to social reality (Ritzer, 1981; 28). Such examination is necessary, he contends, because the rudiments of the paradigm he is constructing have long existed in sociology, although they have not been recognized formally and systematically (Ritzer, 1981; 206). Each body of work is scanned on two levels: the macroscopic-microscopic, and the objective-subjective (Ritzer, 1981; 207). What is significant to Ritzer (1981; 207), however, is not the levels in themselves, but the way in which they interrelate. This, he feels, creates a dynamic rather than a static approach to the world (Ritzer, 1981; 208). Such a view must also be interested in the historical roots of social phenomena (Ritzer, 1981; 208).

The major portion of this work is directed to analyses of the works of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, Parsons, and others, in terms of the four levels devised to constitute the integrated paradigm. It is this type of analysis which foredooms his efforts. While it might have been possible to construct an integrated sociological paradigm using the works of these writers on the level at which each worked, Ritzer instead imposes the four levels of reality he is using on each. The result is that the ideas of each become very distorted in one way or another. Ritzer (1981; 234) does offer the disclaimer that his integrated paradigm is not designed to replace existing paradigms, but to supplement them with
a more integrative approach than they offer. He has attempted to deal with several issues at once in creating the integrated paradigm: the proliferation of schools in sociology (Smelser, 1968; 8), the fact that the individual and society actually denote inseparable levels of the human world (Elias, 1978; 129), and the fact that sociology is an attempt to encompass a description of actions, institutions, situations, structures, and outcomes in one body of work (Harris, 1980; 23). The scope of his efforts is vast. His work has not failed as a result of his efforts to encompass such wide horizons. Previous criteria expressed by Phillipson (1975) are applicable to this context. Phillipson (1975; 169) asserted that self-reflection in sociology was limited almost entirely to refinements of its constructive practices and definition of concepts. Rarely, he contends, does sociology address the grounds on which these practices or definitions stand. This fails to deal with the situated character of sociology, although sociology claims to address the situated character of that which it studies. Ritzer, like many before him, fails to treat more than the symptoms of the problem. He attempts to refine the application of concepts and methodology without addressing the grounds on which such conflicting schools of thought rest. In this sense, Ritzer's paradigm is based on error. It ignores the fact that sociology is permeated with value judgments which are presented as part of objective data (Myrdal, 1969; 52).

Ritzer's (1981) attempt contains the implication that sociology needs to overcome the scientific immaturity which
is betokened by the presence of numerous schools of thought within a discipline (Smelser, 1968: 7). Scientific maturity can be achieved through a closer approximation of consensus (Smelser, 1968: 7). By searching for this scientific maturity, Ritzer has attempted to more closely approximate a consensual methodology which would appeal to numerous schools of thought.

Conclusion

Gouldner and Ritzer are probably not the sole representatives of their respective positions in the search for sociological solutions. They are the inheritors of ideas coming down to them from Durkheim and Weber. Their attempts are efforts to deal, in a more sophisticated way, with the problems inherited from these progenitors. What Gouldner and Ritzer offer in sophistication, unfortunately, is not substantiated by solid solutions.

It appears that there has been no actual or significant progress in the resolution of the value issue. What does appear to have occurred, in spite of efforts such as Ritzer's, is further entrenchment of relative positions, a continued preoccupation with and exploration of logical possibilities within these positions. Whether this conflict is maintained in its intensity, or leads in some other direction, will be explored in the next chapter.
Chapter 7

Directions in Contemporary Sociology
Introduction

According to Norbert Wiley (1985; 179), sociology has been without a dominant or hegemonic theory for about fifteen years. Following the decline in both popularity and acceptance of Parsonian functionalism in the 1960's and 70's, no single theory or body of work has risen to a position of major importance.

There appears to be a fair amount of consensus that functionalism is essentially a thing of the past, and that it has been superceded by other approaches (Collins, 1985; 878; Alexander, 1981; 279). It must be conceded that a hardcore positivistic stance in sociology is now as rare as a hardcore humanistic stance. What is left, however, is a sociology which appears as Wiley (1985) asserts, to have no dominant or central theory guiding its course.

Although Wiley (1985; 180) contends that the absence of such a central theory has left sociology with a sense of uncertainty and depression, his conclusion must not be accepted without further consideration. Rabow and Zucker (1981), who earlier directed their attention to this matter, claimed that the problem is not sociology's lack of a hegemonic theory. They viewed the difficulty, instead, as lying in the fact that a great many sociologists perceive a need for such a singular truth to guide their discipline (Rabow and Zucker, 1981; 12).

Indeed, it can be noted that the identification of such specific and persistent problems has been a consistent feature
of reflections on sociology's condition. Throughout various stages of sociology's history, such problems have been conceptualized and analyzed in several ways. In each new evaluation, however, there appears to be a presupposition that these problems are not necessarily inevitable, and that therefore solutions are possible (Smart, 1982: 121).

New Directions

In contrast to the critical approaches toward sociology so prevalent in the 1960's and 70's backlash against functionalism, the 1980's appears to have generated a new stance. This new direction is unprecedented in the discipline, according to Wiley (1985), and consists in the acceptance of diversity.

This is a bold assertion which cannot be advanced without explanation and clarification. It does appear that this is sociology's new direction, upon examination. This acceptance appears to have come in several forms and for some very specific reasons.

Diversity: Pluralism as Sociology in the 80's

The decline of functionalism occurred within a context of rising egalitarianism in the 1960's and the beginnings of economic recession and inflation in the 70's. In these times of economic uncertainty, functionalism could account for neither. New methods of seeking explanations were needed in sociology. Gouldner (1970) and Ritzer (1981), among others, attempted to provide such new methods, as discussed in the
previous chapter:

The 1980's are seeing a continuing economic decline, with an accompanying rise in the unemployment rate, a significant number of business failures, and erosion of certain forms of government expenditures (Savage, 1983: 2). Hard hit by the withdrawal of financial support accompanied by government action to cut back on university funding (Savage, 1983: 2), the 1980's tend, not surprisingly, to a more conservative approach than the 60's or 70's (Wiley, 1985: 189).

The form that such conservatism appears to be taking may also be dictated by economic necessity. Sociology has not only studied the society in which it exists, but has within itself reflected the events and issues which went into shaping the society. In the widespread social upheaval of the 60's and 70's, sociology found itself embedded in multitudinous webs of internal dissension and conflict. In the economically troubled 80's when conservatism appears to have become necessary to financial survival, sociology continues to reflect the mood of the times.

Rather than turning back to and reviving old values and ideas, however, sociology appears to be developing in the direction of tolerance of ideas which were hotly debated during the 60's and 70's. Instead of focussing on the ways in which symbolic interactionism, conflict theory, or ethnomethodology fail to meet the standards of one another's criteria for acceptance, more of the internal examination in sociology now concentrates on areas of agreement and
complementary overlap.

Sociology, then, does not seem to be in search of a new body of theory. It appears, rather, to have reached a new and unprecedented stage in its own development: the acceptance of diversity and pluralism as a condition of its being rather than as a problem to be solved (Rabow and Zucker, 1980: 12).

The internal focus in sociology has become the desirability of multiple sociological approaches and how such diversity will contribute to more accurate study and assessment of societal development. Along with the acceptance of such diversity appears to have come a pause in the search for new theories. Perhaps such a cessation will allow sociologists to begin the formidable task, which appears to be underway, of attempting to integrate theories already in existence.

In this period of potential re-integration, sociologists may recognize the extent of fragmentation within their discipline. Rabow and Zucker (1981: 14) state that the body of shared, common knowledge in sociology is relatively small, and that this has made communication between specialists in various fields of sociology more difficult. If this is so, a pause in sociology's internal battles and an effort to integrate at least some of the differing theoretical stances can only help to broaden and improve communication with the field.

Such claims, however, need not imply a Utopian sociology
of the future in which all approaches will have an equal claim to attention or status. There will be, no doubt, areas of convergence which did not previously exist. Hopefully, there will be improved communication between specialties and sub-disciplines of sociology. It is highly doubtful, however, that there will be a "finalized science" (Habermas, 1984; 721), or necessarily one which is in more theoretical agreement than it has been previously.

On the verge of the 1980's, Herbert L. Costner (1979) wrote:

"Sociology needs a vision of what it is striving to become. Before deciding on a path to follow, we should have some conception of where we want the chosen path to lead. My belief is that many different research styles and specialties are compatible with a 'common goal, but that no such goal has been articulated to provide a common purpose to current diversity (Costner, 1979; 74)."

The internal focus and commentary on sociology to this point has failed to articulate such a goal, worthy as it may be. To seek such a goal is not to call for a central or unifying theory. Mitroff and Kilmann (1981; 227) note that previous efforts in sociology focussed almost exclusively on achieving quantitative growth and control, while new developments depend on the understanding and the eventual integration of qualitative with quantitative inquiry methods. Schroyer (1983; 718) characterizes this approach as a post-paradigm orientation of science which makes normative considerations such as value inseparable from scientific problems. Brown (1983; 129) claims that previously positivistic sociologists
are exams their theoretical roots to justify their work. Smart (1982; 121) asserts that the coexistence of several competing paradigms is both normal and good for sociology. Rabow and Zucker (1980; 12) claim that multiple sociological truths about society are a more accurate assessment of a pluralistic society such as ours, and it is therefore important for sociology to encourage diversity. It would appear that such views are spreading. The earlier plethora of articles which took a clear stand on one theory or methodology and contested the legitimacy of others from that viewpoint has declined considerably.

It is not clear at this point, however, whether this can be considered a positive or a negative development for sociology. Certainly, different views can be adopted. In one sense, the cessation of furious debate can be viewed as a period of integration and reconstruction. It could allow sociologists previously immersed in battling for an exclusive theory or viewpoint to explore alternative commitments more deeply. New unifications may begin to emerge from such a process.

On the other hand, such an interregnum may be viewed as a lack of courage in a period when economic conditions are forcing more and more social scientists out of academia and into positions in industry and government (Savage, 1983; 2). Although this is a somewhat more cynical view of events, there may be a great deal of truth in it. Béland (1985) notes that university graduates previously rewarded with
employment in their universities are now in a rarified job market, and adds:

"The sociologist...is presently in a market where he must prove his usefulness. The ability of scientists to hold down jobs depends largely on the usefulness of their products (Beland, 1985; 11)."

In times such as these, the luxury of esoteric and largely academic debate over the value of various theories recedes in importance. The question of values, both the values of social science practitioners and the value of social science, becomes an embarrassment. How values intrude into research done by industry or government becomes so obvious as to be unworthy of discussion. In the face of university cutbacks, the intrusion of similar job-protecting motives in choosing and disseminating research becomes a highly sensitive topic. The issue, even in academia, is no longer whether one ought to include or exclude values from one's research, but whether one will get to do research at all.

**Conclusion**

It would be presumptuous of this author to assert that a work of this type might advance any real solution to the value issue in sociology. This does not, however, preclude the rights of the author to advance ideas and opinions on the subject.

Despite the appearance of relative peace in contemporary sociology, the value issue is far from resolved. The bitter debate around this issue has not disappeared, but simply gone
underground for a time. Given the opportunity, academic sociologists will take up this argument where they left it, as they have done before.

Sociology must, however, acknowledge that it cannot operate without including values if it expects to advance beyond such debate. A sociology without values is sterile; it is nothing but mathematics. Mathematical descriptions of various societal groups or structures impart little truly interesting, or even useful, information. It might, for instance, be useful to know that three of every five married women hold full-time jobs. The processes which led to the creation of this situation, the quality and texture of these women's lives, or how their families adapt to two working adults in the home, cannot be mathematically explained. Sociology is more than nose-counting.

The use of formal scientific method is inadequate to sociology's mission. The study of society is the study of individuals and groups, or of structures and institutions, which relate to each other on the basis of meanings and values. The very existence of groups and structures implies the embodiment of some value. Scientific method was devised to study the observable world, and is totally inadequate to the study of human beings no matter how they are organized. The methodology of physical science was developed in response to its subject matter. Sociology's method must be developed in a similar way.

It is in this sense, this author believes, that both
C. Wright Mills (1959) and Alvin Gouldner (1970) spoke of expanding one's sociological imagination, of playfulness and unexpressed hunches, and of the sociologist's need to investigate and reveal his values in his work. Value-neutrality, as Gouldner (1961) asserts, is a myth. Sociology has grown to a point at which it no longer needs to pretend to be neutral in the manner of the physical sciences. The only requirement sociology must incorporate to be considered scientific is that its results are capable of verification or falsification.

Rather than expending energy in internal squabbles, sociologists can expand their methodological experimentation into areas which are new and untried. Rather than criticizing the 'values found in others' work, they can work to become more aware of what values are implicit in all sociological work. New sociologists may construct and test techniques like Ritzer's (1981) integrated paradigm which remain untested as means of discovery.

Although economic hardship may mean temporary withdrawal from the value debate, one can suppose that such withdrawal means that genuine attempts at integration of opposing viewpoints is being made. This does not mean to imply that sociology again needs a central theory. Society is extremely complex, and a variety of methods and theories are needed to deal with it. Rather than treating such variety as opposing points of view, sociology may be in the process of realizing that it is essential to the core
of the discipline.
APPENDIX I

PARADIGM FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Where is the existential basis of mental productions located?
   a) social bases: social position, class, generation, occupational role, mode of production, group structures (university, bureaucracy, academies, sects, political parties, "historical situation", interests, society, ethnic affiliation, social mobility, power structure, social processes (competition, conflict, and so on).
   b) cultural bases: values, ethos, climate of opinion, Volksgeist, Zeitgeist, type of culture, culture mentality, Weltanschauungen, and so on.

2. What mental productions are being sociologically analyzed?
   a) spheres of: moral beliefs, ideologies, ideas, the categories of thought, philosophy, religious beliefs, social norms, positive science, technology, and so on.
   b) which aspects are analyzed: their selection (foci of attention), level of abstraction, presuppositions (what is taken as data and what as problematical), conceptual content, models of verification, objectives of intellectual activity, and so on.

3. How are mental productions related to the existential basis?
   a) causal or functional relations: determination, cause, correspondence, necessary condition, conditioning, functional interdependence, interaction, dependence, and so on.
   b) symbolic or organismic or meaningful relations: consistency, harmony, coherence, unity, congruence, compatibility (and antonyms); expression, realization, symbolic expression, Strukturzusammenhang, structural identities, inner connection, stylistic analogies, logicomeaningful integration, identity of meaning, and so one.
   c) ambiguous terms to designate relations: correspondence, reflection, bound up with, in close connection with, and so on.

4. Why related? Manifest and latent functions imputed to these existentially conditioned mental productions.
   a) to maintain power, promote stability, orientation, exploitation, obscure actual social relationships, provide motivation, canalize behaviour, divert criticism, deflect hostility, provide reassurance, control nature, co-ordinate social relationships, and so on.

5. When do the imputed relations of the existential base and knowledge obtain?
   a) historicist theories (confined to particular societies or cultures)
   b) general analytical theories.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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