AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY'S *LONGUE DURÉE**

THIS IS an important book, which has no obvious competitor as a general history of American sociology, and will undoubtedly receive widespread recognition and use; it is particularly appropriate, therefore, to examine it closely and to evaluate its contents carefully. It is definitely an edited collection of papers, though, rather than a through-written book, so it cannot be treated as an integral intellectual whole. The chapters are of varying merit; some are of high interest for both data and interpretation, a few weak and adding little to our knowledge. A review which discussed every paper fully would be intolerably long, so that is not attempted; some observations are made about the book as a whole, and examples are used to illustrate some issues that run through a number of chapters and to suggest some of its strengths and weaknesses.

The book as a whole

The book covers a broad time-span, from the beginnings of "sociology" in America to the present day, and insofar as they lend themselves to it the papers are presented in a roughly chronological order. However, it does not set out to be a narrative history of the general course of development in American sociology. The titles of some papers refer to a particular period in general (e.g. "Sociology during the Great Depression and the New Deal"), while others refer to a theme such as the feminist revolution, the sociology of education or sociology's relation to social work. In practice, however, the "period" papers sometimes focus on specific themes within their period, while the "theme" papers sometimes concentrate attention on one part of the period relevant to their topic. The titles, thus, do not always tell much about the nature of the contribution to our historical understanding made by the papers; Stephen Turner's paper on the once prominent but now little-known Ellwood is, for instance, as informative on his period in general as some of those defined as about a period, while Lengermann and Niebrugge on the relations between sociology and social work concentrate on the formative period which ended in the 1930s.

There is some overlap between the territories covered in different chapters. Sometimes one gives what is clearly a better-informed account than another, sometimes interpretations differ. Abbott and Sparrow, for example, put forward a broad analysis of the same period as Steinmetz which differs from his, although they clearly have some relation, and DeVault more briefly (p. 168) offers a third account; Breslau has a strong discussion of the legiti-

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mation of the establishment of an academic discipline, though Sica's paper's title suggests more focus on the topic. No explicit attempt has been made to reconcile such differences, despite the broad historical summary offered in Calhoun's introduction – indeed, there are not always even cross-references to draw attention to alternative versions. Although the differences are sometimes ones of complementarity rather than conflict, this means that caution in treating any one chapter as a definitive version is needed.

The book does not claim to cover every aspect of the history of American sociology, either, and indeed Calhoun in his preface mentions some of the areas that have been omitted, which include rural sociology, relations to other disciplines, and the teaching of sociology; he adds some areas of substantive specialisation other than those of race, gender, criminology and education which are included, and could have listed more. (Some contributors dropped out, so maybe some of those were included in the original plan; clearly, too, the editor was not in a position to commission work from scratch in areas where it was not already at least in progress, or associated with the established interests of potential contributors.) One may note that the substantive fields which are included are ones which have had a political as well as a theoretical significance, which perhaps suggests that the implicit reasons for choice have not been purely sociological – but that may equally reflect the way American sociology has been done, or at least the politically correct frame of reference for work commissioned by the ASA. To Calhoun's list of the missing areas one might add quantitative methods, and social psychology/small group studies. (Moreno and his sociometry do not appear at all in the index, despite their phase of high fashion, and Bales figures only in passing references as a co-author with Parsons). There are other areas, however, where the chapters which do appear contribute valuably towards filling significant gaps in earlier historical work; this is particularly so for the period 1920-1950, which figures in several. (Some other gaps are filled almost accidentally. Thus Harvey Zorbaugh and Howard S. Becker appear in Walters' chapter on the sociology of education in relation to stages in their careers quite different from those mentioned in conventional accounts of the "Chicago School", while the space Steinmetz devotes to Michigan – his own department – is roughly equal to the space devoted to the other four he covers combined, which is hard to justify in context, but does add usefully to our knowledge of a department which has received less attention in the general historical literature.) Calhoun makes the claim for the book's distinctive character that it "focuses largely on institutional patterns shaping the field" (p. xiv). I am not sure how far this can be taken to be justified, though it is certainly true that it takes a much more sociological approach than those studies which discuss only theoretical ideas; chapter authors vary in their relative emphasis on ideas and on their immediate or wider social setting. There are many references to institutional features, though they figure in the argument to very varying extents. But

there is no chapter on, for instance, the faculty labour market, learned societies, research funding, or sociological journals.

Kennedy and Centeno (2007, p. 695), in their chapter on internationalism, remark that some of the other chapters "focus almost exclusively on studies of American society; they are reflecting, but also helping to construct, a tale of American sociology as an American area studies speciality''. This rather sharp critical comment might well give rise to useful reflection and, in combination with the literature on intellectual migration and its impact, to consideration of how far even – or especially? – American sociology can be treated simply as a national product. This issue is touched on briefly in passing in some places, but hardly developed.

In addition to the substantive chapters, a useful short essay by Phillips and VanAntwerpen on the history of American sociology's historiography introduces a remarkable 111-page bibliography; this is in itself a resource (1), though by no means all the works listed are themselves historical. But a quick scan of the list discovered only three in any language other than English. (So much for the language requirement!) That is a pity, since there is certainly work in French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish relevant to the history of American sociology, and considering a foreign perspective on it would enrich the discussion; this absence emphasizes the extent to which the story told is an American history of American sociology. The index is impressively full, and should prove very useful.

The chapter authors are an impressive collection, many of them prominent in the discipline. By no means all are, however, prominent for work on the history of sociology; there is a division between those who do have a specialist research interest in its history, and those whose qualification for writing about it is as participants, and this tends to lead to different styles. Eleven of the first authors (some of whom do also work on the history of sociology) write about situations in which they have themselves participated; naturally, this applies more often in the parts on developments since World War II. As compared with some of the well-known books by historians, this work does not suffer from lack of personal knowledge of the intellectual content of the sociology discussed, even if it sometimes tends to become thin and reliant on secondary sources, or to repeat the usual stories, when dealing with periods not within the writers' own experience. Those who draw mainly on personal experience tend to seem less familiar with the historical work that has already been done, and less likely to have collected systematic data specifically for this task, which can lead to weaknesses – alongside the special richness, and grasp of nuance and meanings, associated with the direct knowledge which does not have to rely on uneven published sources.

(1) Although the index does list the names of some authors who appear in the text only as references to their work, not every work in the bibliography has an author in the index. It is not stated how such decisions were made, but this suggests that the bibliography may go usefully beyond the specific works cited in the chapters.

In that connection it may be relevant to note some of the authors' personal characteristics. All are American, at least in current affiliation. One junior author is a historian working on the period covered in his chapter; two more probably define their identity as "sociologist", but are in departments with other names, and another holds a joint appointment (with the other part in a field relevant to his topic). Nine of the 27 authors are women, four of them for chapters in whole or in part on gender, and three more for chapters on the traditionally gendered fields of social work and education; three authors are known to me to be African-Americans, and all those have chapters with "race" in the title. (Masculinity, and "racial" groups other than African-Americans, are scarcely, if at all, present in those chapters; identity politics has set limits to the sociology.)

Nine of the chapters have senior authors whose doctorates were awarded from 1969 to 1979, and six more are from 1980-85. Perhaps this is not exactly a unitary cohort, and perhaps it represents the age structure of American sociology more generally, or of those in it with historical interests, but we may note that much of their formative personal experience is drawn from the period of turmoil and politicisation in the "long sixties" and its aftermath (2); inevitably this affects what they treat as taken-for-granted knowledge. The book is well timed, in the sense that it catches before it is too late some of the memories of an important cohort approaching retirement. The younger professional generation is sparsely represented, almost entirely by graduate students appearing as junior authors, and those within it who have published some interesting quantitative work on the state of sociology are not represented at all. One can imagine a different range and balance of topics which might have been produced by a team with different backgrounds.

There are enough minor errors in this first edition, in index and bibliography as well as the main text, to require note; many of these follow from lack of detailed coordination between authors, so that, for instance, the same cited sociologist's name appears in two different forms. Some of the errors are ones which might mislead users, and it is a pity that a work so likely to be used as a reference source should contain them. But there is at least one which it is impossible to regret; it would take a heart of stone not to appreciate the introduction of the concept of "simper societies" (p. 359). Even this will, however, be corrected in the forthcoming second edition.

Finally, a matter not usually mentioned in reviews. The book has 913 pages. This indicates the scope and richness of the material provided, but it also means that the physical object is too large for convenience, especially in the paperback version. Although it is well enough produced not yet to have fallen apart as I expected, which does credit to Chicago's production standards, it is simply too heavy, at 2 pounds, to hold up at eye level. I hope that the second edition will appear in a more manageable two volumes.

(2) Five of the authors contributed chapters to SICA and TURNER 2005.

Theories and methods

The extent to which the material is explicitly theorized varies considerably. For example, Steinmetz offers a general explanatory account of the pattern he diagnoses, in which state Fordism explains the regrettable prevalence of positivism in the postwar period. Abbott and Sparrow plot the changes in topics and theoretical approaches that they see as following from the war, and construct a detailed argument for how the pattern responded to societal factors of the period – not including Fordism, except perhaps as exemplified in wartime bureaucracy. Kennedy and Centeno characterise American sociology as generally Americoentric, and suggest that "Prominent arguments about social structure and dynamics in other world regions become visible typically when global transformations or American intellectual debates direct the national gaze toward that region'' (p. 672). Walters interprets changes in educational sociology in the light of changing patterns of university organisation for the discipline of sociology, and for "education'' as a field more concerned with training practitioners. Some other chapters could not be described as atheoretical, but are more concerned to provide rich descriptive material on their themes, and to correct earlier accounts, than to offer general theorisation of what they describe.

A strength of the volume lies in the historiographic and methodological points made, even just in passing. The whole chapter by Calhoun and VanAntwerpen on "mainstream'' sociology is valuably reflexive in treating the issue as the use of the category "mainstream'' and what that has signified, or what functions it has performed, and trying to show that those seen as belonging to it by those defining themselves as outside it have been more diverse than the terminology implies – and that some of those "outsiders'' could also be seen as inside. (They end by suggesting that the concept "mainstream'' was created by the New Left "project[ing] the politicized categories of their present onto the past'', (p. 410). Similarly, Lengermann and Niebrugge on sociology's relation to social work relativise it by studying narratives of their historical relation; the comparison of the alternative versions of history is a very fruitful intellectual strategy. Breslau concludes his review of the "American Spencerians'' by seeing them as constructing "society'' as an object appropriate for the application of their expertise and so conferring authority. I regret that more of the chapters did not take the opportunities for the perspective offered by such angles of approach; there are some of the usual stories which would profit from such treatment. Recent work on collective memory could have been very suggestive, too. Doug McAdam, whose work in that area has been important, has written his chapter here in ways which do not obviously draw on it. However, his argument is also methodologically suggestive in that he plots a cohort effect from the generation of the sixties to which he himself belonged; maybe not all cohorts are as clearly defined or consequential as that one, but he makes the case for the potential value of a cohort approach.

In addition, some of the authors make conceptual distinctions which seem to have potential well beyond the precise context in which they come up; thus Walters illuminates the distinction between "educational sociology" and "sociology of education", Calhoun and VanAntwerpen distinguish "elite" and "mass" sociologies and their circumstances, and Kennedy and Centeno distinguish in their group of "internationalist" respondents a cohesive "comparative and historical" set, and a less unified residual group. Two authors suggest reasons why history has attended to some topics more than others: Camic (p. 272) argues that the thirties have been neglected in the history of sociology because of its relative failure at that period, between two periods of greater success; Calhoun and VanAntwerpen (p. 390) argue that Parsons looms disproportionately large because of the propensity of sociologists to write histories which are only about theory. Those suggestions sound plausible, and could be explored further.

The types of data deployed vary considerably. The reader's attention is drawn, by the recurring use made of data on ASA members and sections, and of various earlier efforts to identify the most valued books, to the difficulty of getting good data on some points of interest without very considerable effort; those sources are less than ideal, if much better than nothing. Ferree *et al*. present a considerable body of data of a conventionally sociological kind, with tables; commoner is the compilation of a large body of non-quantitative historical data from diverse sources, as done by Abbott and Sparrow, Camic, Collins, Lengermann and Niebrugge, and Turner. Kennedy and Centeno combine a small exercise in fresh data-collection, on such questions as the reputation of books in international fields of work, with a substantial critical analysis of the literature of their area. Gross's chapter, on the impact of various philosophical positions on sociology, makes a sterling effort to expound the philosophical details for a readership which may not be at all familiar with them. (He also deserves special credit for going on to provide data on their actual uses in sociology, rather than just imputing influence where he judges there to be congruence, strengthening his argument for the need to take into account relations with other disciplines in the history of ours.) Some other chapters (e.g. Wallerstein on the sixties, Winant on race) are skewed in the direction of personal experience and/or interpretive reflection on facts more or less assumed, probably correctly, to be generally known. The extent to which the data are convincing varies; some authors have done extensive archival work on appropriate sources, others are more cavalier, and sometimes make incautious assertions, open to question, without presenting supporting data (3).

(3) Collins, for instance, remarks in passing on the exclusion from sociology of the working class – when writing of the heyday of Lipset, Lundberg, Merton and Shils, all from working-class or humble rural backgrounds – and goes on to treat Davis and Moore's famous (1945) "Some principles of stratification" as intellectually dominant at its time without mentioning the almost equally famous critique of it by Tumin (1953). (See HAUHART 2003 for a review of the history of the article's use.)

The problem with personal experience is that to accept the conclusions reached from it one must implicitly take the adequacy of the author's evidence on authority, unless the experience is described in sufficient detail to qualify as (at least anecdotal) data. But, of course, if one has personal experience that chimes with what is described one is likely to find the account very convincing, whether or not there is good sociological reason to do so. Unfortunately we can only tell formally, as sociologists, whether to accept the general description given if more representative data are available on the others who shared the experience – and when that is so, individual personal experiences may look less relevant. Description apart, there are many points in this book where personal standpoints are evident in the relatively subtle rhetorical form of the implicit assumption that readers will share the writer's understanding of the meaning of certain events. This draws the reader in, and encourages an uncritical attitude. That is the way one naturally writes when one expects readers to be members of the same intellectual, and perhaps also ideological, community. It is noticeable that even authors from elite institutions criticize elitism and hierarchical divisions within the discipline; a thoroughly rightist critique would have made a refreshing addition to the menu offered. Insofar as these are problems that is, of course, in no way specific to this book, if relatively salient here.

Given the problems of dealing with quite long historical periods in a single chapter, and (one infers) with shortages of available data or time to generate them *ad hoc*, it is interesting to note the various methodological strategies used, some of which could be seen as a form of sampling. The success and fitness for purpose of four are briefly evaluated balow.

DeVault on fieldwork, and Laslett on life stories from feminist sociology, both analyse selected publications. They use them, however, in very different ways. DeVault chooses three works to focus on, each a methodological essay chosen as exemplary for its period, but the discussion does not rest on their characteristics; it places them against their intellectual background, drawing on wider knowledge to locate them and to understand the meanings they have had to members of their intellectual community. Laslett uses two books on leading women – Elsie Clews Parsons and Jessie Bernard – and one collection of autobiographical essays by feminist activists. Despite the inevitable human interest of the stories told, this is an odd "sample'' to use for reaching general conclusions about the history of feminist sociology, on which it seems essentially to conclude only that varying circumstances have made a difference – perhaps all one could conclude on that basis.

Lengermann and Niebrugge on sociology and social work, and Winant on the sociology of race, both present their material as organised by versions of it current in the earlier literature: three narratives, and four paradigms. The paradigms are seen as successive, while the narratives are seen as coexisting despite their differences. These choices reflect deep knowledge of the field, as shown in the material presented, though the less informed reader has to accept on authority the adequacy of the summary terms to describe

what has happened. Turner and Morris both focus on single individuals, Ellwood and DuBois respectively. Morris' general approach is hagiographic rather than seriously historical. Assertions are made about DuBois whose function appears ideological rather than concerned with sociological understanding of the past, and the main focus is on arguing that the sociology of race would have been better if DuBois' legacy had been used more. The chapter draws heavily on McKee's work, and it is not clear that it adds much to our knowledge of DuBois and his setting. Turner on Ellwood presents data on one life history, very thoroughly documented. Ellwood had a distinguished career in the interwar period, but his virtual disappearance from the collective memory shows how radical the break with the past was by the 1950s. Turner relates his trajectory convincingly to the social context, so that it does indeed throw light on the wider situation. (In doing so it also, as intended, draws useful attention to the limited value of the commonly offered history that is based solely upon data about elite departments.) Finally, two authors choose particular institutions to provide key data in their arguments. Steinmetz clearly disagrees with Turner, though again they do not refer to each other, because he chooses to focus on leading departments (4), taken as in some sense representative of the total situation despite the author's recognition of the fact that many departments and their members differ from the positions that he highlights. However persuasive Steinmetz's powerfully argued methodological position (and he is to be congratulated for having one, and stating it), it cannot conceal that the same data are reasonably compatible with an opposite interpretation, which would stress continuing diversity and resistance to hegemony. McAdam's data focus on ASA sections and the increasing specialisation which their growth and proliferation reveals; his argument is that the "extended sixties'' had the unintended consequence of making sociology less policy-relevant. Any criticism of the limitations of section data as a source – which could certainly be raised – is partially disarmed by the frank declaration that his piece is impressionistic and polemical, not systematic empirical scholarship. As such it is, arguably, in itself data on the impressions of the cohort he sees himself as representing, maybe an unintended bonus.

Each of these different strategies can be a useful one, even if more and less successful examples of them are sketched here; although they are not of

(4) But are the right departments used? Steinmetz divides the discussion between two periods, 1930s-45 and 1945-65, and for each presents material on Columbia, Chicago, Michigan, Wisconsin and Harvard. He justifies his choice with reference to some data from other authors, though he decided, for unstated but puzzling reasons, to omit Minnesota and North Carolina, which do appear among the leaders in their lists. But even after that is allowed for, each data set in his apparent sources still has at least one institution placed differently from those on his list. Riley (1960 p. 918) has Yale as fifth in number of ASA members holding its doctorates in 1959, (just) above Michigan; Burris' (2004, p. 241) summary of earlier prestige studies does not mention Michigan or Harvard at all for 1934, its only date within the first period, and for 1957 and 1964 has Cornell and Berkeley respectively in the top five; Camic's (p. 233) rather casually mentioned "top-ranked'' departments are mentioned as such for the 1920s, not the 1930s, and do not include Harvard.

the kind proposed in methods textbooks, they suggest some possible models for future work.

Conclusion

The broad interpretive sweep at the macro level is often more attractive than the long march through the foothills of small items of methodologically careful data, and different authors have judged the balance differently; the best work, here as more generally, includes both. Although some well-supported rejections of previous versions are proposed, on the whole the data are presented, and the conclusions reached are offered, in a somewhat inductive style. Though some very interesting and persuasive interpretive ideas are put forward, few or none of them could, I think, be seen as submitted to testing against alternative possibilities. In that sense what is offered here leaves room for valuable future development of historical work.

Several of the authors maintain that there have been significant hierarchical cleavages in the discipline over time, and several also emphasize, as many other writers have done, that more recent sociology has become subdivided into mutually ignorant specialisms. The chapters by Walters and by Short and Hughes, on sociology of education and on criminology, make it clear that there is much that is not covered by a history which attempts to focus on what are assumed to be central or unifying features. Future history would benefit considerably from an agenda of comparative study of specialisms, looking from the ground up rather than the "centre" down, without taking it for granted that the centre was everywhere dominant.

Although this is not a definitive work on the history of American sociology, some of these papers should certainly change our general historical understandings, whether by filling previous gaps in historical writing or by highlighting inadequacies of data or interpretation in existing work. Some of its weaknesses might encourage efforts to improve on them; some of the disagreements between different authors should serve to alert readers to alternatives. But in some ways the most important contribution is to have produced a big, serious book which treats the sociological history of sociology as a worthwhile enterprise. Perhaps in that sense it will also have a good influence in other countries too, among sociologists who are more interested in sociology nearer to home. May it have many successors!

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