

Scholarly Solutions; the development of American Political Science from the Gilded Age to the Great Society

Louisa K. A. Hotson



Corpus Christi College

Trinity Term 2017

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

SHORT ABSTRACT

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This thesis describes the development of the discipline of Political Science in the United States between the so-called ‘Gilded Age’ of the late nineteenth century and the heyday of expertise ushered in by the ‘Great Society’ programmes of the 1960s. It assumes a novel approach to the history of American Political Science by focusing on the interface between the discipline and society. This marks a break from, on the one hand, ‘internal’ disciplinary histories which pay scant attention to the broader social and political environment in which the discipline of Political Science was situated and, on the other hand, historical surveys that give only limited attention to the intellectual concerns and preoccupations of its practitioners. As a discipline oriented to the challenges of an expanding government in a nation that – despite a massive growth of government during the twentieth century – has been characterised by suspicions of both centralization and of ‘experts’, the development of the discipline was never unproblematic. But this thesis describes how leading proponents of the discipline have responded to these challenges and established the study of American politics within the American academy. It argues that the first generation of American political scientists were stimulated into existence by the rapid maturation of American government and politics at the end of nineteenth century, and subsequent generations were animated by its ongoing growth and rapid development during the twentieth. The development of the discipline was also shaped by the rising lot of the ‘expert’ in American life more generally – although their claims never went unchallenged. In describing the past of American Political Science, this thesis illuminates broader trends relating to the growth of American government in the twentieth century, the rise of experts in American society and a peculiar dilemma of our own time: as American political scientists find it harder to think of the ‘big picture’ of American politics today.

LONG ABSTRACT

‘Political Science’ first emerged in the United States as a distinct division of academic knowledge during the so-called ‘Gilded Age’, as university-educated professionals took a more prominent role in American society. Drawing from kindred disciplines of History, Law and Economics, these new political scientists hoped to produce granular, empirical studies of government and politics in such a way that they might clearly speak to the most urgent challenges facing the American democratic system. Over the next one hundred or so years, the discipline changed and grew as a profession whilst remaining rooted in these same concerns. American political scientists envisioned that their work might bring to light a better, more efficient democracy, rationalise longstanding assumptions relating to the nature and operation of American politics and government, and identify patterns of change in American state and society. When the American polity was most tested and the challenges facing it the most severe, these scholars frequently strove to help the American democratic system to survive the dislocation that they sometimes caused in other democratic systems across the world. This thesis analyses these attempts to find ‘scholarly solutions’ to the major concerns of the day.

The emergence of the discipline of Political Science in the United States mirrors the rise of the expert in twentieth century American life more generally. The United States has fostered a distinct anti-intellectual tradition defined by an antipathy towards elitism based in knowledge and expertise.¹ In the nineteenth century, the evangelical preacher and publisher Dwight L. Moody captured this tradition when he stated that, ‘The church in America would die of dry rot and sink forty-nine fathoms in hell if all members were multimillionaires and college graduates.’² Moody was not against ‘intellect’ or ‘education’ per se, but he bitterly resented the learned elites of his day, and as Richard Hofstadter has argued, he spoke for many businessmen, newspaper editors and other quasi-learned figures who, in various ways, were critical of the role of the educated classes in American life.³ Over the following decades this antipathy to experts and expertise somewhat eroded in face of the professionalization of

¹ For the seminal work on anti-intellectualism see; Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American life* (Knopf; 1963). Also see; Micheal Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, (Cornell University Press; 1998); Thomas Bender, *Intellect and public life: essays on the social history of academic intellectual in the United States* (Johns Hopkins University Press; 1993).

² Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American life*, p. 116.

³ *Ibid.*

the middle class and the emergence of research universities.⁴ ‘Education’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘science’ became a powerful new triumvirate powering the development of American business and politics. Higher education institutions, once the preserve of the few, became central features of modern American life and increasingly necessary for a foothold in the new economy. And American universities, once the colonial outposts to European institutions and scholarship, became world-leading centres for academic research – with American research universities far surpassing in size and scope those of other nations.⁵ In 1944, President Franklin Roosevelt addressed the nation with the statement that, ‘New frontiers of the mind are before us’.⁶ Two decades later, Lyndon Johnson would push this statement further still. The United States transformed from a society and culture dominated by fear of expertise, to one whose faith in ‘research’ surpassed all others.⁷

To the extent that political scientists espoused grand ambitions to explain the health and state of the nation’s government and politics through close, granular research, they were almost always just that: ambitions. Political scientists never really came to assume a preeminent role as designers or spokespersons of the American political system, indeed, a periodic refrain of the discipline was to complain about its lack of influence and status. Nevertheless, the intellectual approach of American political scientists is symptomatic of its location in a society that was increasingly open to expertise and increasingly trusting in the power of empirical research, yet within which their claims never went unchallenged. Other countries did not initially consider ‘Political Science’ in the American fashion a necessary study at all. Britain interlinked the subject with History. Germany paired it with Law. France treated it as a faction of training for civil service.⁸ American political scientists, in contrast, were united by a central concern to study the ‘reality’ of politics within a modernizing society.

This thesis also sheds light on a new set of challenges facing expert knowledge today. In the latter half of the twentieth century the main force affecting the role of experts –

⁴ Although, see; Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*.

⁵ See; Roger Geiger, *To Advance Knowledge: The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900 – 1940* (New York: OUP, 1986); Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (OUP; 1993); Hugh Davis Graham and Nancy Diamond, *The Rise of American Research Universities: Elites and Challengers in the Postwar Era*, (Johns Hopkins UP, 1997); Clark Kerr, *Uses of the University* (Harvard University Press; 2001, 5th Ed).

⁶ Quoted in, Vannevar Bush, *Science the Endless Frontier* (US Government Printing Office: 1945) p. i

⁷ See especially, Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*.

⁸ See; David Easton, John Gunnell and Luigi Graziano (eds), *The Development of political science: a comparative survey* (Routledge; 1991).

whether that be scholarly academics or more practical professional specialists – is not in the form of antagonists such as Moody, seeking to curtail their power. Anti-intellectualism remains a significant force in American politics. Nevertheless, it is in the form of a growing modesty as to the limitations of research and knowledge and – for lack of a better description – the dulling of ambition among learned men and women to deal with the big picture, that most hinders the role of the expert today. The late twentieth century is the era of the public intellectual, the politician, the media spokesperson – not the academic specialist. American research universities have become exceptionally efficient at producing specialists and professionals, but a curious modesty afflicts these same men and women when it comes to engaging with large issues.

This new humility has not afflicted all disciplines evenly. Some divisions of ‘specialised experts’, such as illustrious macroeconomists, have rather a lot to say on big issues – too much, perhaps. Others, most notably the research-bound American political scientist, have withdrawn from the fray, wary of attempting too much or overstepping their proper jurisdiction. The ambitions of the discipline in the past are brought into stark relief in comparison with a malaise that has fallen over the contemporary discipline. Although few today share the Reverend Moody’s flagrant contempt of the ‘university educated’, scholars have to a striking extent willingly ceded the responsibility to speak to large issues. Political scientists attempt narrower and narrower questions. Worldwide the American profession is notable – although not celebrated - for a fondness for modelling itself after the ‘natural’ sciences. Two influential scholars, Bernard Crick and Dorothy Ross, have both referred to the ‘scientific’ aspirations of the discipline as ‘scientism’.⁹ Moreover, between 2009 and 2013 Republicans in Congress successfully lobbied to have Political Science removed from National Science Foundation funding. They posited that the discipline is a ‘waste’ of federal money.

If one’s point of comparison is the twenty-first century, the period investigated here, by contrast, was something of a long golden century for the discipline. Compared with what came before and what would follow, this was a period in which American political scientists

⁹Dorothy Ross, *Origins of American Social Science* (CUP, 1991); Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics: Its origins and conditions* (University of California Press; 1959) Also see, Gunnell et al, *The Development of political science: a comparative survey*; David McKay, ‘Why is there a European Political Science’ *PS: Political Science and Politics* Vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 1051; and, McKay, ‘Is European Political Science inferior to or different from American Political Science’, *European Journal of Political Research* Vol. 20, Issue 3-4, (December, 1991), pp. 459-66.

were able to overcome the challenges that had for so long prevented a discipline of 'Political Science' forming in the United States. And, unlike in later decades, this was a period in which political scientists were eager to link their empirical research in American government and politics to large questions concerning the American polity. This thesis considers the two sets of circumstances that so vitalized the discipline in this decade. On the one hand, political scientists had an exceptionally interesting subject matter: the growth of the American state and concurrent transformative changes in American politics; on the other hand, the professionalization of American society and the coterminous rise of American research universities gave the discipline a framework upon which to expand.

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THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the help and support of many individuals and institutions. A Wolfson Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship in the Humanities bore the majority of costs for study and research and also enriched my time as a graduate student by introducing me to a welcoming community of Wolfson scholars. A Robert L. Platzman Memorial Fellowship from the University of Chicago enabled me to spend a crucial month of research in the Regenstein Library. Further financial support from various departments and colleges of the University of Oxford - the History Faculty, Corpus Christi College, and the Rothermere American Institute - provided me with additional grants and awards for research. A Corpus Christi Senior Scholarship gave me extra financial support during my third year of doctoral studies and also deepened my attachment to the college and its members. And an award from the Vice Chancellor's Fund, combined with an award from Andrew Smith Memorial Foundation, provided valuable financial assistance whilst writing up.

Staff at various libraries helped to make my research trips productive and fruitful; I would like to thank those at the Regenstein Library in Chicago; Berkeley Special Collections in the Bancroft Library; the Department of Special Collections and University Archives at Stanford University Libraries; the George Washington University Special Collections Library; Harvard University Archives and the Pusey Library at Harvard; the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum; the Manuscripts and Archives department at Yale University Library; and Judy Sackett at the University of Kentucky Libraries.

Particular thanks go to the staff of the Vere Harmsworth Library, led by Jane Rawson, where much of this thesis was written. Thanks also go to the fellows and students of Corpus Christi College, which provided me with a friendly environment and, due in no small measure to Rachel Pearson, a remarkably efficient response to any and all requests for paperwork.

The main intellectual base of this project was in the Rothermere American Institute. I benefitted from the energy that Pekka Hämäläinen and Mara Keire put into steering the DPhil seminars and enlivening and inspiring the RAI graduate community. Fellow members of that seminar offered an invaluable combination of friendship and intellectual stimulation and I would like to thank in particular Nonie Kubie, Daniel Rowe, Patrick Andelic, Skye Montgomery, Jane Dinwoodie, Kathryn Olivarius, Mitch Robertson, Dom Barker, Emma Day, Christoph Nitschke, Rivers Gambrell and Horatio Joyce. Scholars and visiting fellows

of the Rothermere American Institute offered helpful and instructive conversations and I would like to thank especially Nigel Bowles, Sidney Milkis, Lisa Miller, Tom Packer and Ursula Hackett for their guidance and advice.

I would also like to thank my examiners, Byron Shafer and Daniel Scroop. Their astute and interesting questions and made the process of the viva not only instructive, but intellectually stimulating and enjoyable.

Above all, this thesis is indebted to my supervisor, Gareth Davies. I began my doctoral studies with what I now realise was simply ambition and enthusiasm, but Gareth helped give this project direction and purpose. From the beginning to the end Gareth has provided invaluable advice and guidance and I am deeply grateful for the time and energy he has put into supervising me during the past four years.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the love and support of friends and family. I would like to make special mention here of those friends at Oxford who shared so much of graduate life with me: Rosy Hall, Marjolein Poortvliet, Belinda Faust, Liselotte Snijders, Kira Liebert, Helena Beeley, Anna Comboni, Hannah Ryley, Renee Haver and all of the ‘ferrets’, especially the much-missed Lottie Fullerton. My parents, Anthony and Louann, and my brother Christopher supported me at all times before and during the writing of this thesis – not least in the final stretch. The happiest consequence of writing this thesis was meeting Huw, and with this thesis as with all things he has been an unwavering source of strength and support.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAPSS</i>	<i>Annals of the American Academy of Social and Political Science</i>
AEA	American Economic Association
AHA	American Historical Association
APSA	American Political Science
<i>APSR</i>	<i>American Political Science Review</i>
BSC, BL	Berkeley Special Collections, Bancroft Library
CEMP	Charles E. Merriam Papers
CNPS	Caucus for a New Political Science
DSCUA, SUL	Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries
GWU, SCL	George Washington University, Special Collections Library
HUA, PL	Harvard University Archives, Pusey Library
JFKPLM	JFK Presidential Library and Museum
IGR	Institute for Governmental Research
MA, YUL	Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library
<i>PSQ</i>	<i>Political Science Quarterly</i>
SCRC, RL	Special Collections Research Center, Regenstein Library.
SSRC	Social Science Research Council

Introduction

‘Political Science’ first emerged in the United States as a distinct division of academic knowledge during the so-called ‘Gilded Age’, as university-educated professionals took a more prominent role in American society. Drawing from kindred disciplines of History, Law and Economics, these new political scientists hoped to produce granular, empirical studies of government and politics in such a way that they might clearly speak to the most urgent challenges facing the American democratic system. Over the next one hundred or so years, the discipline changed and grew as a profession whilst remaining rooted in these same concerns. American political scientists envisioned that their work might bring to light a better, more efficient democracy, rationalise longstanding assumptions relating to the nature and operation of American politics and government, and identify patterns of change in American state and society. When the American polity was most tested and the challenges facing it the most severe, these scholars frequently strove to help the American democratic system to survive the dislocation that they sometimes caused in other democratic systems across the world. This thesis analyses these attempts to find ‘scholarly solutions’ to the major concerns of the day.

The emergence of the discipline of Political Science in the United States mirrored the rise of the expert in twentieth century American life more generally. The United States has fostered a distinct anti-intellectual tradition defined by an antipathy towards elitism based in knowledge and expertise.¹⁰ In the nineteenth century, the evangelical preacher and publisher Dwight L. Moody captured this tradition when he stated that, ‘The church in America would die of dry rot and sink forty-nine fathoms in hell if all members were multimillionaires and college graduates.’¹¹ Moody was not against ‘intellect’ or ‘education’ per se, but he bitterly resented the learned elites of his day, and as Richard Hofstadter has argued, he spoke for many businessmen, newspaper editors and other quasi-learned figures who, in various ways,

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were critical of the role of the educated classes in American life.¹² Over the following decades this antipathy to experts and expertise somewhat eroded in face of the professionalization of the middle class and the emergence of research universities.¹³ ‘Education’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘science’ became a powerful new triumvirate powering the development of American business and politics. Higher education institutions, once the preserve of the few, became central features of modern American life and increasingly necessary for a foothold in the new economy. And American universities, once the colonial outposts to European institutions and scholarship, became world-leading centers for academic research – with American research universities far surpassing in size and scope those of other nations.¹⁴ In 1944 President Franklin Roosevelt addressed the nation with the statement that, ‘New frontiers of the mind are before us’.¹⁵ Two decades later, Lyndon Johnson would push this statement further still. The United States transformed from a society and culture dominated by fear of expertise, to one whose faith in ‘research’ surpassed all others.¹⁶

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¹² Ibid.

¹³ Although, see; Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*.

¹⁴ See; Roger Geiger, *To Advance Knowledge: The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900 – 1940* (New York: OUP, 1986); Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (OUP; 1993); Hugh Davis Graham and Nancy Diamond, *The Rise of American Research Universities: Elites and Challengers in the Postwar Era*, (Johns Hopkins UP, 1997); Clark Kerr, *Uses of the University* (Harvard University Press; 2001, 5th Ed).

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¹⁸Dorothy Ross, *Origins of American Social Science* (CUP, 1991); Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics: Its origins and conditions* (University of California Press; 1959) Also see, Gunnell et al, *The Development of political science: a comparative survey*; David McKay, ‘Why is there a European Political Science’ *PS: Political Science and Politics* Vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 1051; and, McKay, ‘Is European Political Science inferior to or different from American Political Science’, *European Journal of Political Research* Vol. 20, Issue 3-4, (December, 1991), pp. 459-66.

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The politics of Political Science's past

As James Farr has quipped, 'Political Science remembers so little of its own history, and what history it does remember is often dismissed as dead wrong, or simply dead'.¹⁹ There is much truth in this statement. Intermittent collections of retrospective articles which examine aspects of the profession's past have some interesting new light to shed, with Albert Somit and Joseph Tanenhaus's 1967 book-length investigation among the most significant and useful.²⁰ In general, however, the historical memory of political scientists is cloudy. This results less from inattention to the subject than the fact that the discipline has become a staging post for waging contemporary battles over method and approach. The very earliest surveys of American Political Science were celebratory accounts of the development of new research programmes.²¹ However, in more recent years these histories have become much more critical, often using historical investigation as a proxy to engage in contemporary

¹⁹ James Farr, 'Political Science and the State' in Farr, James and Siedelman, Raymond (eds) *Discipline and History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993) p. 63.

²⁰ Albert Somit and Joseph Tanenhaus, *The Development of American Political Science: From Burgess to Behavioralism*, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon; 1967).

²¹ See; John W. Burgess, 'Ideas and Forms of the State' *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1891), Vol.1, Chapters 1-3; Charles Merriam, *A History of American Political Theories* (New York: The Macmillan company; 1903); Robert Murray, *The History of Political Science from Plato to the Present* (NY: Appleton, 1925); Walter James Shepard, "Political Science", in, Harry Elmer Barnes (ed) *The History and Prospects of the Social Sciences* (NY:Knopf, 1925).

disciplinary debates.²² This led Gabriel Almond to observe in 1988 that there was currently a battle for control of interpretation of the discipline's past, in which 'Whoever controls the interpretation of the past in our professional history writing has gone a long way toward controlling the future.'²³

Among the most influential of this literature was David Ricci's tellingly titled *The Tragedy of Political Science: Politics, Scholarship and Democracy*.²⁴ His central claim was that the discipline had deviated from its 'true path', in the line of 'great thinkers' from Plato to Marx. A combination of professionalization, liberal political values and new ideas about 'science' pushed scholarship down an ever more rigorously 'quantitative' direction. This was a widely read argument which seemed to capture some prominent recent trends, and as Almond observed in 1988, it had 'succeeded in convincing some of us that we have deviated from the true path'.²⁵ This thesis captures certain threads of Ricci's main story, most notably the narrowness and seeming irrelevance of much contemporary Political Science to the large questions of the day. However, whilst Ricci is very attentive to certain ideas of how various structural forces have affected Political Science scholarship – such as the bureaucratization of the American academy - he is inattentive to a broader social and political context of the twentieth century United States. And, whilst Ricci is very concerned with debates about methodology and the philosophy of science, he does not strive to determine a broader set of animating concerns and preoccupations concerning American society and politics writ large. In this respect, Ricci largely overlooks the orienting concerns of the discipline that this thesis holds as central to its development.

Ricci was far from alone in using a discussion of the discipline's past to critique political scholarship in the present day. One edited collection which focuses on the history of the discipline contains six essays all of which were published between 1970 and 1992, and all of which disagree, often on quite fundamental terms, as to the history of the discipline. This includes a contribution by the rational choice scholar William H. Riker that celebrates the

²²See especially; John Gunnell; *Imagining the American Polity* (Pennsylvania State University Press; 2004); David Easton, 'Political Science in the United States: Past and Present', *International Political Science Review* Vol. 6, No. 1 (1985); Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics* (University of California Press; 1959); John C. Wahlke, "Pre-Behaviouralism in Political Science" *American Political Science Review* 73, (1979) pp. 9-31, David Easton "Political Science in the United States: Past and Present", *International Political Science Review*, Vol.6, No. 1, (1985), pp. 133-152.

²³ Gabriel Almond, 'Separate Tables: Schools and Sects in Political Science', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), p. 835.

²⁴ David Ricci, *The Tragedy of American Political Science*, (Yale University Press; 1987).

²⁵ Almond, 'Separate Tables', p. 835.

advance of scientific techniques among his colleagues, stating that this, rather than ‘criticism or philosophical speculation’, accounted for the development of the discipline.²⁶ In contrast, a 1981 presidential address by Charles E. Lindblom criticises the loss of ‘radical’ critics to the mainstream of political science.²⁷ And a third contribution, by Helene Silverberg, looks at the underrepresentation of gender as a ‘theoretical lens’ through which to understand ‘the organization of political, social, and economic life.’²⁸ All of these accounts were largely inattentive to broader historical context, and narrowly engaged in internecine warfare of ideas and research programmes. This thesis has no methodological axe to grind about the use of ‘quantification’: scientific techniques might be employed to great effect, and they might be employed badly. Instead, it attempts to explain the broader picture of the discipline – not only of its formal scholarship and research programmes, but the animating preoccupations and concerns of its scholars.

American Political Science in context: ‘Professionalization’ and the growth of the state

The political scientists described in this thesis witnessed something develop that was quite remarkable. The experience of watching the striking, unprecedented, and uneven expansion of the American state during the twentieth century was a phenomenon quite unlike any other, not least because of the force of anti-statism in American political thought. Between the first emergence of the American administrative state in the so-called ‘Gilded Age’ and the vast expansion of American bureaucracy and growing responsibilities of government in the ‘Great Society’, the ongoing challenges facing American democracy created a confident and broad-ranging tradition of scholarly inquiry. Animated by wonder, urgency and sense of opportunity, these scientific experts were posed with an unusual set of questions. More than any other single factor it was the changes in American politics that galvanized the discipline into existence.

²⁶William H. Riker, ‘The Two-Party System and Duverger’s Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science’, in Farr and Seidelman (eds) *Discipline and History* (University of Michigan Press; 1993).

²⁷ Charles E. Lindblom, ‘Another State of Mind’, in Farr and Seidelman (eds) *Discipline and History*, pp. 327 – 345.

²⁸ Helene Silverberg, ‘Gender Studies and Political Science: The History of the ‘Behavioralist Compromise’, in Farr and Seidelman (eds) *Discipline and History*, pp. 363 – 383.

The political scientists described in this thesis were not only *academics*; in many cases they were also profession-builders. As beneficiaries of a society that was becoming increasingly hospitable to ‘experts’ and university academics, political scientists sought to bridge new opportunities for research to the task of understanding the expanding American state. As we shall see, important benefactors – the Rockefellers, Carnegie, and even the Federal Government – were courted by entrepreneurial individuals, anxious to improve the lot of the discipline in society in the wake of new challenges to politics and government. Individuals played an important role in building the national profession in less formal ways as well. A candid conversation, a mutual connection, or a trusted recommendation provided the links between members within the discipline, as well as the outside world.

The experience of political scientists between the Gilded Age and Great Society contravenes one of the most well-worn tropes of the historiography on the rise of modern American academic knowledge: that the ‘professionalization’ of the academy led to work that was ‘aloof’ and ‘specialised’. Historians have been very interested in the growth of professional academic knowledge, and the rise of the modern mass research university. Julie A. Reuben, Richard Hofstadter and Lawrence Vesey have investigated a broad process of secularization of knowledge that guided university teaching away from the philosophical curriculum of earlier generations and oriented it instead to the ideals of objectivity and ‘value-free’ empiricism.²⁹

A similar trajectory defines other histories which have focused more directly on the development of American ‘social science’. The history of Political Science is very much intertwined with the history of other social sciences including economics, sociology, Law and History. The approach of my thesis reflects this: although it is concerned with the history of Political Science in particular it tells this story alongside the development of other disciplines. Existing histories of the social sciences frame these new disciplines as emerging from social reform movements in the antebellum era. Mary Furner has argued that modern American social science, defined by its values of objectivity and its scientific method, emerged in a

²⁹ See; Julie A. Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual transformation and the marginalization of morality* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press; 1996); George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: from Protestant establishment to established non-belief* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1994); Richard Hofstadter, *The development of academic freedom in the United States* (New York, Columbia University Press: 1955); Lawrence Vesey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1965). For an argument against the ‘secularisation’ literature see; Andrew Jewett, *Science, democracy, and the American university: from the Civil War to the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2012).

crisis of the middle classes, as reformers rephrased their social interests in the new, scientific lingo.³⁰ Dorothy Ross has also considered the emergence of what she posits to be the profession's 'liberal values, practical bent, shallow historical vision, and technocratic confidence' of modern American social science.³¹ Focusing on the period between the Civil War and the New Deal, she argues that the first three generations of American social scientists were engaged in reconfirming the idea that 'America occupies an exceptional place in history based on republican government and economic opportunity' via new techniques and theories. As with Furner's analysis, the process of 'professionalization' produces work that is increasingly abstract, scientific and technical.

In order to understand the history of American Political Science we must rethink the established narrative that sees the rise of the expert social scientist as the 'reformer' transitioning into the increasingly specialized technician, motivated by concerns of the modern professional. The world of the twentieth century political scientist was certainly very different to that of the nineteenth. And yet, 'professionalization' was not all-consuming, it did not overwhelm political scientists and cloud their ambitions and concerns. As we shall see, so dynamic was the subject matter of Political Science that the discipline was in a near-perpetual state of professional transformation. These men and women were active participants in building the profession, seizing opportunities not only to raise their scope and purpose in American life but also to speak to new challenges and questions. Moreover, they did so often against the grain of American society, that remained frequently sceptical of experts in 'politics' and sceptical of centralisation as well. And yet, animated by a central coherent subject matter, political scientists ambitiously sought to extend their professional footprint. Only by the 1960s would the source of its vitalization begin to deflate, when what had been an exciting and unique subject matter became more complex and seemingly less susceptible to the sort of expert influence political scientists had to offer. Only then would the discipline lose its ability to conceptualise its central problem, or to congeal as a single scholarly community. And only then would the opportunities afforded to experts in American life – the presence of large professional discipline – begin to seem like an impediment to dealing with large or important questions. This thesis offers a different story of 'growing aloofness' than the one we are accustomed to hear from historians. Political scientists did not determine their identity as narrowly academic experts between the Civil War and the end of World War I.

³⁰ Mary Furner, *Advocacy and objectivity: a crisis in the professionalization of social science, 1865- 1905* (University Press of Kentucky; 1975).

³¹ Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, p. viii.

Rather, they emerged for a long and vibrant period – roughly one hundred years – as a broad and ambitious intellectual enterprise.

Method and Approach

In this thesis I am primarily concerned with American Political Science scholarship that focuses on American politics and government. American politics has formed a central vein of analysis throughout the history of the profession and, as we shall see in chapter I, it was the original concern upon which the discipline was forged. This focus discounts interesting developments in a number of secondary fields: including international relations and political theory.³² But not only does important literature already cover these neighbouring fields, they also shed less light upon the central argument of the thesis.

I have identified in each scholarly generation five or six leading figures to be representative of the key modes and patterns of thought. To the extent that this thesis covers the history of a large discipline over a period of around one hundred years, it must be partial and impressionistic. Nevertheless, these individuals are taken to be representative not conclusive and they have been chosen in differing degrees to the extent to which their work illuminates key trends, the originality and thoughtfulness of their interpretations, and, on occasion, by the presence of archival collections that allows for an especially deep and well-rounded understanding of their lives and concerns.

The challenge of writing authoritatively on such a topic as the ‘animating concerns and preoccupations’ of scholars of American politics is greatly abetted by the fact that source material is readily available in the form of published scholarly research as well as in copious archival collections – much of which remain rather untouched by historians. The papers of various political scientists have been helpful not only for their own personal papers, unpublished autobiographies and the like, but also for the wide range of colleagues represented in their correspondence. This has been the case for the papers of Charles E.

³² The authoritative work on the subfield of international relations is; Ido Oren, *Our Enemies and US: America's Rivalries and the Making of Political Science* (Cornell University Press: 2002) On the development of the subfield of political theory see; John Gunnell; *Imagining the American Polity* (Pennsylvania State University Press; 2004); Gunnell, John G., *The descent of political theory: the genealogy of an American vocation* (University of Chicago Press; 1993); Ira Katznelson, *Desolation and enlightenment: political knowledge after total war, totalitarianism, and the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press; 2003).

Merriam and Harold F. Gosnell at the University of Chicago, John Gaus and V.O. Key at Harvard, James Fesler and Harold D. Laswell at Yale, Peter Odegard at Berkeley and Gabriel Almond at Stanford, as well as others. A wealth of material also exists in the form of records of Political Science departments and of the American Political Science Association, which I have also consulted.

Chapter outline

There are six chapters to this thesis, each of which describes a distinct epoch in the history of the discipline during which political scientists cohered around a set of concerns relating to the prospects and challenges facing the American polity. The first chapter traces the birth of the modern discipline in the so-called ‘Gilded Age’. Departing from established historiographical understandings the period as a moment of *laissez-faire*, we see how the emerging, tentative shoots of a large government administrative structure came to inspire a number of scholars to conduct research in politics. Further buoyed by the broader social and political context, the discipline developed a coherent intellectual purpose, a deepening sense of commitment to research and, from 1904, a national professional association.

The first and second chapter are bracketed by the experience of the First World War. Although the war had made possible the kind of expansive federal apparatus that some progressives had yearned for in vain during Wilson’s first term, this ‘warfare’ state was quite different to the welfare state pre-war reformers had envisioned, providing a serious challenge to political scientists who hoped to state its workings simply. The second chapter considers the discipline’s development in this ‘New Age’, an age which, it is argued, is frustrating for a discipline still committed to the central goal of studying politics scientifically and speaking to the big questions of the day.

The next two chapters describe how the decades that contained the Great Depression, the New Deal and the Second World War, by contrast, provided important fodder for a growing ambition within the discipline. The dramatic, unprecedented, and – for political scientists – long-awaited, expansion and professionalization of American government bolstered the understanding that political action and political institutions were of central importance to American life. As it did, the originating ambition of the discipline flourished.

By the end of the Second World War, American political scientists returned to their desks armed with a raft of important and meaningful questions and concerns.

As the fifth chapter argues, the mid-century decade and a half, between 1945 and 1960, saw the emergence of intellectually ambitious attempts to create an empirical context in which to study politics. At the heart of American Political Science during the post-war decade and a half was a search to understand on the one hand the new administrative state and on the other hand the increasingly pluralistic nature of American politics. This orienting ambition set the discipline apart from the increasingly narrow concerns exhibited by some economists, psychologists and sociologists who were advancing on ever more esoteric questions about the economy and human behaviour. It also set the actual development and concerns of the discipline apart from later interpretations of scholars as a ‘behavioral movement’, a historiographical construction which this chapter firmly refutes.

The final chapter considers the fate of the discipline in the 1960s, an era which contained the striking extension of American government, but also a period in which academic disciplines in the United States came under intense attack from critics who variously claimed that the American academy had been insufficiently ‘engaged’ in the problems that really mattered in American life and had largely failed to be ‘scientific’. However, what is interesting about the 1960s is not how *much* changed in this decade, but how little did. Nevertheless, other forces were silently at work to fracture the outlook of the discipline, and future generations of political scientists would find it harder to replicate the ambition of their predecessors. This thesis ends where that new world begins, and the conclusion outlines some of the facets of this new world.

Prologue: The problem of American ‘Political Science’; 1865 - 1880

The story told here begins in earnest in 1882, with the founding of the Columbia school of Political Science under the purview of the legal scholar John W. Burgess. However, something might first be said of the conditions that preceded this development, in particular, the nature of American culture and politics made it difficult to foster a distinct science of ‘politics’ in the United States before the Civil War. If anti-intellectualism percolated much of American society in the nineteenth century, it was in the political arena where such

sentiments were at their most influential. An entrenched disregard for the involvement of ‘experts’ in politics was a prominent feature of the political climate, as symbolised by the populist figure of Andrew Jackson. American attitudes on this matter also overlapped with much nineteenth century liberal thought from the other side of the Atlantic. The prodigious British intellectual, Walter Bagehot, in his widely-read *The English Constitution* ‘irreverently stressed that it was the unreflective cast of mind that accounted for the success of those who managed political affairs’.³³ This scepticism was also articulated elsewhere by British liberals such as John Stuart Mill who praised the practicality of the individual in democratic decisions.³⁴ Attitudes in the United States and Britain were quite different to that in France where ‘grand ecoles’ encouraged the training of technical subjects and where Alexis de Tocqueville could announce in Paris’ ‘Academy of Moral and Political Sciences’ that, ‘The political sciences form around each society something like a kind of intellectual atmosphere in which the minds of the governed and of those who govern breathe, and from which both, often without knowing, sometimes without wanting to know, draw the principles of their conduct.’³⁵ It was different as well to Germany, where the sciences concerned with the state and its role in society emerged under the banner of *Staatswissenschaften*. As the German state performed predominately in a bureaucratic way, the German approach was one largely through the field of public law.³⁶

Between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, American society underwent a number of large and sweeping changes. The war that divided the United States into Unionists and Confederates also divided the nation’s history into two periods distinguished by a sharp break in social, economic and political conditions. Industrialization that had been stimulated by the Civil War accelerated in the years that followed. Frederick

³³Jack Hayward, ‘British Approaches to Politics: the dawn of a self-deprecating discipline’ in Jack Hayward, Brian Barry and Archie Brown (eds), *The British Study of Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1999), p. 4.

³⁴For the meaning of ‘political science’ according to nineteenth century European intellectuals see; Stephan Collini, Donald Winch, John Burrow (eds) *That noble science of to politics: a study in nineteenth-century intellectual history* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1983). Also see, Lawrence Goldman, ‘A peculiarity of the English? The Social Science Association and the absence of sociology in nineteenth-century Britain’, *Past and Present* No. 114 (1987), pp. 133 – 171. On Tocqueville’s view see; *Democracy in America*, especially, chapter IX ‘The Example Of The Americans Does Not Prove That A Democratic People Can Have No Aptitude And No Taste For Science, Literature, Or Art’.

³⁵ Quoted in, Eduardo Nolla and James T. Schleifer (eds), *Alexis de Toqueville Democracy in America: Historical critical edition* (Liberty Fund: 2010).

³⁶ For this point see, Hans Kastendick, ‘Political development and political science in West Germany’, in David Easton et al (eds), *The Development of Political Science: a Comparative Survey*, p. 110. Also see, David F. Lindenfeld, *The Practical Imagination: The German Sciences of State in the Nineteenth Century* (University of Chicago Press: 1997).

Winslow Taylor revolutionised the effectiveness of factory machines in urban settings; by 1890 rural Americans had doubled the number of farms and the number of acres under cultivation, and more than doubled the production of wheat, cotton, and corn; corporations put down a quarter of a million miles of railroad; and even the human body was redefined, as new theories of bacteriology combined with experiences in Civil War hospitals to initiate new medical advances.³⁷

The third quarter of the nineteenth century had been a ‘triumphal age of liberalism’, bolstered by a widely held understanding of republican self-government, free-trade, and limited government intervention in the economy.³⁸ But, by the 1870s and 80s, this confident era had come to an end. Rising industrialization in Europe as well as in the United States had prompted Western democracies to take an increasingly prominent role in the economy, issue protectionist tariffs and to challenge established notions of democratic representation. As the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt wrote somewhat gloomily in 1870, ‘[t]he masses want their peace and their pay. If they get it for a republic or a monarchy, they will cling to either, if not, without much ado they will support the first constitution to promise them what they want.’³⁹ This appeared to be the case in the United States as well. For some new groups, such as the Knights of Labor movement, the extension of the state over the economy was a necessary development to protect citizens from the excesses of capitalism.

Political change and industrialization stimulated the emergence of a modern university system. Beginning in the 1870s and developing on through to the 1890s, increasingly vocal reformers began to address the state of the American academy. Where once it had been assumed that American universities were ‘colonial outposts’, and therefore incapable of the same impact of established European institutions, these new reformers were more ambitious as to the potential of the colleges and less accepting of their present conditions. They argued that they were at once too sectarian, undemocratic, that their curriculum was too ‘elementary or superficial’ and that the universities failed to serve American society.⁴⁰ Francis Wayland of Brown bluntly expressed the problem, ‘We have produced an article for which the demand is diminishing. We sell it at less than cost, and the

³⁷ For figures see, Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Movement 1900- 1915* (Prentice Hall: 1963) p. 1. Also see; Daniel Boorstin, *The Democratic Experience* (Phoenix; 2000: New ed); Rebecca Edwards; *New Spirits: Americans in the gilded Age, 1865- 1905*; Nancy Cohen *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism 1865- 1914* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London, 2002).

³⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848 – 1875* (Sphere Books, 1977).

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 357.

⁴⁰ Vesey, *The Emergence of the American University*, p. 245.

deficiency is made up by charity. We give it away, and still the demand diminishes. Is it not time to inquire whether we cannot furnish an article for which the demand will be, at least, somewhat more remunerative?’⁴¹

The professionalisation of American society and the rise of the new university system also gave rise to two separate attempts to foster in the American academy the subject of ‘Political Science’. On the one hand there arose an attempt by university reformers who were worried about political instability and attempted to establish on American soil a training programme for government practitioners under the title ‘Political Science’. The president of Cornell, Andrew Dickinson Wight, was one of the foremost leaders of such an attempt. His model for Cornell included non-sectarianism and freedom of choice among different subjects of study. But, his ‘deepest hopes’ involved fostering the university as a training ground for ‘politically oriented civil service’.⁴² A ‘School of History and Political Science’ was listed as part of the initial announcement, alongside five other departments, the first time that this term was used in the United States.⁴³ As the announcement declared, ‘Historical studies and studies in Political and Social Science will be held in high honor, and will have more attention than is usual in our higher institutions of learning.’⁴⁴

Wight’s attempt at creating through the discipline of ‘Political Science’ a training ground for America’s political classes did not herald the beginning of modern American Political Science. The term ‘Political Science’ had emerged, but it was not distinct from other disciplines, and it was not clear that it was closer to the ‘social sciences’ than to History. Instead, the orienting focus was primarily practical, rather than primarily intellectual. As the description of the department stated, ‘the need of the country for a higher and more thorough education for the public service, will be constantly kept in view.’⁴⁵ In initiating this course White envisioned his ‘graduates pouring into the legislatures, staffing the newspapers, and penetrating the municipal and county boards of America. Corruption would come to an end; pure American ideas would prosper until one day they governed the world.’⁴⁶ His was a heady vision premised on the desire to influence, as he was to write in 1871, ‘the formation

⁴¹ Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History*, p. 220.

⁴² Vesey, *The Emergence of the American University*, p. 85.

⁴³ Haddow, *Political Science in American colleges and universities* p. 190. Although Francis Lieber held a professorship in ‘History and Political Science’ for a few years in the 1860s. On Lieber see; Gunnell, *Imagining the Nation’s Polity*, pp. 57 -101.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ General announcement, quoted in Haddow, *Political Science in American colleges and universities*, p. 190

⁴⁶ Vesey, *The Emergence of the American University*, p 85.

of political judgments' and 'courses of political action.'⁴⁷ Even as he was warned by one friend that America greatly mistrusted expertise, White retorted that 'Nobody expects to get a majority of the men educated as I propose into office at first, but if we only had plenty of them to stand outside and fire into the people, and especially into those in office, they would certainly be obliged sooner or later to surrender'.⁴⁸

If White's ambitious idea of a science of politics that could 'fire' its graduates into political office was not, in the end, realised, another attempt at creating a 'Political Science' was to prove more enduring. It was around the same time that the tradition that is the subject of this thesis was born. This second tradition was distinct from the first because it aspired not only to train scholars in politics, but also to conduct research in political affairs in such a way that might solve complex – but incredibly urgent and significant – problems facing democratic systems across the world. Initially led by the Columbia scholar John W. Burgess, this group would assert not the narrow aim of professional training in political leadership, but a much broader one of studying American government and politics, and disseminating this information. How it emerged, and what happened next, are the subject of what follows.

⁴⁷ Andrew D. White, *Popular Science Monthly* Vol. 2 (April 1873).

⁴⁸ Vesey, *The Emergence of the American University*, p. 85.

Chapter I

The Emergence of American Political Science, 1882 – 1917

Introduction

‘During the last half decade, an awakening of interest in the study of the Political Sciences has manifested itself throughout the public at large, such as no previous generation since the beginning of our national existence has experienced.’⁴⁹ So spoke the historian and legal scholar John W. Burgess at an inaugural address delivered in 1882 to mark the opening of Columbia College’s new School of Political Science. The mere fact of the school’s formation in 1882 marked an important change from earlier years. For a brief period in the late 1850s Columbia College had employed the Prussian émigré scholar Francis Lieber to give instruction in ‘History and Political Science’, but by 1865 the incoming president of Columbia, Frederick Barnard, had abolished this chair and ended instruction for undergraduates in the field of government, deeming such instruction ‘unnecessary’. Now, seventeen years later, and in quite a different socio-political context, an aging Barnard succumbed to a new insistence that the creation of such a school was the ‘bounden duty’ of his institution.⁵⁰ The key fact was that its members would be ‘scholars’, and not simply a proxy for political reformers. Indeed, Barnard had accepted Burgess’s request to found a department only when he became convinced that the new school ‘belongs rather to what in a German university, is

⁴⁹ John Burgess, ‘The Study of the Political Sciences at Columbia’, address delivered in 1882 [<http://www.irwincollier.com/burgess-on-political-sciences-at-columbia-college-1882/>].

⁵⁰ William J. Barber, *Economists and Higher Learning in the Nineteenth Century* (Wesleyan University Press, 1993) p. 162.

known as the Philosophical Faculty, by which is meant, in that country the faculty which teaches all subjects non-professional.⁵¹

This chapter focuses on the emergence of a tradition that was started with Burgess, and its development and evolution over the following four decades, as led by scholars including Woodrow Wilson and Albert Lawrence Lowell in the 1890s, 1900s and 1910s. Although they differed somewhat in their views on ‘science’ and on ‘politics’, these individuals all shared the core goal to apply ‘scientific’ research to large and pressing questions relating to a maturing political system. In this respect they differed from an earlier antipathy to mix ‘expertise’ and politics, as well as a concurrent but largely separate attempt to train political practitioners within the nation’s colleges. What stimulated these scholars into self-consciousness as a distinct division of academic knowledge was the growth and maturation of the American state which attracted not only would-be reformers, but also these scholars and intellectuals who were interested in the study of American politics and government.

Members of the first few generations of American Political Science were in many ways notably positive about American democratic institutions. Writing in 1888 the established British scholar James Bryce visited the United States and declared that the nation’s government and politics had reached an early stage of maturity. It was still very different from Victorian Britain — but he thought that the United States was just about at the point where intellectuals could start to make sense of it. In his *American Commonwealth*, Bryce emphasised the capacity of American institutions to deal with new challenges wrought by mass immigration, noting how they, ‘lend themselves with wonderfully little friction to growth and development and to the peaceful assimilation of new and strange populations.’⁵² Upon reviewing Bryce’s work, the Princeton scholar Woodrow Wilson approved of the description of, ‘the almost full grown, the measurably sobered America of today’.⁵³ Such statements, as we shall see, were an important thread of a newly emergent discipline.

The discipline evolved through various periods. The first political scientists adopted a specific disciplinary identity in response to the distinctive political context of the late nineteenth century and increasingly came together as a profession by the early twentieth, the time at which a national association was founded thus formalizing the development of Political Science as a distinct profession as opposed to a more informal grouping. From 1882 to 1920, the discipline grew from the seed first sown by John Burgess in his department at Columbia to an increasingly large and institutionalised venture, complete with a national professional association which

⁵¹ Gordon R. Hoxie, *A History of the Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University* (Columbia University Press; 1955) p. 38.

⁵² James Bryce, *The American commonwealth*. 2nd ed., rev. Vol. 1. (New York, 1891. 2 vols.) *The Making of Modern Law*. Gale. 2017. Gale, Cengage Learning. [September 2017; <<http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2173/servlet/MOML?af=RN&ae=F101821746&srchtp=a&ste=>>] p. 668

⁵³ Woodrow Wilson, ‘Bryce’s American Commonwealth by Woodrow Wilson’, *Political Science Quarterly*, March 1889, p. 153.

provided its members with a platform and an identity from which they could attempt to influence and educate various facets of an increasingly educated American society. The social and cultural vicissitudes of the Progressive Era further animated the discipline, heightening its ambition and raising the urgency with which it addressed its subjects. As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, the nation's new cadre of political scientists sought to utilize 'scientific' research in order to comprehend new advancements in American politics and government and to disseminate their findings to practitioners and the wider populace. As they did, the discipline was born.

Political Science has featured in several histories concerned with the beginnings of professional American social science, but it has frequently played only a cameo role, and the increasing demand for a science of politics to speak to large problems of politics has been cast into the shadow of narratives that focus instead on the development of Economics and Sociology. Dorothy Ross, who follows this pattern, argues that Political Science fits into the general pattern of development which she describes for these two disciplines. But she notes that Political Science developed more slowly in comparison.⁵⁴ She also notes (but does not expand upon) a relative lack of 'scientific' ambition that had developed among political scientists compared to economists and sociologists by the 1920s.⁵⁵ Similarly, in separate monographs Mary Furner and Robert L. Church have each prioritised the emergence of Economics over Political Science.⁵⁶ The implication of these works is that if the emergence of Political Science differs as a phenomenon, it is in a matter of timing rather than fundamental nature, and ultimately the discipline of Political Science exhibited the same trends that characterise the other disciplines: those of professionalization, secularization and 'value-free' research whose findings are useful to a technocratic, bureaucratic world.

That such works have chosen to focus on Economics and Sociology, rather than Political Science, in part reflects the fact that Political Science in these years was less distinct than the other two disciplines. As we shall see, there was a significant overlap with History and a considerable degree of borrowing from other social sciences. But, more importantly, it also reflects a tendency to overlook the animating concerns of scholars within Political Science as opposed to neighbouring disciplines. In line with the prominent historiography which casts the period as a 'Gilded age', the

⁵⁴Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, pp. 257- 303; also see, Ross, 'The Development of the Social Sciences' in James Farr and Raymond Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History: Political Science in the United States* (University of Michigan Press; 1993) pp. 81- 104.

⁵⁵ Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, pp. 448- 67.

⁵⁶Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity*, pp. 278 -91.

heyday of laissez-faire, scholars such as Ross and Furner have been accustomed to ignore the importance of the state as a motivating factor for new scholarship.⁵⁷ Instead, they have traced the way in which the ‘social sciences’ were ‘galvanised into self-consciousness’ by the deep social tumult of the period. In contrast, this chapter focuses on the animating concerns of political scientists rooted in the maturation of the American political system, and in doing so it finds not scholarship that grew increasingly narrow and, in Ross’s phrase, ‘scientistic’, but an attempt to conduct research close empirical research in such a way as to illuminate new and important questions relating to the rise of a modern mass democracy and newly-developed administrative government.

There are three sections to this chapter. The first begins by tracing the concerns and preoccupations of John Burgess and his colleagues at the new school in Columbia. This group of scholars anticipated the arrival of a new, centralised government and they hoped to distinguish the discipline from other fields of interest and to make its findings useful to an emergent cadre of scholars and civil servants. The next section traces a second generation of American political scientists who came to assert an increasingly distinctive identity and, influenced by the example of neighbouring disciplines, to deepen the intellectual scope and practical purpose of the profession, culminating in the founding of an official ‘professional’ association in 1904. The final section analyses how the work of these scholars evolved in the early 1900s and 1910s. By 1920, the new modern American Political Science reflected the aims and ambitions of a new generation and class of urban professional American men and women who saw an important role of a ‘science’ of politics, in educating practitioners, students and the public.

Section I

John W. Burgess and the emergence of Political Science

John W. Burgess was the driving force behind the first stage of the development of American Political Science. Burgess was significant for his dogged advocacy of a new ‘science of politics’, which resulted not only in the opening in 1882 of the nation’s first official department of Political Science, but also in 1886 of its first journal, *Political Science Quarterly*. What motivated Burgess in these ventures stemmed from his observation of stark changes in American government. Like many educated Americans, Burgess followed the demands of Civil Service reformers closely, and in the

⁵⁷ See; Haskell, *The emergence of profession social science and the nineteenth-century crisis of authority*; and, Furner, *From advocacy to objectivity*.

early 1880s he stated in a letter to Columbia's trustees that, 'the Republic has now reached those mighty proportions demanding the finest training, as well as the finest talent, for the successful management of its affairs'.⁵⁸

In observing these changes Burgess partly shared the reaction of those such as Andrew Dickinson Wight at Cornell, who believed that the universities should play a role in training Americans for careers in a newly emergent Civil Service. Moreover, Burgess was very impressed by the example of the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques in France. Unlike in Germany where the subject was dominated by the study of public law, or in Britain where men like Bagehot refused to accept that the subject might be distinct from history, in France 'Political Science' was a division of expert knowledge which successfully prepared men for government careers. Much reference was made to the French school in Burgess' plans for his new department which he sent to Columbia's trustees.⁵⁹

However, if training for civil service was part of Burgess's vision for a new discipline, it was only part and, moreover, it did not form his primary ambition in setting up his new school of 'Political Science'. According to Burgess, not only did the growing structure of government require more specialised knowledge to produce a better-trained administrative class, but the evolution of politics required a new, broad-gauge analysis in which Americans could come to comprehend what was happening in the nation's political system. This second, larger, ambition grew out his existing intellectual approach towards studying the American polity. Remembered as a 'ridiculously fanatical Germanophile [sic]', and 'the veritable dean of Teutonism', Burgess was a leading proponent of a theory which held a powerful sway over the American historical profession in the 1880s.⁶⁰ This theory – teutonism, or Teutonic 'germ' theory – stated that American ideals, including representation, federalism, deliberation, democracy, self-government, individualism and nationalism, were born in Teutonic tribes of Northern Europe, and were filtered through Anglo-Saxon Britain, and then to the more recent American adaptations. For much of the nineteenth century this theory had functioned as a descriptive theory furthered by German historiography, and utilized by American scholars such as Herbert Baxter Adams ('the most zealous promoter of the theory', according to Peter Novick), who argued, that it was 'just as improbable that free local institutions should spring up without a germ along American shores as that English wheat should have grown here without planting.'⁶¹

Tuetonism was neither understood nor embraced by all Americans, but to men like Adams and Burgess it represented a deep and fundamental truth, as clear and as factual as any other scientific

⁵⁸ Hoxie, *A History of the Faculty of Political Science*, p. 12.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p. 17. Also see, John W. Burgess, *Reminiscences of an American scholar*, (Columbia University Press; 1934), Bernard A. Brown, *American Conservatives: The Political Thought of Francis Lieber and John W. Burgess* (New York, 1951).

⁶¹ Quoted in Novick, *That noble Dream*, p. 88.

theory of the period. Faced by what he perceived as concentrated and notable evolution of American government in his own time, he Burgess felt a pressing need to take stock of the changes and to discern the implications. As he warned in his inaugural address; '[t]he conviction is now already deep and general that unless a sounder political wisdom and a better political practice be attained, the republican system may become but a form, and republican institutions but a deception'.⁶² In this respect, Burgess's main concern was an intellectual one, as he explained to the trustees of Columbia, his 'prime aim' was 'the development of all branches of Political Science' while his 'secondary aim' was the preparation of students for civil service.⁶³

First steps: defining the field

The first stage in developing a new science of politics at Columbia was to define the field: to explain its nature, scope and purpose. Between 1882 and 1890 the Columbia school had only three members of staff, and between 1890 and 1911 only four, including Burgess.⁶⁴ Burgess' first big monograph was still under production during the late 1880s, but by 1886 he established with the help of a young prodigy, Munroe Smith, a new journal entitled the *Political Science Quarterly* [PSQ]. The first edition of this new journal provided the Columbia department with a distinct mouthpiece in which to set out the study of 'politics' to an American audience, and together Burgess and Smith began to define the need for a 'science' of politics in the United States.

In an article entitled 'The Domain of Political Science' Munroe Smith began by explaining that the term 'Political Science' was greatly, 'in need of definition'.⁶⁵ Contemporary scholars were addressing this science, too 'vaguely'. Even 'professed experts' would use the term loosely, referring alternatively to 'political' or 'social' science, and seemingly unsure of whether these constituted one science, or many sciences. Smith argued that the study of 'Political Science' was the study of the state, and that it offered a perspective on the nature of society just as much as did economics and sociology. Indeed, the three were so interrelated that, according to Smith, 'investigation of any one of the three implies the investigation of both of the others.'⁶⁶

Nevertheless, despite the interrelation of these 'sciences' the domain of the 'state' was becoming increasingly important and demanding increased attention. As Smith argued, 'The

⁶² John Burgess, 'The Study of the Political Sciences at Columbia', address delivered in 1882 [<http://www.irwincollier.com/burgess-on-political-sciences-at-columbia-college-1882/>]

⁶³Ibid, p. 46.

⁶⁴ John D. Millet, 'The Department of Public Law and Government' in Gordon Hoxie (ed) *A History of the Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University* (Columbia University Press; 1955).

⁶⁵ Munroe Smith, "The Domain of Political Science" *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 1,(1886) p.1.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

conception of the state as a mere protective association against external force and internal disorder is antiquated. The state is everywhere exercising other functions than the protection of person and property and the enforcement of contract.⁶⁷ Moreover, ‘Whether the increasing importance of the state be deplored or applauded, the fact remains that it is rapidly becoming, if it is not already, the central factor of social evolution.’⁶⁸ Such rationale contrasts with common historiographical belief that this was a ‘Gilded Age’, the apogee of laissez faire.⁶⁹ What Smith and the Columbia school were beginning to investigate, albeit loosely and indefinitely, was the existence of a more tangible and commanding ‘state’.

Smith also described how this new science would use ‘scientific’ techniques, which he defined as a ‘historical comparative’ approach to the study of politics. For a nineteenth century American, the ‘historical comparative’ approach represented a notable change from an older ‘deductive’ method, which had sought to deduce ‘laws’ from a priori first principles, in the tradition of philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke. (In this respect we can think of that famous example of early ‘Political Science’, *The Federalist Papers*, as deductive theory.) Smith had outlined this approach in his article stating, that the ‘the historical method’ was by far the most important perspective on modern political life, as that is how you measure evolution. Statistics, as being developed in Europe had a place in understanding the modern nations, but ‘to use statistics safely, the sociologist must take into account the entire social condition of the state in which the statistics are gathered.’⁷⁰

Where Smith wrote dispassionately, stating the case for a science of politics in a matter-of-fact manner, Burgess, his close mentor, was far less guarded. Whilst Smith had avoided explicitly taking a side on whether the growth of the state was good or bad, Burgess made his anti-majoritarian feelings clear. In an essay titled, ‘The American Commonwealth: Changes in its Relation to The Nation’, Burgess pointed to the corruption at the local level of government, writing, ‘The filth of an electoral campaign, a short term and a petty salary, are poor attractions for men of great learning, austere morals and reserved habits.’⁷¹ As Burgess further explained, in reaction to these harsh realities meaningful political activity was moving by a gradual osmosis to the higher levels such as the national courts, whose institutions were still trustworthy.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ See; Alan Trachtenberg, *The incorporation of America: culture and society in the gilded age*, (Hill and Wang; 2007), Richard White: *the transcontinentals and the making of modern America*, (W.W. Norton & Co; 2011); Brian Balogh, *A government out of sight: the mystery of national authority in nineteenth-century America* (CUP; 2009).

⁷⁰ Smith, ‘The Domain of the State’, p.6.

⁷¹ John W. Burgess “The American Commonwealth: Changes in its Relation to the Nation” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Mar., 1886), pp. 32.

Where Smith had argued that the ‘state’ had ‘increasing importance’, Burgess was somewhat more forthright, arguing that the ‘federal’ era was over, and the United States was evolving towards a new era of a centralized national state. To support his claim, Burgess argued that political life was evaporating away from local levels, claiming that it is evident ‘that a stronger consciousness of nationality, a larger confidence in the national government, and a pronounced distrust of the commonwealth governments have taken possession of the whole people, and are now realizing themselves in the constitutional and legal transformations of our entire political system.’⁷²

Taken together, these two articles demonstrate the intentions of ‘Political Science’ as it emerged in the Columbia setting. Smith’s descriptive article, defining the field, belied a deep and urgent mission that emerged more clearly in Burgess’s piece. According to both scholars, American institutions were arriving at a moment of great change which demanded comparative and descriptive study of the present shape of political structures and their environment. This new intellectual approach would employ ‘scientific’ techniques in order to revise and update deep-seated assumptions concerning the nature of the American Political system as a ‘federal system’. As Burgess wrote, ‘it seems to me that the great vitiating principle of the most of our political and judicial reasoning is this dogma that our political system is an indestructible union of immutable states; and it is in reference to this dogma that I shall endeavour to excite scepticism.’⁷³ Opinions about scientific methods and the nature of American politics would change very greatly over the coming years, but Burgess’ central purpose in speaking in authoritative terms about the nature of politics and political structures would remain as the central thread of an emergent discipline.

Columbia scholarship, 1890 - 96

If the first step in founding the new discipline of Political Science was defining the field, the second was to produce scholarship. Having helped to launch the opening salvo of the field in the first edition of *PSQ*, Munroe Smith did not publish a major work over the following decade; consumed instead by the responsibilities involved as managing editor of the new journal, which produced four issues per year between 1886 and 1890. The journal published many book reviews, of American works as well as foreign ones, and articles written from a number of disciplinary perspectives – this new breed of Political Science was, after all, in its infancy and largely confined

⁷² Ibid, p.30.

⁷³ Ibid. p.12.

to the small Columbia department. Smith's teaching also continued in Roman administrative law, and he published some articles on this subject.⁷⁴

Although Smith did not contribute to the new science, Burgess did. In 1890, he released a new two volume study, *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law*.⁷⁵ Burgess's publication provided an important function in defining and demonstrating the new scope and purpose of a 'science' of politics. In the first place, Burgess' work exemplified the 'historical comparative' approach by tracing different practices of government in Great Britain, Germany, France and the United States. Burgess's work also provided an important function in sorting out terminology of the new discipline. Smith had stated in his 1886 article that the 'domain' of 'Political Science' was unclear and the terms 'Political Science' and 'Political Sciences' were used rather indiscriminately in existing work. In contrast to this trend, Burgess attempted to define certain terms, including 'state', which he saw as quite a separate entity to 'government' and more similar to the spiritual 'nation'. He also defined sovereignty as the ultimate decision-making power. Although Burgess 'felt that his work was never understood anywhere' (his readership confused the different classifications of 'state' and 'nation'), it was nevertheless well reviewed. One encyclopaedia declared, 'Probably no contribution has had such influence in clarifying American conception on these phases of Political Science.'⁷⁶

Another important contribution of the early years of the Columbia department was Frank Goodnow's *Comparative Administrative Law*. Goodnow, who was the third member of the faculty beside Burgess and Smith, began his work with the statement that, 'The great problems of modern public law are almost exclusively administrative in character.'⁷⁷ He noted 'Our modern complex social conditions are making enormous demands of the administrative side of the government, demands which will not be satisfied at all or which will be inadequately met, unless a greater knowledge of administrative law and science is possessed by our legislators and moulders of opinion.'⁷⁸ His work was not the first to note the importance of administration to American politics (Wilson's famous statement will be discussed below), but it was the first to investigate the operation of administration, and to recognise its importance as part of a modern democracy. In this respect, Ford's monograph marks an important step not only in defining a field, but as a substantive contribution to what would become an increasingly important field of interest.

⁷⁴ Millet, 'The Department of Public Law and Government', p. 261

⁷⁵ John W. Burgess, *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1890 – 91)

⁷⁶ Quoted in Anna Haddow, *Political Science in American Colleges*, p. 244

⁷⁷ Frank Goodnow, *Comparative Administrative Law* (G.P. Putman's sons, 1893)

⁷⁸ *Ibid*

The third and final stage in the early emergence of American Political Science at Columbia was to define this field against others. What really established the legitimacy of the Columbia approach was the advance of the claim that this field of study was analytically superior to History. If the fate of Political Science was advancing at the start of 1890, the discipline of History was undergoing a period of change and transition. According to Frederick Jackson Turner, the beginning of the 1890s gave rise to the new epoch in American life: as he famously wrote, 'we are approaching a pivotal point in our country's history'.⁷⁹ But to other historians this presented a challenge. As Novick has stated, the emergence of the 'frontier thesis' challenged the long-held understanding of 'germ' theory; as the 'stock of Turner's frontier thesis, first advanced in 1893, rose as Adam's fell.'⁸⁰ As the historian Edward Channing opined in 1892, '[t]he argument that because a New England town and a German village were each surrounded by a defensive wall, the one is descended from the other, proves too much.'⁸¹ By the end of the decade historians continued to be concerned with institutions, but followed Turner to consider the social and economic contexts within which institutions developed, rather than at the line of evolution.

The new discipline of Political Science profited from the questions facing the historical profession. Although Burgess' own scholarship was suffused in ideas derived from germ theory – especially his central argument that only a few nations were productive of political genius – he and his colleagues were also interested in understanding how political structures worked in different environments, closely echoing the contextual approach that historians were also taking. Concluding that political scientists were prying upon their turf, Professor Morse Stephens of the American Historical Association called upon Burgess to address the annual meeting of historians in 1896. Here Burgess explained the relationship between the two disciplines in a manner that celebrated the promise of his new Political Science. He noted first that the two fields of study 'so lap over one another and interpenetrate each other that they cannot be distinctly separated... Separate them, and the one becomes a cripple, if not a corpse, the other a will-o-the-wisp'.⁸² However he then went on to state that, 'Political Science consists of something more than facts and logical conclusions from facts. It contains an element of philosophical speculation, which

⁷⁹ Frederick J. Turner, 'The Significance of History', (1891), in *The Early Writings of Frederick Jackson Turner* (University of Wisconsin Press; 1938), p.61.

⁸⁰ Novick, *The Objectivity Crisis*, p. 88.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² American Historical Association Report, (1896) quoted in Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p. 26.

when true and correct, is the forerunner of history.’⁸³ By implication, Burgess celebrated the greater conceptual power and practical application of Political Science over and above the discipline of History.

Over the previous decade Burgess and his colleagues had transported the study from abstract deduction of principles to a new and modern approach to analysing comparative state behaviour and evolution. Now attracting the interest of historians, the discipline appeared to be gathering considerable momentum. *Political Science Quarterly*’s 1896 retrospect, ten years after the first edition, summed up the state of the field in words that echoed Burgess’; ‘Without pretending to take sides in the perennial debate as to whether history is or is not a science, we have practically limited our pages to such historical contributions as have had for their end rather the illustration of some phase in the development of institutions than the mere presentation of the truth about past events.’⁸⁴ This description of History as the ‘mere presentation of the truth’, oozed condescension and confidence.

Developments at Columbia between 1882 and the mid-1890s represented an important development within a nation long accustomed to treat the idea of a ‘science of politics’ with misapprehension. Although Burgess demonstrated some interest in the scientific study of politics as developed abroad, the intellectual approach that he helped to shape at Columbia was internationally distinct. Unlike in France where study in politics was rather ‘technical’, aimed at training an administrative class, or Germany where it was very legalistic, in New York’s Columbia College an approach had emerged which sought comparative, historical descriptions of the state and the administrative system, and did so with the purpose not merely of informing government practitioners, but of illuminating large changes in American life; most particularly it explored the new centrality and nationalization of American government.

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Munroe Smith, ‘A Retrospect’, *Political Science Quarterly* (1896) p. 567

Section II

New directions in research

No sooner had the new science emerged than other scholars began to take the discipline in a distinctively new direction. Writing in the Columbia journal *Political Science Quarterly* in 1887, Woodrow Wilson issued a rallying call for the study of ‘government in action’, or, the study of ‘administration’. Wilson, a professor at Johns Hopkins University, announced that it was ‘getting to be harder to *run* a constitution than to frame one.’⁸⁵ This article adumbrated one of the defining trends of the new period as a second generation of political scientists began to deepen and expand their new ‘science’. They did not quarrel with the scientific aspirations of Burgess and the Columbia schools – firmly agreeing that comparative study of different national systems was a highly useful form of analysis – but they nevertheless enjoined scholars that they might use these techniques to greater effect; they might go deeper and become more immersed in the ‘reality’ of politics and political development.

Like the scholars of the Columbia school, this younger cohort was interested in the rapid change and maturation of American politics and government, employed the method of historical and national comparison, and aspired to speak to the public as well as political practitioners. But far more than their elders, this new cadre craved to understand ‘reality’ and to conduct research in the actual practice of government, not merely its laws and theories. In his *PSQ* article, Wilson commented that Americans were uninterested in the state of their political institutions, ‘Government is so near us, so much a thing of our daily familiar handling, that we can with difficulty see the need of any philosophical study of it... We have been on our feet too long to study now the art of walking.’⁸⁶ But these new scholars were willing to venture into heretofore untouched territory: to study political parties, the practice of administration and other more informal aspects of government.

Moreover, in identifying a need for a deeper and more ‘realistic’ study of politics these scholars assumed a lofty confidence in the purpose of their discipline. The statement that Political Science could speak to large trends in the nation’s politics was to become a familiar refrain in the discipline’s evolution. But rarely would it be repeated with such gusto and naively optimistic sense of opportunity as it was by those who bandied it about in the 1890s. The precepts of the American constitution had been widely discussed, but never had scholars taken the time to closely consider

⁸⁵ Woodrow Wilson; ‘The Study of Administration’ *PSQ*, II (June 1887) p. 202.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

the actual operation of American government. The growth of the state made this newly necessary and exciting. With conviction, Wilson promised that such study was ‘worthy to be ranked among the highest and most fruitful of the great departments of political study’.⁸⁷

New concerns

The work of these political scientists soon challenged prevailing assumptions about the nature of American politics. In contrast to the ‘mugwumps’ of the 1880s and 90s, (middle class reformers seeking to hold themselves aloof from party politics), political scientists in the 1890s came to argue that parties provided a necessary function in organizing the fragmented American political system. They were not simply the means of organizing elevated opinion, but of creating that opinion in the first place. Whereas Burgess had considered too much government machinery a problem in adapting to industrial change, a new cadre of scholars saw governmental mechanisms as the key way of adapting to large-scale national change. The Princeton professor Henry Jones Ford presented such an account in his *Rise and Growth of American Politics* in which he – as had Wilson – traced the American experience to England.⁸⁸ In Britain, Whig theory had set the people, in Parliament, against the crown; in America this theory had similarly separated the executive and the legislature. However, where Americans had gone to the trouble of codifying their theory by writing the separation of powers down in the constitution, Britain had not. As a result, British officials were able gradually, over time, to forge appropriate links between the executive and legislative. The Americans were less fortunate. Faced with an unwieldy government they now struggled to produce efficiently powerful laws. The solution, it seemed, would be finally to integrate, as Britain had, the executive and the legislative, by admitting members of the president’s cabinet onto the floor of Congress.⁸⁹

This had very much been Wilson’s view in his classic text, *Congressional Government*. It also infused his second work titled, *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics*.⁹⁰ Published in 1889, it was a broad survey of the ‘state’ which encompassed early forms of kinship, via Athens, Rome and European monarchies, to American republicanism. Wilson nodded towards the nationalism of Burgess, noting that ‘Government is merely the executive organ of society, the organ through which its habit acts, through which it becomes operative, through which it adapts

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Henry Jones Ford, *The Rise and Growth of American Politics. A Sketch of Constitutional Development* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Woodrow Wilson, *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics* (Heath, 1889) [Available at: <https://archive.org/details/stateelementshi09wilsgoog>].

itself to its environment'.⁹¹ However, Wilson's real purpose was exposed in the subtitle, *Elements of Historical and Practical Politics*. The central movement in American democracy had been the way in which, 'Like a lusty child, government with us has expanded in nature and grown great in stature'.⁹² This was a study not of a philosophical nation, but of practical government.

In producing such work, Wilson and Ford had high hopes of gaining a wide audience and influencing American life. College students were the first and most obvious target of this scholarship. In a speech delivered at Princeton, Wilson stated, 'The university in our day is no longer inclined to stand aloof from the practical world'. As he continued, 'when all is said, it is not learning but the spirit of service that will give a college place in the public annals of the nation. It is indispensable, it seems to me, if it is to do its right service, that the air of affairs should be admitted to all its class-rooms.'⁹³ Moreover, the discipline of Political Science had a special significance in this respect. As Wilson further stated in his famous article on 'Administration', the leaders of tomorrow would have a great function to serve not merely as 'leaders', but as *administrators* in a growing government bureaucracy. As he stated quite clearly, 'we are not prepared for the tasks of the new period', warning, 'in spite of our vast advantages in point of political liberty, and above all in point of practical political skill and sagacity, so many nations are ahead of us in administrative organization and administrative skill'.⁹⁴

Unlike in France where the *sciences politiques* were purely oriented towards training government administrators, American political scientists wrote not merely for a scholarly crowd, but for the broader, educated public. In his years as a professor, Wilson would regularly feature in the genteel *Atlantic Monthly* ('A magazine of literature, science, art, and politics'), with thoughtful pieces on such subjects as the 'character of democracy in the United States' or 'responsible government under the constitution'.⁹⁵ A large portion of the *Political Science Quarterly*, meanwhile, was set aside for commenting on public events. As Somit and Tanenhaus have noted, in 1896 a trio of essays 'expounding the virtues of a 'sound currency'' were published in relation to the issue of 'free silver' in that year's presidential election, and the *PSQ* ran critical articles on American foreign policy in the years following the Spanish-American war.⁹⁶ The journal also published articles from those outside of the 'ranks of educators'; as editor in chief, Munroe Smith, commented in one 1895 retrospect article, the editors

⁹¹ Woodrow Wilson, 'The State', in *Woodrow Wilson: The Essential Political Writings*, introduced and selected by, Ronald J. Pestritto, (Lexington Books: 2005) p. 53.

⁹² Woodrow Wilson, "The Study of Administration", in Far and Siedleman (eds) *Discipline and History*, (Michigan; 1993) p.36-37.

⁹³ Woodrow Wilson, 'Princeton in the Nation's Service', p. 465.

⁹⁴ Wilson, 'The Study of Administration, p. 206.

⁹⁵ See; Wilson, 'Character of Democracy in the United States', *The Atlantic Monthly*, (Nov. 1889), pp. 577-587; Wilson, 'Responsible Government under the Constitution', *The Atlantic Monthly*, (April 1886), pp. 542-552.

⁹⁶ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.44.

‘have felt it to be for the advantage of their periodical, as well of Political Science, to welcome useful matter from the widest possible range of sources’.⁹⁷

Finally, but significantly, political scientists also hoped to influence teaching in schools. Wilson produced in 1889 a manual for use in schools and in colleges ‘which have not yet been able to make room in their curriculum for a more complete course of political study’, based on his seminal work, *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics*.⁹⁸ Focusing not only on those students undergoing training for the civil service, or educated readers of high-brow weekly magazines, but the nation’s youngest citizens: far too young even to vote. Children in the school system received the attention of political scientists as these scholars sought to infuse their nation with a better understanding of the nature and scope of their politics and government.

Towards professionalization

Although political scientists had come to think of their discipline as intellectually superior to many kindred disciplines, their field of study was in many respects considerably less advanced in American life than other divisions of knowledge. Both History and Economics had created national associations in the mid-1880s, (in 1884 and 1885 respectively), and these associations provided general meetings, journals and – at least to the observation of scholars of politics – provided some sort of coherence and identity over and above the informal intellectual community that had been emerging among scholars of politics.

If political scientists were animated by changes in government, these other new divisions were reacting to other changes in modern society. As Dorothy Ross has argued, the ‘field of economics, and behind it, sociology, formed the front line of battle on the social question, attracting the more liberal and radically inclined of the younger social scientists’.⁹⁹ Largely protestant, middle class sons of ‘well-to-do, native-born’ citizens, the men who joined the ranks of economics were heirs to a dissenting Protestantism, which Ross credits with lending them a ‘tender conscience’.¹⁰⁰ When combined with training in Germany, these men fostered a certain sympathy with socialism, inflated by the depression of 1885 and a striking growth of the Knights of Labor movement, and the Haymarket riot of 1886. As John Bates Clark wrote in 1885 ‘I took upon myself a vow to write in behalf of the labouring classes’. For Clark, as for others including

⁹⁷ Smith, ‘A Retrospect’, p. 572

⁹⁸ Woodrow Wilson, *The State and Federal Governments of the United States: A Brief Manual for Schools and Colleges* (D.C. Heath & Co; 1889)

⁹⁹ Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, p. 101

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*

Henry Carter Adams and Richard T. Ely, the future of America was socialist, or in Adams' term 'economic republicanism'.¹⁰¹ Not all economists and sociologists ascribed to socialism as the answer to the 'social question', indeed the seeds were also being sown for a managerial economics capable of guiding the political system. Nevertheless, even those who pushed back against the radical socialist theories had been fundamentally concerned with the same problem; the inequality and social discomfort caused by industrialization.

Even as political scientists attempted to influence society in a number of ways: through high-minded monthly magazines, accessible scholarly journals, direct training of students in the growing university system, or in schools, many nevertheless felt frustrated that their discipline lacked the resources and the prestige of historians and economists. Meeting in 1902 a group of political scientists outlined plans for an association that would provide some of these missing functions, and 'take the scientific lead in all matters of political interest, encouraging research, aiding if possible in the collection and publication of valuable material, and, in general, advancing the scientific study of politics in this country.'¹⁰²

The name decided upon for this new association was the American Political Science Association [APSA], and the purpose was to bring rigour to the study of politics in the United States. Addressing his fellow scholars in 1905 the association's first president, Henry Jones Ford, earnestly stated, 'Doubtless it will take the labors of generations of scholars to bring Political Science to a position of authority as regards practical politics'. But, the task at hand was of manifest importance; 'certainly no undertaking could be more important or more inspiring to effort, since success means attainment of the power to give rational determination to the destinies of nations.' As Ford concluded, 'It is hardly too much to say that Political Science transcends all other branches of science in practical value'.¹⁰³

If, according to its practitioners, no other discipline surpassed Political Science in importance, History and Economics nevertheless provided important examples as to the benefits a national association could provide. Both organisations had sponsored journals, conferences and provided a platform for which its members could draw authority. As the first president of the APSA stated, 'There is none of us, I am sure, who did not feel that the establishment of the American Political Science Association offered us an advantage which we had long envied the historian and the economist.'¹⁰⁴ And as the association's first secretary stated, 'The need for an association such as this, which should do for Political Science what the American Economic

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² W. W. Willoughby, 'The American Political Science Association' *Political Science Quarterly* 19(1904): pp. 107-11, p. 110.

¹⁰³ P. 206.

¹⁰⁴ Frank J. Goodnow, 'The Work of the American Political Science Association', *Proceedings of the APSA*, Vol. 1, First Annual Meeting, p. 46.

Association and American Historical Associations are doing for Economics and History respectively, have been felt for a number of years.’¹⁰⁵ The outlook of the APSA was founded on these other associations. Like the AHA and AEA, the APSA was to be a scholarly organisation, not an advocacy body. The constitution of the new organisation stated that APSA ‘will not assume a partisan position upon any question of practical politics.’¹⁰⁶ The need was not to comment directly upon the matters at hand, but to provide the platform: as the report further stated, ‘at its annual meetings and in its publications [APSA] will give the freest opportunity possible for the discussion of current questions of political interest’.¹⁰⁷

The new association also provided a platform to further extend the broad influence of the discipline. Scholars like Wilson had already attempted to influence schools with the production of text books, but the APSA granted the discipline a greater organizational capacity. Frank Goodnow, APSA’s first president, appointed a ‘Committee on Instruction’ to be chaired by W. A. Schaper of Minnesota, to investigate, as the title of Schaper’s resulting report put it, ‘What Do Students Know About Government Before Taking College Courses in Political Science?’.¹⁰⁸ The answer given by the report was that many students knew very little, and this prompted a further report by the Association, again chaired by Schaper, to examine the teaching of government in secondary schools; as the report noted ‘Is it not a curious fact, that though our schools are largely instituted, supported and operated by the government, yet the study of American Government in the schools and colleges is the last subject to receive adequate attention?’¹⁰⁹

With such an assortment of projects, the new American discipline of Political Science had entered another stage in its development, one marked by a focus on the ‘realistic’ aspects of American politics and administration and by an increasingly ambitious sense of its own purpose as a formal ‘profession’. In 1909 no less celebrated a figure than James Bryce, a British professor at Johns Hopkins University, who was certainly Britain’s and possibly also the world’s most renowned political scientist, accepted appointment as president of the APSA and testified to an audience of political scientists, ‘We are all laboring together for one another, for science, and for the world, for that future world in which humanity may have learnt so to discipline its passions and so to elevate and refine the sense in each man of his duty to the whole community that it will be able after long ages to create institutions better than any we now possess and to work them in a purer spirit.’¹¹⁰ Bryce, like Wilson, Ford, and others, shared an interest in the understanding the real functioning of the political system, and a profound

¹⁰⁵ Willoughby, ‘The American Political Science Association’, p. 109.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid p. 110.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ See, Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, pp. 80 – 81.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 81.

¹¹⁰ James Bryce; “The Relation of Political Science to History and to Practice” *American Political Science Review* 2 (1909), p.19.

interest in the workings of American democracy. Addressing the new association, the possibilities of future scholarship now seemed very bright indeed.

Section Three

Political Science and Progressivism

When the American Political Science Association was founded in 1904 it had 214 members. By 1910 this figure had risen to 1,350. Five years later the APSA had 1,462.¹¹¹ (By comparison, the largest association of social scientists, the American Economics Association, had 2,300 members by 1920 whilst the newer American Sociological Society, founded in 1905, had 1,000.) The years between 1904 and 1917 were years of growth and expansion for American Political Science not only in membership of the professional association, but also in intellectual production and professional ambition. Political scientists continued the tradition that had developed in the 1890s, towards close, empirical study of what were perceived to be the ‘realistic’ features of American politics – in parties, public administration and so forth. But, they combined this with a deepening sense of responsibility and urgency.

The first decade and a half of APSA’s existence coincided with the Progressive Era, a context which both energized and worried political scientists in almost equal measure. On the one hand, the period helped to raise the profile of the discipline within society. A cool rationalism combined with a hot moralism pervaded American life in these years which neatly complimented the outlook of the discipline, and its attachment to objectivity and science. The animating impulse uniting a heterogeneous body of reformers rested on an optimistic vision of social progress and a firm belief that purposeful human intervention could, and must, be directed to solve the many problems caused by urbanization and industrialization. How this progress was to be achieved was highly contested, but most progressives agreed that government should play a central part. As Robert Wiebe has argued, ‘progressives’ were part of a new generation and class of urban professional American men and women who envisioned a continuous role for government in the management and administration of American life.¹¹²

This ethos was evident amongst Progressive Era leftists such as Charles Beard and evident too in the Socialist government in Milwaukee, and also in the patriotic, muscular reformism of Theodore Roosevelt, and finally in the business approach described by Alfred

¹¹¹ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.55

¹¹² Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877 – 1920* (New York: Hill and Wang; 1967)

Chandler in *Visible Hand*.¹¹³ Even as Americans cried out for universal suffrage, rallied in indignation against vested interests, and issued warnings of almighty damnation as they battled ‘demon rum’, beneath the surface of the era was a frustration with philosophical arguments. In 1914, Walter Lippmann published *Drift and Mastery* in which he painted an image of a new type of intellectual possessed of an unprecedented ability to guide and direct the vicissitudes of modern American life.¹¹⁴ Lippmann’s text was met with wide approval by an ideologically disparate section of the nation that was attracted by the vision of orchestrated, orderly reform.

The reform impulse of the Progressive Era also provided a new set of problems for political scientists to focus upon. The growth of new forms of political power that had emerged in recent years: interest groups, professional organizations, businesses, farm lobbies among others, was worrying for scholars who had great faith in parties, but little confidence in other sorts of voluntary associations. In 1893 the Anti-Saloon League was founded which by 1919 would succeed in passing the 18th Amendment. To this was added a long list of other influential, non-governmental bodies, including in 1895 the National Association of Manufacturers; in 1909 the NAACP; and in 1912 the Chamber of Commerce. At the same time, philanthropists, organised social workers and especially women’s clubs were becoming more organised.¹¹⁵ As we shall see, these new features in American politics created new interest and concern among political scientists concerning the power of the citizens and meaning and nature of public opinion.

New trends in research, 1904 - 1917

Although somewhat wary of the excesses of spirited reformers, many political scientists had come to absorb progressive impulses. As the Harvard professor Albert Lawrence Lowell declared, any attempt to influence the public sphere must accept ‘the natural tendencies of a progressive age instead of trying to run counter to them.’¹¹⁶ Among those who absorbed these impulses was Columbia’s Frank Goodnow. In his 1900 work *Politics and Administration*, Goodnow, observed that ‘the party system’ had ‘become so important as to exercise an influence on the governmental system’.¹¹⁷ Like Wilson, Goodnow saw an important role of responsible parties in guiding and controlling public opinion in an industrialized society alongside a role for

¹¹³ See; Alfred Chandler, *The visible hand: the managerial revolution in American business* (Belknap Press; 1977).

¹¹⁴ Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery: an attempt to diagnose the current unrest* (M Kennerly; 1914).

¹¹⁵ See; Miriam Cohen, *Workshop to Office*, (Cornell University Press; 1993).

¹¹⁶ A. Lawrence Lowell, ‘The Physiology of Politics’ *APSR*, Vol. IV, (Feb, 1910) pp. 1-15.

¹¹⁷ Frank Goodnow, *Politics and Administration; a study in government*, (Macmillan, 1900) p. 28.

centralised administration in implementing policies. But just as Goodnow's deeply researched book laid out the importance of parties, voter turnout was starting to decline significantly, indicating the success of reform movements that had attempted to eliminate parties from American politics. During the late nineteenth century, voter turnout regularly reached 81 percent. By 1900 73 percent of those eligible voted. By 1912 the figure was 59 percent. Never again did figures top 70 percent.¹¹⁸

By the dawn of the 1910s, Goodnow had come to realise that the American political system commanded fonts of energy for releasing public opinion that were not confined to parties alone. In 1911 he delivered a series of lectures to the New York School of Philanthropy, later published as a monograph. Both titles – 'Social Reform and the Constitution', and *American Social Progress Series* – point to an underlying concern with the grand question of 'how can governments be designed so as to facilitate the passage of progressive legislation'. Goodnow's analysis marked a great difference from his first work on administration written in 1893 which, as Ross has noted, 'spent four pages discussing such functions as public health and the collection of information under the heading, 'The Socialistic Action of Administration'¹¹⁹. As a reviewer of the series noted, 'Professor Goodnow has left no stone unturned in the endeavour to discover what are the extreme limits of social reform permitted by the Constitution as it is'.¹²⁰

The fullest treatment which the topic of 'public opinion' was given in the Progressive Era was at the hands of the Harvard scholar, Abbott Laurence Lowell, in a lecture series that was also compiled in his 1909 volume, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*. This was a very timely subject: whilst voter turnout was declining in American party politics, in other respects the United States was becoming a mass culture.¹²¹ The growth of new communications technology combined with advancing industrial production gave rise to new forms of entertainments: vaudeville, short nickelodeon films, the Yellow Press, dime novels and from the 1910s the first Hollywood motion pictures.¹²² Against this backdrop, Lowell framed the question of how democratic representation could, and should, operate in modern mass society. As the series editor, Albert Bushnell Hart, noted in the preface, 'Professor Lowell deals with the most difficult and the most momentous question of government – how to transmit the force of individual opinion and preference into public action. This is the crux of popular institutions.'¹²³

¹¹⁸ Figure quoted in Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A concise history of the American people* (McGraw Hill, 2008, 5th edition) p. 569.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, Footnote, 4, pg 259.

¹²⁰ Frank J. Goodnow "Social Reform and the Constitution" *American Social Progress Series* (NY: 1911).

¹²¹ See; Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*, (Harvard U.P., 2009), especially pp. 11-83. Also see, Paul Starr, *The creation of the media: political origins of modern communications* (Basic Books, 2004); Lary May, *Screening out the past: The birth of mass culture and the motion picture industry* (University of Chicago Press; 1983 [1980]).

¹²² Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Democratic Experience* (Phoenix Press; 2000, [1973]) p. 383.

¹²³ Abbott Laurence Lowell, *Public Opinion and Popular Government* (1909) p. i.

In addressing this momentous question, Lowell challenged the conception of both ‘a public’ and ‘a public opinion’. Neither, he stated, exist in any tangible sense. Instead, the critical difference between a ‘majority’ and ‘public opinion’ is that ‘the former is possible and the latter is not’. Illustrating this point, he wrote that popular opinion on suffrage in the South during Reconstruction, ‘could not in any true sense be said to depend on which of the two races had a slight numerical majority’.¹²⁴ He suggested that the machinery of government can create public opinion from a fluid ‘effective majority,’ a distinction between politics and administration that was analogous to the distinction being drawn at the time by Wilson and political scientists. But it was also distinctively new, and with this Lowell provided a meaning for public opinion which would lay the foundation for a later ‘application of psychology’ to politics.¹²⁵

Political Science in the Academy

As political scientists turned their attention towards the more sociological features of American life, actual sociologists went further, as with Walter Sheperd who giddily predicted ‘government by public opinion without the interposition of representative bodies other than very extended electorates’.¹²⁶ Indeed, the discipline of sociology was generally treated with amused derision by political scientists, to whom it appeared too vague and imprecise a study, with little practical benefit. When the National Sociological Association was founded in 1905, a report admitted that most academics still failed to see any purpose for sociology.¹²⁷ One ex-president of the American Political Science Association considered the only redeemable quality of Sociology to be ‘the streams of sentiment from which the sociological fogs arise’.¹²⁸ To add a further insult to injury, America seemed to agree. In 1909, a leading New York daily newspaper had described a well-respected American sociologist as ‘the fake professor of a pretend science’.¹²⁹

However, as political scientists turned towards the social aspects of American life, and to subjects such as public opinion and parties, they drew away from the comparatively antiseptic and institutional approach that members of the Columbia department had pioneered. John Burgess, aging but still writing, remained committed to developing a science of politics that worked within the intellectual world in which he had been raised – one dominated by legal scholars and historians. But

¹²⁴ Ibid. p.5.

¹²⁵ For this point see; Charles E. Meriam, *Contemporary Political Science*, (UNESCO, 1950), p. 240

¹²⁶ Quoted in Ross, *Origins of American Social Science* p. 296.

¹²⁷ Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity* p. 312.

¹²⁸ H. J. Ford, ‘The Pretensions of Sociology’ *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 15, (1909) pp. 96-104.

¹²⁹ See; Harry Elmer Barnes, ‘Some Contributions of Sociology to Modern Political Theory’, *Political Theories in Modern Times* p. 357.

the style of Burgess's work, speaking to and for an imagined homogenous society, was now anachronistic; the mainstream of the discipline was committed to addressing a more sophisticated audience capable of understanding more precise and concrete aspects of government. In the process, Burgess' faith in history and the comparative method was being replaced by a new emphasis on statistics, and other such modes of social investigation.

In 1915 Burgess would produce his latest attempt to work through the problems in *Reconciling Government with Liberty*, but the response it received from American political scientists was tepid. Burgess struggled to gather more than the respect paid to a scholar who has in the past had interesting things to say, but has since failed to keep up with the shifting tides. After a brief overview of the work, a reviewer in the *APSR* noted that, 'Professor Burgess differs from the great majority of political theorists'.¹³⁰ When the futility of Burgess's work was criticised in 1915, it was with the opinion that his method of searching for a 'millennial equilibrium' with which to reconcile government with liberty was inconsistent with the demands of the day. Instead, noted the reviewer, the only way of evaluating 'Whether government and liberty are reconciled' could come from 'an examination of what the government does'.¹³¹ Not, as Burgess suggested, by highlighting how an invisible state is increasingly 'muffled by the mechanisms of politics'.¹³² This reflected a general turn which had gathered impetus in the discipline from the beginning of the century. As the first APSA President, Frank J. Goodnow, explained, Political Science should not be a 'realm in which the political philosopher is to be permitted to roam at will, subject to no check on the exuberance of his fancy or caprice.'¹³³

This new, and in many ways more modern and cutting-edge, style of Political Science continued to aspire to a function in society that far surpassed that of simply training civil servants. In an address delivered to the American Political Science Association in 1909, Lowell argued that 'students of politics do not lead public thought as much as they ought to do.'¹³⁴ This insecurity – that political scientists did not exert as much influence as they ought to – derived in part from the sense of inferiority to the professional associations of economists and historians in the late 1880s and 90s, but in large part from the sense of capability and promise entailed in the venture of studying politics. In the decade and a half following the foundation of APSA, the discipline projected a clear sense of purpose as a profession

¹³⁰Lindsay Rogers, "The Reconciliation of Government with Liberty by John W. Burgess, Review" *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Feb., 1916), pp. 196-198.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Sylvia D. Fries, "Staatstheorie and the New American Science of Politics" *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1973), pp. 391-404.

¹³³ Frank Goodnow, "The Work of The American Political Science Association" *Proceedings of the American Political Science Association, Vol. 1, First Annual Meeting* (1904), pp. 35-46.

¹³⁴ Albert Lawrence Lowell, "The Physiology of Politics" *APSR*, vol. 4, (1910), p. 2.

whose central purpose was to research and to educate in a broad manner, within society at large and not just within the academy.

Building on earlier work by the association, in 1916 APSA sponsored the ‘Haines report’, examining the teaching of government in American schools and universities.¹³⁵ Upon being invited to conduct the report, Haines had written to the APSA secretary, W.W. Willoughby;

My very limited study of the matter more than a year ago led me to observe that organizations were actively engaged in pushing the claims of such subjects as Economics, Sociology, and Municipal Government in universities, colleges and even secondary schools and no such organized effort was being made at this time to extend the study and improve the methods of instruction in American Government. It will be commonly conceded, I think, by those who are familiar with the entire field, that an over-emphasis upon Economics and Sociology without a sufficient background in a knowledge of the structure and functions of American government is certain to lead to instability and uncertainty in political thinking. A thorough and painstaking study of American government is a necessity before anything like clear thinking is possible in the field of social and economic policies, and yet this fact seems to be strikingly neglected in the preparation of the curricula of our schools and colleges.¹³⁶

In this letter, Haines stumbled across an observation that would reappear over the course of the century. What he saw was that although ‘knowledge’ and ‘ideas’ had a role in American life, knowledge about ‘politics’ seemed to be peculiarly lacking. This observation spurred Haines on to serve his profession, just as it would spur on many after him.

A discipline which had so recently struggled to gain a place in the American academy had by 1917 become an established division of intellectual knowledge: meaning something quite different from the abstract principles that underlay the *Federalist Papers* and something quite different to the French model of civil service training. Not all Americans read Political Science scholarship – indeed few did, if the membership of the Association hovering around 1,500 is to go by. Nevertheless, the discipline’s practitioners hoped to inform and influence political debate. Not only was the subject taught to a developing cadre of experts within universities, but – through the active efforts of APSA officials – the subject was also increasingly taught in schools. For this reason, although American political scientists did not train new government officials or conduct major reforms of institutions, their emergence in the early twentieth century was a significant development.

¹³⁵ Charles Grove Haines, *The Teaching of Government; Report to the American Political Science Association* (New York: the MacMillan Company; 1916)

¹³⁶ Letter, to W.W. Willoughby, from Charles Haines, Whitman College (Jan 11, 1912) *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 180, 1912, Editor’s files.] GWU, SCL. Washington.

Conclusion

When political scientists cohered as a profession officially in 1904, and then increasingly over the next decade and a half, this represented a considerable achievement for a group of scholars who had not existed in the United States, and whose basic model was quite unlike the leading example in France. Unlike the reformers who adopted the title 'Political Science' in an attempt to train a new generation of civil servants, this cadre set out to produce research on substantive questions relating to American politics. By the 1920s Political Science had become a profession with a national association, a number of journals and an orienting perspective that attached it to the timely and interesting subject matter of a rapidly developing administrative state. Against all odds, Political Science had arrived in the United States.

The first couple of generations of American political scientists produced many significant and long-lasting insights concerning American government in their day. Wilson's concept of a government evolved from Whig principles and provided the starting point for Political Science scholarship. Over the following two decades scholars had developed closer understandings of the voluntary and informal aspects of American life. They tended to view parties of enormous consequence and they saw the growth of public administration as being of central importance in modern society, an insight first developed by Frank Goodnow in 1904. Scholars in the 1910s came to theorise, or hypothesize, upon the workings of public opinion in a mass society. As Albert Lawrence Lowell demonstrated, this was the result not of groups, but individual attitudes and there were multitudinous ways in which 'effective majorities' might be legitimately engineered within a political system. By the standards of mid-nineteenth century scholarship, modern Political Science was decidedly 'realistic', empirical and focused on the operation, not merely the laws, of government. This was a substantial achievement in a nation that had long been sceptical of experts, especially when it came to political affairs.

The coming war would shatter many of the central tenets of Progressive Era America. Unexpected and unprecedented, the war would cripple American progressivism and bring to this confident, developing discipline a new set of challenges. Nevertheless, Political Science would enter this challenging era on the back of a meteoric rise. Buoyed by observation of a maturing political system, the discipline had put down firm roots. Going into the 1920s scholars would be permanently attached to the study of American state and politics, even when changes in American life would make it difficult to maintain such a focus.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE ASSOCIATIVE STATE

1917 – 1930

Introduction

The 1920s were something of an exceptional decade in the development of Political Science from the ‘Gilded Age’ to the ‘Great Society’. In comparison to what had come before and what would follow, American political scientists struggled in this decade to find meaningful answers to many of the new problems with which they grappled. Moreover, more than at any other period described in this thesis, American political scientists strained to convince a broader audience that their discipline was both relevant and useful. This chapter will explain how new attempts to update and reform the ‘science’ of politics emerged, and how they also fell rather flat, sowing frustration and confusion at the discipline’s inability to profit from the recent changes in American life.

Although the war had made possible the kind of expansive federal apparatus that some progressives had yearned for in vain during Wilson’s first term, this ‘warfare’ state was quite different to the welfare state that pre-war reformers had envisioned. For political scientists who were broadly progressive in their outlook, the war inspired mixed feelings: on the one hand they were edified by a massive growth in government, and the demonstration of its ability to move swiftly and purposefully on a large scale; on the other hand, they feared the subordination of social goals to those of national security. American government had grown massively during the war. Between the months of April 1917 and November 1918 the nation experienced an intense and unprecedented period of wartime mobilization.¹³⁷ Washington scrambled to implement measures to improve the efficiency of national industry: a National War Labor Board and the War Labor Policies Board were set up to resolve labour disputes within war industries; Congress authorized presidential control over food and fuel

¹³⁷ See David Kennedy, *Over Here: the First World War and American Society* (OUP; 1982); Ellis Hawley, *The Great War and the search for a modern order: a history of the American people and their institutions 1917 – 1933* (Illinois: Waveland; c.1992, 1997); Barry Karl, *The Uneasy State: The United States from 1915 to 1945* (University of Chicago Press, 1983); Robert H. Wiebe, *The search for order, 1877-1920* (London : Macmillan, 1967).

production; and, when a particularly harsh winter threatened to bankrupt the nation's railway corporations in December 1917, the government moved in to bail out the industry.¹³⁸ Not only did the War require efficiency of the nation's industry, it also required support from its citizens. In movie theatres, audiences were updated on the war effort by 'Four minute men'. In towns shoppers had this information in leaflets handed out to them on the streets, and in schools, children were taught about the reasons for war. By the closing months of 1918, an American war machine had slowly, awkwardly, assembled leaving in its wake a raft of new questions and concerns for scholars of politics relating to the nature and structure of the American political system.

Moreover, lingering in the minds of political scientists in this decade was a heightened set of concerns relating to the stability of American democracy. To political scientists involved in the war, it had raised interesting questions about propaganda and citizenship. These concerns came into focus in a post-war period which witnessed the emergence of Red Scares, mass arrests, and 'myriad other manifestations of what would now be called a repressive reaction'.¹³⁹ But none of these questions and concerns would elicit easy answers. The problem of how to understand and account for 'citizenship' had, under the purview of men like Lowell, just risen to the surface of disciplinary consciousness, as they grappled with the emerging problem of 'bigness' in government. Now, in the emergent mass democracy of the 1920s, these complicated questions had become ever more so.

Furthermore, despite many new concerns about the health of American government and politics on the part of political scientists, during the 1920s, 'social' change was more evident than political vicissitudes. Dramatic change was happening in American life but government did not seem centrally involved in that change. Progressivism did not, as historians used to think, completely collapse – but it did lose energy, a process rooted initially in the war, and then gaining impetus from the massive technological, cultural and economic changes of the 1920s. The coalition of southern and western farmers, organised labor, social reformers and independent radicals that came to support of Woodrow Wilson's Democratic party in 1916 collapsed by 1920.¹⁴⁰ When in 1924 Robert LaFollette was nominated as a presidential candidate by the Progressive Party, on platforms proposing lower tariffs, government aid to agriculture, and public ownership of railroads and electrical utilities, he attracted a respectable five million votes. Yet, as David Kennedy has noted, analysis of the electoral results 'showed clearly that La Follette lost primarily because he failed to attract a sufficiently large working-class vote.'¹⁴¹ In this context, political scientists – as 'experts on politics' – would find

¹³⁸ Barry Karl, *The Uneasy State*, p.41.

¹³⁹ Arthur Link, 'What Happened to the Progressive Movement?' *American Historical Review*, (July, 1959), p.837.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p.838.

¹⁴¹ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American society*, (OUP; 2004) p.294.

themselves cast aside in comparison to other divisions of social scientific expertise who seemingly had more to say in response to the major issues and problems of the day.

If this decade was in general professionally difficult for political scientists, it did see one important development in the role of government that in some sense extended the Progressive impulse. Referred to by contemporaries as a 'New Era', this was a period of great social, economic and cultural change, and Americans were forwarding new ideas in public policy. A new vision and plan for government represented by the commerce secretary, Herbert Hoover. As defined by Ellis Hawley, Hoover's distinctive vision in 1921 placed himself 'as the protagonist of a new and superior synthesis between the old industrialism and the new, a way whereby Americans could benefit from scientific rationalization and social engineering without sacrificing the energy and creativity inherent in individual effort, 'grassroots' involvement, and private enterprise.'¹⁴² The emphasis of Hoover's planning, centred in the commerce department, was at once anti-statist and at the same time involved a vast potential on social planning, using the resources of government. But the divisions of scholarship it found the most use for were firstly the so-called 'natural sciences' and secondly those focused primarily on 'social' problems, economists and sociologists – not primarily *political* scientists.

For these reasons, American political scientists found the 1920s hard going. Ironically, this period of frustration is a period in the development of the discipline that most historians have characterised American Political Science as at its most confident, identifying it as a period that foresaw what many perceived as an uptick of 'behavioral' methods at mid-century.¹⁴³ Such scholarship has wrongly described this decade primarily in terms of a lurch towards 'scientistic' scholarship. For Dorothy Ross this is the peak of what she describes as 'liberal scientism' within the discipline – an aloof and technocratic attempt to model 'liberal society', which she traces in all the social sciences.¹⁴⁴ In a similar manner, later political scientists have also added to this impression of the period. Seeking the roots of a 'behavioral' revolution, widely supposed to have occurred in the discipline in the 1950s, these scholars have sought the roots of a more behaviourally oriented discipline. Whilst Somit and Tanenhaus do not distinguish the 1920s as a specific period in the history of the discipline, in reference to the years between 1921 and 1945 they state that 'scientism' was the 'most important intellectual development' of the 'middle period'.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Ellis Hawley, 'Herbert Hoover, the Commerce Secretariat, and the Vision of an 'Associative State,' 1921 – 1928', *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (June, 1974), pp.116 – 140.

¹⁴³ This claim regarding the 1950s will be challenged in chapter V.

¹⁴⁴ Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, pp.440-8.

¹⁴⁵ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.109. For further statements of the period's 'scientistic' concerns see; John Dryzek, 'Revolutions without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science' *APSR*, Vol. 100, No. 4, pp.487-92, Michael Heaney, 'The Chicago School that Never Was', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 2007) pp. 753-8, Michael T. Heaney and John Mark Hansen, 'Building the Chicago School', *APSR*, Vol. 110, No. 4, (Nov. 2006), pp.589 – 596.

In contrast to such interpretations, this chapter explains how the context of the 1920s shaped a distinct chapter in the discipline's history in which political scientists were not mindless advocates of a 'scientific' doctrine. Although these scholars were certainly optimistic and enthusiastic in their appropriation of new scientific techniques, they nonetheless continued to speak to large and pressing concerns in the nation's politics. However, their ongoing attempt to use 'scientific' techniques to cast new light on recent developments was particularly difficult in the distinct social and political context. Compared with the experience of practitioners of other disciplines in the 1920s and of political scientists in other decades, this was a difficult period for the discipline and its central ambition to create a scientific yet broad-minded study of politics.

This chapter has four sections. The first section describes how political scientists, greatly shaped by the recent experience of war, sought to rethink what a 'science' of politics could achieve in a new, post-war era. Remembered by contemporary scholars as an urge to be 'scientific', this section explains how it was at heart a movement to be *useful*. As the following two sections demonstrate, the new, useful, science of politics remained an unfulfilled vision. Interdisciplinary research did develop, but in the context of the new era 1920s, even this new type of Political Science scholarship struggled to find a coherent voice. It explains this frustration firstly in national terms, focusing on the Social Science Research Council, and secondly in terms of the new Political Science department at Chicago. The final section describes how influenced by the worrisome nature of democratic politics in this age of mass-marketing and propaganda, scholars of politics found it increasingly difficult to simply speak to the large problems of the day.

Section One: Towards a 'new' Political Science

The movement to found a 'new science of politics' began in 1921, on the pages of the *American Political Science Review* in an article written by the Chicago political scientist Charles E. Merriam and entitled 'The Present State of the Study of Politics'.¹⁴⁶ The war bequeathed many legacies to the discipline of Political Science, but most of all it led its practitioners to the conclusion that the discipline was failing to perform a useful role in American life. In his article, Merriam painted a bleak picture of his young profession. In a number of sweeping observations, he complained that Political Science in the United States was failing to live up to the expectations of its practitioners. With understatement, Merriam noted that neither 'electorates [n]or parliamentary bodies [n]or administrative agencies' were 'waiting breathlessly for the pronouncements of Political Science

¹⁴⁶ Charles E. Merriam, 'The Present State of the Study of Politics', *APSR* Vol. 15, No. 2 (May, 1921), pp.173-185.

associations'. Yet, as he opined, these constituencies 'would on many occasions welcome the very sort of information, analysis and tentative conclusions of political prudence that serious professional organisations of this type could supply.'¹⁴⁷ Warming to his theme, Merriam postured that it was 'certainly not to be desired' that 'professional students of politics should upon all occasions and upon every transient issue rush to announce their theories and conclusions with an air of finality'. Nevertheless, 'upon grave questions of long standing, where exhaustive inquiries have been made and all phases of a problem maturely considered, the professional opinion of special students has a certain value.'¹⁴⁸

Merriam's 1921 article detailed the difficulty that the discipline had in informing political institutions, guiding electorates and generally promoting a vibrant civic culture and expert administration. Such aims were central to Progressive Era political scientists, but they had gained a new relevance during the war. The experience of war had been responsible for the increased prominence of research bureaus which began to incubate new research directly within, or at a close distance to, government itself. The Institute for Governmental Research, established in 1916 by Robert Brookings and staffed primarily by political scientists and economists, witnessed a spurt of activity during the war. Under the directorship of the political scientist W.F. Willoughby, the formation of the institute had represented a 'conviction on the part of its founders that the work of administration is, if not a science, a subject to the study of which the scientific method should be rigidly applied'.¹⁴⁹ As the new director, Willoughby – the twin brother to one of APSA's founders and the association's first executive secretary – declared, 'it is not out of place to point out how closely its aims correspond to those of the American Political Science Association, and how nearly it meets a desire formally expressed by it.'¹⁵⁰ In wartime conditions, the existing desire of members of the IGR to influence government and society with 'scientific principles' had gained additional momentum. By the end of the war in November 1918, the IGR had taken steps towards the creation of a series of volumes that would be useful in peacetime, the first volume of this series, entitled *Principles Governing the Retirement of Public Employees*, was in press by 1918 and other volumes were in preparation, to be published later in the year. Future plans were to 'cover in time the whole field of administration' and to produce another volume entitled 'Service Monographs of the United States Government' which would list all the fifty or more distinct services of the government; in his *APSR* article Willoughby suggested that all congressmen should possess a copy.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p.178.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p.177.

¹⁴⁹ W.F Willoughby, 'The Institute for Government Research', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb., 1918), p.50.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.57.

¹⁵¹ Willoughby, 'Institute for Government Research', p.56.

More generally, the war had stimulated the production of numerous books by political scientists on the subject of war: one edition of the *APSR* in August 1918 noted, ‘Limited space precludes even brief reviews of all the war books which have appeared during the last few months’.¹⁵² Those that were listed included, *Militarism and Statecraft* by Munroe Smith (the founding editor of the *PSQ*), which was described as ‘probably the most important’ and surveyed political theories and diplomacy as well as a review of Austro-German diplomacy of 1914.¹⁵³ Countless talks and surveys were also given on the subject, including a series of seven public lectures on ‘Aspects of the World War’ delivered during February and March, 1918, at Johns Hopkins.¹⁵⁴

Work that could be useful – whether by explaining new administrative facets of government as in the *IGR*, or by speaking to wartime policy issues – gained extra currency in this period. Merriam’s own research had been largely historical and theoretical. Trained in Columbia in the 1890s Merriam had learned from men like John Burgess to treat ‘science’ as history and comparison, and he published in 1905 his doctoral thesis *A History of American Political Theories*.¹⁵⁵ The main contribution of this book was to demonstrate the development of a body of theoretical precepts according to which government operates. But, his intellectual appetite had grown in the years that followed and he had come to appreciate work that, unlike his own, had a clearer, more direct relevance to public affairs.

Merriam’s article was readily accepted by his colleagues, and immediately after his article was published he was called upon by the president of the American Political Science Association, William Dunning, to lead a Committee on Political Research. Dunning, the renowned – now infamous – historian of Reconstruction, had been Merriam’s tutor when the latter was a graduate student at Columbia in the 1890s, and it had been under Dunning’s guidance that Merriam had written his doctoral thesis. As suggested by his invitation to Merriam, this stalwart of the Columbia department also sensed that new responsibilities were facing the American discipline. A priority that quickly developed among the members of the new committee was ‘to investigate the possibility of developing and employing more scientific methods for testing the theories and hypotheses of current Political Science’.¹⁵⁶ In formulating this aim, Merriam’s committee explained that advice offered by political scientists to government ‘is too frequently the result of guess-work and speculation rather than of

¹⁵² [Anon.], ‘Minor Notices’, *APSR*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Aug, 1918), p.560.

¹⁵³ Other works include; Morris Jastrow, Jr, *The War and the Coming Peace* (Lippincott Company, 1918); John Firman Coar, *Democracy and the War* (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1918); H. H. Powers *America among the Nations* (Macmillan, 1918).

¹⁵⁴ See; Ernst Freund, Charles Merriam and P.O. Ray, ‘News and Notes’, *APSR*, Vol.12, No. 2 (May, 1918), p.289.

¹⁵⁵ Charles Merriam, *A History of American Political Theories* (MacMillan; 1905).

¹⁵⁶ [Anon.], ‘News and Notes’ *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 17 (1923) pp. 463-4.

precise knowledge and scientifically determined principles'.¹⁵⁷ The war had demonstrated a considerable difficulty in linking Political Science expertise up to American society more broadly.

This emphasis on 'science' was far from an abstract or narrowly 'academic' concern. Whilst the war had heralded uncomfortable questions for political scientists, it had provided economists with a certain amount of new information from the war experience. Most notably, the Columbia economist Wesley Clair Mitchell who had headed the price section of the War industries board had, 'in the face of a massive and irrational mood of demobilization' successfully put in a request that he be allowed to increase his staff so that the information gained about price movements could be retained and made available to economists and businessmen. This effort salvaged fifty-seven bulletins and 'was one of the most comprehensive efforts to preserve useful collections of domestic data from the war experience.'¹⁵⁸

More importantly, the war had also highlighted a difficulty in asserting that Political Science was 'scientific' in the same sense as the natural sciences. Research on submarine detection carried out by the New London Experiment Station had improved sound-ranging for artillery and communications for the Signal Corps, and 'in conjunction with private industry, the NRC helped achieve large-scale production of optical glass, nitrates and poison gas.'¹⁵⁹ As Roger Geiger has argued, these achievements 'seemed to reveal the vast potential that could be tapped through organisation and cooperation in scientific research.'¹⁶⁰ Both the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation were drawn to supporting burgeoning new scientific communities, opening up a stream of ongoing research funds after the war. The NRC was financially supported by the armed services and the Council for National Defense whose generous financial backing had helped to build research communities and individual fellowships to create centres of expertise, and such schools as Caltech, Stanford and MIT were flourishing in the sciences.¹⁶¹ After the war the National Research Council continued to finance applied sciences and research fellows with 'vast potential resources for the realizing of scientific goals'.¹⁶²

But, the social sciences had not been equally well provided-for as had their 'natural' neighbours, and considerable discrepancies had emerged in the status and support offered to social science. Where the 'natural' sciences had been arranged under the 'National Research Council' [NRC], the 'social' sciences had been placed with the humanities in the American Council of Learned Societies. What had begun as an administrative formality began to belay great differences in funding

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p.464.

¹⁵⁸ Barry Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the study of politics*, p .109.

¹⁵⁹ Roger L. Geiger, *To Advance Knowledge: The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900 – 1940* (New York: OUP, 1986) p.97.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Barry Karl, *Charles Merriam and the Study of Politics* (University of Chicago Press; 1974), p.123

¹⁶² Geiger, *To Advance Knowledge*, p.107.

and prestige. Whilst NRC funding continued after the war, the community of American social scientists became faced with serious stringencies in their research. For Merriam and his committee, this lack of 'scientific' credentials emerged as a major impediment in their quest of making the discipline useful to American life. Bureaus such as the IGR had given political scientists a platform, sociologists worked with economists to analyse the cost of living in Labor Bureaus and economists had provided impressive results with aggregative indices of money and goods.¹⁶³ But these did not match the natural sciences in demonstrating the striking potential of expert knowledge to achieve heretofore unimaginable heights. The APSA Committee on Research evoked this image when it complained that 'decisions of great public importance' were being made 'without adequate knowledge of the facts and theories that are involved.'¹⁶⁴

The wartime experience of the natural sciences had also demonstrated that the big breakthroughs come at the points where disciplines meet and overlap. Fixed upon this example, the APSA committee organised a national conference that would 'be devoted almost entirely to problems of technique and methodology'.¹⁶⁵ The sort of problems the scholars had in mind were detailed in the layout of the conference which was divided into round tables, some focused on 'practical governmental concerns' such as public finance, efficiency ratings and nominating methods. Two major wartime initiatives, psychology and statistics, were on prominent display with roundtables on 'psychology and politics', another on 'political statistics'. Each of these panels were given two tasks: to formulate the 'outstanding problems in its area of interest' and then to indicate 'the methods by which the objective evidence' bearing upon these problems 'could be secured and accurately interpreted.'¹⁶⁶

The first conference took place in Madison, Wisconsin in 1923. It was well-attended, by approximately 100 persons, but was not an unqualified success. Arnold Bennet Hall, a Madison Political Science professor and one of the convenors, noted that 'during the first two days of the session the groups seemed unable to visualize their problems' and would skirt towards 'the field of general prudence, opinion, and speculation'.¹⁶⁷ Unsurprisingly perhaps, given the scanty guidelines that the conference offered and the lack of familiarity on the part of most political scientists with the two disciplines of psychology and statistics. This fact was not unrecognised by Hall and his colleagues, who included the fellow Michigan political scientist Robert T. Crane, as well as Merriam. They adopted a much soberer tone in talking about the possibilities of science than did their Progressive Era predecessors. Answering the sort of questions they were interested in would require,

¹⁶³ H.D. Lasswell, 'The institutionalization of the profession' Gabriel Almond Paper (SC330). Box 6. Folder 9. Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.

¹⁶⁴ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism* p.123.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p.124.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.124.

‘The willingness of many men and women to devote long years of arduous and unremitting toil to the detailed study of political problems’.¹⁶⁸ This contrasted somewhat with Woodrow Wilson’s outlook when compiling his large comparative work, *The State*. He had declared that he needed ‘at least three summers in Europe to study his subject ‘alive’’.¹⁶⁹ Compared with the ‘long years’ predicted by the conference organisers, Wilson’s ‘three summers’ had begun to seem rather brief.

Moreover, some of the intellectual certainty concerning methods and approach had slipped away. Speaking to the 1909 APSA annual meeting, James Bryce had stated ‘The Fact is the first thing. Make sure of it. Get it perfectly clear. Polish it till it shines and sparkles like a gem.’¹⁷⁰ In contrast, by the early 1920s it was far from clear what such a ‘pure science’ might look like; as Merriam admitted in his 1923 article, ‘We only know that we do not know whether it is possible or impossible to ascertain with scientific precision the laws that govern human behaviour in the political field or in the social field.’¹⁷¹ As this suggests, the process of formulating this new science was not without difficulty, something that did not go unnoticed even to those leading the charge. When it came to organising a follow up conference in 1924, Hall described how the committee in charge were vexed by such concerns as ‘How much of the success of the first meeting had been due to the novelty of the idea? How many had been lured by the skilfully advertised attractions of Wisconsin’s capital city? How many were impelled by mere idle curiosity?’¹⁷²

By the second conference some of the optimism had returned. It was attended by eighty-nine men and women, most of whom were employed in American universities and dedicated to full-time careers of teaching and research. Hall noted with gratification, ‘Happily there were few casual visitors’, and ‘those who had been animated by idle curiosity did not return’. He further suggested that it had ‘strikingly demonstrated that large numbers are taking seriously the obligations of the profession and that they have caught something of the vision of what might be and in the practical realization of that vision they are ready and eager to play a worthy part’.¹⁷³ Moreover, by mid-decade some important new studies had emerged which reflected important ‘scientific’ advancements. Many of them, (as will be discussed below), emerged from Chicago. But others included Arthur Holcombe’s *Political Parties of Today*, which analysed American political parties by way of classifying congressional districts according to region, economic characteristics and degree of urbanization.¹⁷⁴ Another book of note is Stuart A. Rice’s *Farmers and Workers in American Politics*, as Somit and

¹⁶⁸ Arnold Bennett Hall, ‘Second National Conference on the Science of Politics’. American Political Science Association Records. [Box 180, ‘Editor files, 1911-24’] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, p.278.

¹⁷⁰ Bryce, ‘The Relation of Political Science to History’, p. 15.

¹⁷¹ Charles E. Merriam, ‘Recent Advances in Political Methods’, in James Farr and Raymond Seidman (eds) *Discipline and History: Political Science in the United States* (University of Michigan Press; 1993) p.146.

¹⁷² Hall, ‘Second National Conference on the Science of Politics’.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Arthur Holcombe, *Political Parties of Today: a study in Republican and Democratic Politics* (Harper & Brothers; 1924).

Tanenhaus note, this represented the ‘first advances in legislative roll-call analysis since Lowell’s pioneering work some two decades earlier.’¹⁷⁵

By 1923 Merriam was to publish another article in which he restated these aims, passionately and clearly, encouraging his colleagues to start incorporating the findings of sociology, psychology and biology. Interpreted by later scholars as ‘scientism’ or a proto-‘behavioral’ revolution, this was in reality no such navel-gazing.¹⁷⁶ As Merriam explained, ‘As custodians of the Political Science of our time, the responsibility rests upon us to exhaust every effort to bring the study of government in its various stages to the highest possible degree of perfection, to exhaust every effort to obtain effective knowledge of political forces, to bring to bear every resource of science and prudence at our command.’¹⁷⁷ As this statement implies, Merriam viewed the essential purpose of the profession as a broad one. And in the process, as Merriam declared, it was necessary to ‘bring to bear every resource of science and prudence at our command’.¹⁷⁸

Section Two: The Social Science Research Council

Alongside the sponsoring of national conferences, the APSA committee had offered another, more ambitious, recommendation for improving the science of politics, namely the establishment of a Social Science Research Council which might do for the social sciences what the National Research Council had done for the ‘natural’ sciences. Impressed by such a rapid advancement of both the fundamental use and the broader application of ‘natural science’, members of the APSA committee hoped that the social sciences might prosper in a similar way under the creation of its own research council. However, as we shall see, the creation of the Social Science Research Council tested the discipline: suggesting that the concerns of ‘Political Science’ were out of place in this New Era.

Founding the SSRC

The first stage in creating a central research council for the social sciences was to acquire funding. By 1923 Merriam had discovered that a former Chicago graduate student in psychology, Beardsley Rumel, had at the age of 27 been appointed Director of the Rockefeller Foundation subsidiary, the Laura

¹⁷⁵ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.127; Stuart Rice, *Farmers and Workers in American Politics* (Longmans, Green & Co.; 1924).

¹⁷⁶ See; Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, pp.440-7; Somit and Tanenhaus, *Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.122-131; and, Heaney, ‘The Chicago School that Never Was’, pp.753-8.

¹⁷⁷ Charles Merriam, ‘Recent Advances in Political Methods’, *APSR*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (May, 1923), p.146.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund [LSRMF].¹⁷⁹ The total endowment of the LSRMF was \$74 million, and although the funds were formally intended for medical research, Merriam hoped to convince Ruml to invest some of this substantial pot of money in the future of the social sciences. With this aim in mind, in 1923 Merriam requested a meeting with the young executive.

Merriam's hope that Ruml might support the social sciences was optimistic, but not entirely without precedent. The Carnegie Corporation had taken an interest in sponsoring sociologists at Chicago in 1919 and scholars including Robert E. Park and William I. Thomas produced a series of studies under the title of the 'Americanization Study' which was to help states and cities understand the rapid rise of immigration. The backdrop to this study was an increasingly difficult problem of inward migration to American cities, as foreign war émigrés, new immigrants and hundreds of thousands of returning 'doughboys' flocked to America, vying for decreasing numbers of jobs in overcrowded cities.¹⁸⁰ If Carnegie had taken an interest in migration, there were many other social problems that were ripe for investigation including rising ethno-cultural tensions and growing violence against black Americans in the South.¹⁸¹ Not to be forgotten was the economic crisis as post-war inflation had caused the cost of living to rocket. By 1919 the official figure was 77 per cent higher than in the pre-war period.¹⁸²

Ruml was, as Merriam hoped him to be, gripped by the suggestion that the social sciences were ripe for orchestration. He had been appointed to the Rockefeller post from a role in Carnegie under his former psychology professor James Angell, and already by the turn of the 1920s had the reputation as an 'ideas man'.¹⁸³ Later that same year Ruml commissioned the economist Lawrence K. Frank to survey the 'State of American Social Science'. Frank's findings supported Merriam's general position, and stated that the separation of disciplines had led to an anachronistic 'boxing up' of insights and general under-supply of social scientific ideas to American life. Convinced by Frank's report, Ruml stated, 'All who work toward the general end of social welfare are embarrassed by the lack of that knowledge that the social sciences provide. It is as though engineers were at work without an adequate development in the sciences of physics or chemistry, or as though physicians were practicing in the absence of the medical sciences.'¹⁸⁴

Beginning in 1923, Merriam and Ruml hatched plans to create the Social Science Research Council which might support research with a practical benefit, as well as the long-term 'fundamental'

¹⁷⁹ Barry D. Karly and Stanley N. Katz, 'The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890 – 1930' *Minerva* Vol. XIX no. 2, (Summer 1981), pp.236-270.

¹⁸⁰ Niall Palmer, *The Twenties in America: Politics and History* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006)p.16 & 41

¹⁸¹ Hawley, *The Great War and the search for a modern order*, p.11.

¹⁸² Karl, *An Uneasy State*, p.47.

¹⁸³ Mark C. Smith, *Social science in the crucible: the American debate over objectivity and purpose, 1918 – 1941* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press), p.26.

¹⁸⁴Seim, 'Perhaps we can hit upon medium of course', pp 84-5.

development of the social sciences. It was to mediate between these two goals by encouraging the development of interdisciplinary, scientific and largely university-based research. Attracting other disciplines to the Social Science Research Council was not straightforward. As Barry Karl has noted, the respect and support of 'busy economists' might have been forestalled by the ability of economists to operate reasonably successfully as an independent discipline. However, as Karl has further argued, the social sciences were joined together in this time as a community 'facing post-war stringencies in the financing of their research', and largely as a result of this, the SSRC did ultimately succeed in attracting disciplines to join, including Sociology, Economics and Psychology.¹⁸⁵ Even Wesley Mitchell (the former head of the price section of the War industries board', responsible for salvaging collections from the war for economists) was a key supporter of the effort to form a Social Science Research Council, and his involvement ensured a steady flow of interest from economists and the formal incorporation of the American Economic Association.¹⁸⁶ The order in which the associations joined the Council in the years between 1923 and 1925 was: the American Political Science Association; the American Sociological Society (later renamed the American Sociological Association), the American Economic Association; the American Statistical Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Anthropological Association and the American Historical Association.

As a platform for influencing society, sharing training and knowledge between disciplines and focusing on the major challenges of the day, the SSRC represented the continuation of certain Progressive Era trends – the desire to influence society and a respect for rational expert solutions – with the post-war form – emphasising largescale organization, enhanced funds and modern methods. But it also chimed with the broader context of the 1920s. A series of innovations transformed daily life in this decade: the assembly line churned out cars, which were leased with hire purchase agreements; employers allowed paid vacations; and new innovations in advertising, radio technology and communication drew the nation together. Social scientists too played a role in pushing forward the quality of American life. A fascination with possible extension of scientific management ran through articles in magazines such as *The Survey*, *World's Work* and *The Metropolitan Magazine*.¹⁸⁷ Most importantly for present purposes, Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover pioneered a new relationship between business and government, aimed at deploying cooperative mechanisms in which 'expert' knowledge could be deployed so as to promote prosperity and alleviate social tensions.

In this context, the SSRC emphasised its capacity to improve life and solve social problems. No sooner had the SSRC come into fruition in 1923, than Ruml began to assist in procuring funds from the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund. Great emphasis was placed on the recent

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p.123.

¹⁸⁷ Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p.206.

advances in psychology, as one of the most promising of the current crop of disciplines. The first committee was set up in 1924 on the Scientific Aspects of Human Migration and was chaired by Robert M. Yerkes and staffed by psychologists including E.G. Boring of Harvard and E. L Thorndike of Columbia. This committee drew on psychological techniques which had been developed during the war.¹⁸⁸ Granted \$133,800 for projects on the social and economic impact of migration to the United States, it produced a number of important books and research articles, including studies of ‘Swedish immigration, Mexican immigration and labor in the United States, statistical compendia of international migrations, and original research on the cityward [sic] migration of African Americans.’¹⁸⁹

After the first year of funding one-off projects, Council members established a committee to discuss what should be funded and supported by the Council in the future. These meetings were ‘[o]ne of the most innovative of the Council’s early activities’ designed as a two-week period in which board members, committee members, staff and invited guests could come together and ‘contemplate research priorities, allocate training funds and formulate plans for new committee activities.’¹⁹⁰ Situated in an idyllic rustic setting in Hanover, New Hampshire, there was an emphasis on informality and a ‘leisurely pace’ which projected a sense of order and cooperation.¹⁹¹ And the result of these civilized summer meetings was the creation of new committees, including those on Agriculture (1925-42); Crime (1925-32); Industrial Relations (1926-30); International Relations (1926 – 38); Business Research (1928-31) and the Eighteenth Amendment (1925-28).¹⁹² These problem areas emphasized a development of formal science, married to practical solutions. They also showcased the developing strength and seriousness of a ‘science’ of society that was rapidly converging in the American academy, supported by a powerful new body of deep-pocketed supporters and emblematic of the respect for expertise and the rising lot of a professional class of social scientist in American society.

Political Science in the SSRC

However, the confidence of the Hanover meetings did not extend all the way down into the crevices of each individual discipline. As the SSRC flourished, it became clear that some disciplines would benefit from its generosity more than others. In a note to Charles Beard, Merriam wrote ‘We have made a good deal of progress in interesting donors in the subject of social science, but thus far have

¹⁸⁸ Barry Karl: ‘ Presidential Planning and social science research: Mr Hoover’s experts’ *Perspectives in American History* Vol III 1969; p.360

¹⁸⁹ Kenton W. Worcester, ‘Social Science Research Council, 1923 – 1998’, (Social Science Research Council: New York, 2001), p.27

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.25

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p.27

not had equal success with Political Science. I wonder if there are any steps we ought to be taking in the direction of obtaining endowment for governmental research.’¹⁹³ This elicited the reply, ‘I... have written a half a dozen elaborate memorands [sic] with specific suggestions as to lines of action. All of them have been filed by gentlemen of means in their waste baskets. So I am out of the game.’¹⁹⁴ As Merriam and Beard were both discovering, it was not easy to sell the ‘science of politics’ to philanthropists.

What accounted for this disparity was a concern on the part of external funders that the discipline of ‘political’ science was too partisan. This criticism was unfair on two counts, firstly that political scientists were generally uninterested in direct engagement in political affairs, and secondly, to the extent that they were interested in furthering such aims this was no different than economists or sociologists, who were often far more politically inclined. Nevertheless, the SSRC governing committees, which from middle of the decade included representatives of all the associations, turned down several ‘well-endowed and prestigious proposals to escape charges of partisanship’.¹⁹⁵ The projects that the SSRC committee chose instead were a survey and analysis of social research in progress, a survey of social science methods, and an annual index and digest of state laws.¹⁹⁶

A similar pattern took place in the research bureaus created during the war, which became populated increasingly with economists rather than political scientists. Building on wartime innovations, economists in the 1920s fostered the dream to stabilise the economy, to avoid recessions that had occurred in 1893, 1907 and more recently in 1920. This dream was to be drastically unrealised at the end of the decade. Nevertheless, in the early 1920s, the IGR had succeeded in its first major objective with the creation of the Bureau of the Budget. Donald Critchlow has argued, ‘In retrospect the creation of this system can be seen as the vital first step to a compensatory spending, counter-cyclical role for the government in the economy’.¹⁹⁷ This was furthered when the Institute spawned a new bureau, The National Bureau of Economic Affairs, which was petitioned for by men in and around the IGR who stated in 1927, ‘The events of the past ten years, and particularly those of the years since the war, have gone far to emphasize the fact that many governmental questions are, in their essence, economic questions.’¹⁹⁸ Such a statement was no doubt a source of comfort to many Americans, but it signalled signs of a future where even governmental questions were a matter of losses and gains.

¹⁹³ Letter Merriam to Beard 1924. Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 25, Folder 17], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

¹⁹⁴ Letter Beard to Merriam, Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 25, Folder 17], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

¹⁹⁵ Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*, p.99.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Donald Critchlow, *The Brookings Institution, 1916- 1952: Expertise and the Public Interest in a Democratic Society* (Northern Illinois University Press; 1985).

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

The fact that broad-gauge social science scholarship was losing out in important ways to that which was narrower and more technical elicited a blazing critique of mindless ‘scientism’ from within the confines of the discipline of Political Science. Among the most prominent critics was the Harvard scholar William Yandell Elliot, who wrote in his 1928 *The Pragmatic Revolt in Politics* about the trends towards psychology and statistics. In a critique that was to reverberate throughout different periods, Elliot argued that it was not quantification or scientific techniques per se that was the problem, ‘Some of these preoccupations of the political scientists are genuinely fruitful and produce useful results other than the mere piling up of monographs.’ Further stating that, the ‘utility of the statistical method, properly directed and interpreted, is not to be doubted’. Nevertheless, some social scientists had been moved to apply these techniques to ever narrower ends. Elliot’s book, and a subsequent article, was heavily critical of attempts to provide ‘rigid deterministic laws’, of the sort so valued in other disciplines and, he feared, increasingly attractive to scholars within his own discipline.¹⁹⁹ Sharing Elliot’s view was the Princeton political scientist Edward S. Corwin, who argued that the task at hand should always remain, ‘criticism and education regarding the true ends of the state and how best they may be achieved.’ Science may have an important role to play, but it should not be forgotten that this was the discipline’s ‘true destiny’.²⁰⁰

Perhaps the most prominent critic of ‘scientism’ to emerge in this period was Charles Beard who recognised the changing times, and was beginning to reject the foundation model for funding political research, and to bemoan what he diagnosed to be a new emphasis on neutrality and objectivity in social scientific research. In a 1927 address to the APSA Beard would argue that the model of social science research which was gaining national popularity, and research money, was at risk of transporting social science away from the world it aspired to help, ‘No small part of our intellectual sterility... may be attributed to the intense specialization that has accompanied of over-emphasis in research’.²⁰¹ Warning to his theme, Beard pronounced that he wished for American social scientists to start ‘daring to be wrong in something important rather than right in some meticulous banality’.²⁰² He even suggested that pure empiricism might be ‘inviting our countrymen to try... coercion and suppression’.²⁰³

This criticism, that the social sciences were providing the tools with which hidden elites could siphon power away from society, was in many ways ahead of its time. It was a complaint that would re-emerge with much more gravitas in a few decades time when the Federal government would take up an active role in the fostering of research. However, during the 1920s it was nevertheless a

¹⁹⁹ Quoted in Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.118.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. p.119.

²⁰¹ Charles Beard, “Time, Technology and the Creative Spirit in Political Science” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 21, No. 1 (Feb., 1927), p.10.

²⁰² Ibid, p.11.

²⁰³ Ibid.

criticism not without foundation. Philanthropists carefully navigated away from any attachment to party or cause, veiling all attempts to help within the broader preserve of the ‘public good’. Even government officials claimed neutrality, seeking a pure science of administration that would protect them from the messy world of politics. The outcome was that research that claimed to be interpretative and not merely ‘practical’ found it difficult to gain support.

Beard’s foresight about the odds stacked against truly useful scholarship was not enough to dissuade most political scientists from seeking to produce a science that was both empirical and broad. And so he retreated from the discipline – in communications he was bitter and grumbling, refusing the title of ‘Professor’ and affecting instead that of a Connecticut farmer, whilst frequently excusing himself from conferences and APSA committees on the premise that he could not afford it as he had no means of academic support.²⁰⁴ (Although he nonetheless accepted the appointment of President of the American Political Science Association in 1927.) In part this retreat might have signalled something about Beard’s temperament, he had long fallen out with university administrators, most famously leaving Columbia during the war on the case of protest at university policy. But Beard’s retreat also signalled a new tension in the discipline’s traditional aim of combining scientific research with big questions. Even as most sang the gospel of objective research, Beard at least realised that the sort of information it offered was lacking an audience or a purpose in American life.

To the extent that Beard’s criticism – shared with Elliot and Corwin – was directed at scholarship within discipline and not the nation more generally, it was somewhat unfair. Those political scientists who were engaging most in ‘science’ were located in Chicago and, as we shall see, they pursued a rather broad-gauge analysis of politics. However, conditioned by the general prestige of ‘narrow’ science, and the rising interest in ‘science’, it is not difficult to see where this criticism had emerged from. During the 1920s ‘political’ factors were of less apparent centrality than were ‘social’ ones, by 1933 the President Hoover would commission a report on ‘Recent social trends’, a telling indication of just how central the study of ‘society’ had become to American life. It was fear more than reality that caused these scholars to warn their colleagues not to follow the path towards recondite, technical concerns of other disciplines.

Historians of the discipline have argued that the discipline in this period was overlaid by a debate between warring factions: the ‘empiricists’ and the ‘theorists’. Those in favour of ‘scientific’ methods, and those against.²⁰⁵ In truth, there was no such division. Excitement about scientific method emerged as a reflection of the new opportunities of the Second World War, but this was never a

²⁰⁴ Correspondence Merriam and Beard, Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 25, Folder 17], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

²⁰⁵ See; Gunnell, *Imagining the American Polity*, Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, pp. 63-80; Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, p. 440-55.

narrowly technocratic vision. And, whilst there did emerge punchy new criticisms of ‘empty’ scientism, this emerged in reaction to the inhospitable environment for the broad-gauge aims of the discipline, it was not directly against ‘scientific’ techniques as such.

Section Three: The Chicago school of Political Science

During the 1920s the Political Science department at Chicago underwent what was arguably the most consequential transformation of any American Political Science department in the period between 1880 and 1970, and Chicago political scientists conducted the most extensive attempt to link ‘scientific’ politics to broad-gauge investigation. In 1919 the department had only one full-time professor and a skimpy provision of subjects; as one incoming student, Harold Gosnell, recalled, ‘When I came to Chicago in 1919 the Political Science department was at its lowest ebb.’²⁰⁶ However, during the 1920s the fate of the department reversed and by the end of the decade Chicago rivalled Harvard and Columbia for the mantle of the most sought-after Political Science department for employment and graduate training in the United States.²⁰⁷ This transformation was the result of two trends: the choice of Chicago as a focus for the new, rising interest in social science research after the war; and the presence of the influential and indefatigable spokesperson and visionary of a ‘New Science of Politics’ – Charles E. Merriam.

If Beard and others had caught sight of the problem facing Political Science research on a national level – the lack of interest in ‘big picture’ research on politics in favour of a narrower sort of science and information about ‘social’ rather than ‘political’ affairs – Merriam encountered a similar frustration in Chicago. At the heart of his vision for the department had been a role of consulting to the local community. But during the 1920s, despite his striking success in attracting funding for such major initiatives as the SSRC and the Chicago social science faculty, he struggled to accrue as much prestige for the ‘politics’ department, and failed in attracting interest in the issue at the heart of his interests – a Political Science that could be of service to the local community.

Chicago Social Science, 1900 - 1920

Chicago boasted a congenial location within a close-knit social science faculty with deep inroads to the local community. The Chicago social science faculty was high-performing before the First World

²⁰⁶ Harold D. Gosnell, Autobiography manuscript, ‘Chapter 6: University of Chicago, and notes’, Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 3, Folder 3], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

²⁰⁷ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behaviorism*, p.108

War, and during the Progressive decades of the 1900s and 1910s its sociologists had engaged in important work in the local community, culminating in a commission on race that was established after the 1919 Chicago race riot. Although many Progressive Era political scientists had turned a sceptical eye towards the developing discipline of Sociology there was a pioneer feeling to Chicago research which neatly complemented the perspective of those such as Raymond Fosdick at the Rockefeller Foundation who spoke in the late 1910s of social science being ‘at the growing edge of things’.²⁰⁸

In the 1920s the University of Chicago attracted new funding from the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund (LSRMF). The university had been founded by the Rockefellers in 1890, but save in medical research, they had not maintained a constant interest in the university.²⁰⁹ What funding it won in the 1920s was therefore on merit of the faculty and the various departments rather than any longstanding patronage. When the LSRMF decided to grant money to Chicago social science they were investing not only in a few scientists, but an ongoing project with many dimensions and interactions – between disciplines, and between the university and the local community.

The headline project sponsored by LSRMF was the construction of the extravagant new Social Science Research Building. Here social scientists would be brought together under one roof and supplied with suitable equipment including, ‘a statistical laboratory, three machine rooms and a room for holding census data.’²¹⁰ The social scientists were also to be arranged by research area rather than department with a floor-plan which paired Harold Gosnell, a political scientist interested in voting studies, with the sociologist William Fielding Ogburn, and Harold Lasswell, a political scientist interested in political psychology, with the psychometrician L.L. Thurstone.²¹¹ All this was to be completed by the end of the decade at which point a new university president would declare, ‘if this building does not improve the social sciences, there is something wrong with the social sciences or something wrong with us’.²¹²

Chicago Political Science

As chair of the Political Science department during the 1920s, Merriam had a vision of research in Political Science that matched with the overall atmosphere of the department at Chicago. He

²⁰⁸ Seim, *Rockefeller Philanthropy and Modern Social Science*, p.109.

²⁰⁹ Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p.133.

²¹⁰ Heaney and Hansen, ‘Building the Chicago School’, p.595.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*, p.29.

emphasised cooperation between disciplines, the development of empirical techniques, and interaction with the city at large. As he wrote in the department's 1926 annual report:

What we are really attempting is to blaze a new trail in the field of the technical study of political relations. We are endeavouring to integrate the study of government more closely with the other social studies and with the natural sciences, and we are struggling to develop a more precise technique. This is not the task of a day, and we do not expect to finish it offhand, but we are confident that we are making significant progress... We are developing significant research activities, and we believe that we are making real contributions to the more intelligent ordering of political life.²¹³

Under Merriam's supervision and encouragement, political scientists in Chicago produced some of the most significant works of the decade. These scholars were influenced by the broader interdisciplinary Chicago setting. As a graduate student, Harold Gosnell was deeply influenced by Professor Robert E. Park of the sociology department and by Park's work in directing the research of the Chicago commission on race relations. The volume in which Park presented his findings, *The Negro in Chicago*, pioneered new understanding of black communities in Chicago. Gosnell regularly associated with Park's students, as he later recalled; 'When I first came to Chicago in 1919 right after the race riots of that year, the atmosphere at the University of Chicago was full of discussion of how and why that unfortunate incident had occurred.'²¹⁴ And, as he further noted, 'I could not help imbibing a lasting interest in race relations.'²¹⁵

Gosnell drew attention to the role of black voters in a PhD project, published in 1924 as *Non-Voting: Causes and Methods of Control*.²¹⁶ The level of focus that he placed on racial categories was a particularly distinctive aspect of Gosnell's work, and a pioneering new front within a discipline that had, to a striking extent, been willing to leave questions of race to sociologists in earlier generations.²¹⁷ Gosnell drew attention to racial categories as a means of finding out more about the phenomenon of non-voting, 'Non-voting was more prevalent among these citizens than among whites so special attention was given to the analysis of the differences. We were interested in the attitude of black citizens toward disfranchisement in the south and its effect upon their voting habits. How were these citizens acquiring positive attitudes toward participation in politics?'²¹⁸ In this project, and a

²¹³ Quoted in, Heaney and Hansen, 'Building the Chicago School', p.595.

²¹⁴ Harold F. Gosnell, Autobiography manuscript, 'Negro Politicians', Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 4, Folder 7], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Charles Merriam and Harold Foote Gosnell, *Non-Voting Causes and Methods of Control* (University of Chicago Press, 1924), p. vii.

²¹⁷ See; Rogers Smith, 'The Puzzling Place of Race in American Political Science', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Jan., 2004).

²¹⁸ Harold F. Gosnell, Autobiography manuscript, 'Negro Politicians', Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 4, Folder 7], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

follow up project entitled *Getting Out the Vote*, Gosnell worked through problems that were distinctive for their attempt to grapple with new categories, new techniques and its attempt to produce workable solutions to practical political problems.

Not only did the Chicago department work towards the furthering of a new science, but Merriam's department also attempted to reform the local community. Chicago was a city widely associated with social problems, political corruption and rampant criminality, but, as Gosnell, has recalled, 'In spite of the city's bad reputation for graft, bootlegging, gangster killings, election frauds, racketeering, and street violence it possessed a dynamic quality which overshadowed its shortcomings and gave promise for the future.'²¹⁹ However unlikely, according to Gosnell, the city was the location of much social progress, 'Buildings went up, superhighways were built, and the functions of an urban metropolis somehow were performed. Business in general prospered. We were hopeful that democracy could be made to work'.²²⁰ For a young Gosnell it seemed that Chicago corruption had a soft underbelly: '[i]n an informal interview with Mayor Big Bill Thompson I found him an intriguing rascal who was quite frank about his propaganda techniques.'²²¹

Research was also furthered in the much-vaunted field of political psychology. Merriam had been impressed by the developments made by psychologists during the war and as one of his students, Harold Lasswell, recalled, 'As a student and practitioner of party politics, he was aware of the relatively scant though promising 'quantitative' literature on voting; and of the fumbling efforts of the pre-Gallup and pre-Roper era of survey research'²²² Lasswell was one of Merriam's most impressive and distinctive students, not only sharing his teacher's belief that Political Science needed to absorb more from the harder behavioural sciences, but also conducting research which straddled psychology, anthropology and sociology. In particular, Lasswell had been preoccupied with the field of 'psychoanalysis', a research method of psychology that involved interviewing individuals. Lasswell had learnt these techniques when Merriam had arranged for him to spend a year in Europe working with a renowned experimental psychologist, Elton Mayo.

Lasswell's first monograph (discussed further below) was not to be released until the end of the decade, and for most of the 1920s work in psychology and politics was treated as something with 'promise' yet to be revealed. In '1126', the name given to the Chicago Social Science Research Building, Lasswell's office added to the mystique around the field, as all the office doors were of a similar light wood with a window in the middle, but, in testament to Lasswell's methods, his room was guarded by a big windowless oak door that would maintain a level of privacy for his

²¹⁹ Harold F. Gosnell, Autobiography manuscript, 'Chapter 6, University of Chicago, and notes', p.30, Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 3, Folder 10] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² H.D. Lasswell, 'The institutionalization of the profession', *Gabriel Almond Papers* (SC330). [Box 6. Folder 9.] DSCUA, SUL. Calif.

interviewees. It also featured, to the bemusement of some students, a large chaise-long in the middle of the room and various wax cylinders running on shelves high up on the wall.²²³

Author of a number of highly original works on pressure groups, political psychology, leadership and fascism, Harold Dwight Lasswell was one of the forerunners of the Chicago department in the 1920s as it committed to ‘blaze a new trail in the field of the technical study of political relations’.²²⁴ Nevertheless, his approach to scholarship raised a few eyebrows in the 1920s and 30s. One graduate course that he offered in the late 1920s focused on ‘irrational political behaviour’ and promised to educate the student in ‘the study of political obsessions delusions, hallucinations, and other forms of irrational behavior, with especial reference to their physical or psychic origin.’²²⁵ Gently satirizing this approach, in later years Gosnell would draw a cartoon of Lasswell stark naked in front of a blackboard, a glib reference to his unique application of Freudian theory to the study of politics.²²⁶

Above all, Chicago Political Science was distinctive for a belief that interesting and complex new problems could be solved by way of new methods. ‘Beyond voting and opinion studies’ Lasswell later recalled, ‘Merriam had no doubt that - whatever ultimate complexities might emerge – a great deal could be done at once by means of ‘quantitative’ methods’.²²⁷ Merriam and Gosnell’s work on *Non-Voting* would in later years be considered a significant breakthrough in the use of quantitative methods. In a novel move, the pair had begun to use the idea of sampling voters, and gathering this data together by use of a card-sorting machine loaned to the social scientists for a dollar an hour by the Comptroller’s Office of the City of Chicago; as Gosnell recalled, this was unprecedented in the discipline, but the operator ‘agreed to run our cards through on his own time’.²²⁸

One reviewer praised the book for its mastery of new methods. ‘Exacting scientific standards are reflected in the methodology employed. The sampling was particularly scrupulous. Unwarranted inferences are avoided, and the authors avow a hope that many similar studies elsewhere will enlarge

²²³See; Michael A. Baer, Malcolm E. Jewell, Lee Sigelman (eds), *Political Science in America: Oral Histories of a Discipline* (The University Press of Kentucky: 1991).

²²⁴Quote from; ‘Annual report’, (1927), *Political Science Department Papers* [Box 2, Folder 13] SRC, RL. Chicago. On Lasswell see; David Easton, ‘Harold Lasswell; Policy Scientist for a Democratic Society’, *The Journal of Politics* Vol. 12, No. 3 (Aug., 1950), pp.450 – 77; James Farr, Jacob S. Hacker, Nicole Kazee, ‘The Policy Scientist of Democracy: The Discipline of Harold D. Lasswell’, *American Political Science Review*, 100: 4: 579 – 587.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Cartoon, Harold Lasswell, Harold F. Gosnell Papers, [Box 8, Folder 2] Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

²²⁷ H.D. Lasswell, ‘The institutionalization of the profession’, p.4 [undated] Gabriel Almond Papers (SC330). Box 6. Folder 9. Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.

²²⁸ Harold F. Gosnell, ‘*Political Methodology* article’, (1990), *Charles E. Merriam Papers*, [Box 73, Folder 9], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

and correct their own findings.²²⁹ And, no doubt to Merriam's delight, the reviewer also noted that 'Wider significance attaches to this volume because of the evidence that it offers of a reorientation now under way in Political Science. A 'science of politics' is in process of formation, to no small degree as a result of the influence of the distinguished senior author of the present study.'²³⁰ This sort of positive reception was evident not only in reviews but in an attempt to poach Chicago staff. Charles Allin at the University of Minnesota wrote to Merriam seeking to employ 'one of your most promising young men to open up the work in a new field at another institution'. As Allin further noted, 'You certainly ought to be interested in responding to our 'Macedonian Call' for a missionary to preach the new gospel'.²³¹ Although they desired Lasswell, when the young scholar chose to stay at Chicago, Minnesota enthusiastically appointed instead Herman Beyle, another promising young scholar trained in Chicago.

Frustration at Chicago

Even as such scholarship advanced, the Chicago department encountered a number of challenges in bringing this work to bear on problems outside of the university. During the 1920s, the department's connection with the city was primarily orchestrated through the Spellman-funded Local Community Research Committee. Created in 1923 with an expenditure of over \$100,000 a year, the committee joined together the departments of Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Political Economy.²³² It produced the first in the way of major urban study of the city and also offered the expertise of the university's social scientists on any local project for which a Chicago group was willing to contribute half the funds, conducting research for, among many other groups, the Real Estate Board, the meat-packing industry, different social settlement houses, the International Advertising Association, and the League of Women Voters.²³³

With Merriam as chairman and fellow political scientist and public administration expert Leonard D. White as executive secretary, the Political Science department provided some of the leading members of the committee.²³⁴ This venture was at the heart of Merriam's vision for his department and for the discipline at large; in departmental reports he frequently drew attention to the

²²⁹ Stuart Rice 'Review: *Non-Voting Causes and Methods of Control*', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 119 (1925), p.153.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ C.D. Allin to Merriam, Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 25, Folder 1], SCRC, RL, Chicago.

²³² [Anon.] 'Annual reports, 1927 – 1942', *Political Science Department Papers* [Box 2, Folder 13] SCRC, RL, Chicago.

²³³ Mark Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*, p.97.

²³⁴ Annual reports, 1927 – 1942, *Political Science Department Papers* [Box 2, Folder 13] Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

high importance that he placed on the work of the Community Research group, which he considered to offer ‘unusually effective service to numerous civic agencies’.²³⁵ He explained how through this committee, members of the Political Science department undertook joint projects with a wide range of groups including the Committee and The Union League Club, The Regional Planning Association and the Commonwealth Club, Council of Social Agencies; Federation of Settlements.²³⁶

However, Merriam also grew frustrated with what he viewed as the persistently underappreciated nature of this work; ‘In many instances the Department has worked in intimate cooperation with other agencies where it has been necessary to avoid public notice in order to obtain the result desired. In such cases the influence of the Department is powerful but not measurable and perhaps never recognized.’²³⁷ It was a real frustration for Merriam that the local community research project was not able to flourish fully, due to the time commitments that members of the committee faced when stretched too thinly between the dual responsibilities of research and community work. Merriam attempted, unsuccessfully, to raise funds from the LSRMF with which to set up an ‘Institute for Politics’: he proposed that the Institute could support ‘conference and cooperation with responsible governing officials and citizens; professional training; basic research in governmental problems’.²³⁸ Most importantly, the creation of such an institute would help to counter what had become an over-extension of the consultancy work of his department; ‘a staff is needed with a personnel large enough to make possible the detachment of one or more members for practical consultation without interfering with the regular research work of the University or with its teaching functions.’²³⁹

Merriam’s Institute did not succeed in attracting funding from the LSRMF, which had always shied away from sponsoring activities that could be deemed as ‘political’, and for whom the title of the Institute would have set off warning bells. But to make matters worse, few of his colleagues seemed to share his commitment to the role of consulting local officials. Instead, many colleagues in neighbouring disciplines were seeking a more aloof and technocratic approach to policy making. The economist Wesley Mitchell was a prime example of how this disposition emerged among a number of social scientists. At the beginning of the decade Mitchell had been a close associate of Merriam, and a colleague in their shared attempt to create the Social Science Research Council. However, Mitchell was drifting towards a different image of social science than the one that Merriam held. Mitchell had conducted work on Business Cycles in the 1910s and during the 1920s and, as Mark Smith has argued, ‘was a deeply compassionate individual who hated the personal injustices of society and felt it

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Charles E. Merriam, ‘Proposed School of Government’, (October 1929), p.2 Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 122, Folder 3], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

²³⁹ Ibid, p.3.

necessary to work to alleviate them. Yet the method he believed could best accomplish this goal called for dispassionate objectivity and the accumulation of quantitative data without hypothesis.²⁴⁰ By the end of the decade, Mitchell concentrated on ‘writing for and training a technical elite’, and when his university, the New School, failed to attract enough technically minded fact collectors, Mitchell went to Columbia, ‘where he continued to preach the scientific gospel whenever possible’.²⁴¹

Although Merriam encouraged the development of a more technical sort of scientific information about politics, and embraced the use of empirical techniques to get closer to the true facts of how political society operated, he viewed such introverted movements among scholars in neighbouring disciplines with dismay. He did not view ‘Political’ Science as a separate subsection of ‘social science’: rather, it was an aggregating and synthesising science that drew upon all the different sciences (equivalent to Burgess and Munroe Smiths’ early vision of a discipline that aggregated the various strands of the ‘policy sciences’). In this respect, the fact that the work of economists and other disciplines was becoming clothed in more technical and less accessible language was of direct concern to Political Science. As his colleagues sought to dig deeper in their own separate patches of turf, Merriam worried that social science was becoming a neatly boxed-up world whose categories of investigation reflected intellectual divisions of labour, making it harder to bring them together as ‘Political Science’. As Lasswell later recalled of his mentor, ‘he entertained a lively suspicion that conventional departmental lines were becoming barriers to a genuinely integrated, diversified and policy relevant social science.’²⁴²

This tension rose to the surface from the moment that the new Social Science Research Building was unveiled. Merriam had been a central proponent of the building and a key force in raising funds for its construction. However, he was out of the country when his sociologist colleague William Fielding Ogburn proposed that a slab be placed below the central bow window with the inscription; ‘when you cannot measure your knowledge is weak and unsatisfactory’. For Merriam this slab was an eyesore of epic proportions and he railed against its insertion, allegedly mumbling ‘about taking Ogburn for a ride, Chicago style.’²⁴³ Merriam was frustrated and ultimately helpless as he watched his colleagues dance off down a path to ever purer research. It was a path, moreover, that as a founding father of the SSRC he had done so much to create.

²⁴⁰ Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*, p.68.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² H.D. Lasswell, ‘The institutionalization of the profession’, [undated] Gabriel Almond Papers (SC330). [Box 6. Folder 9] DSCUA, SUL. Calif.

²⁴³ Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*, p.29.

The sort of science that Merriam had really wanted to create was vastly advanced at Chicago, but, in truth, was never really borne out. Instead, it can be glimpsed in a sketchy, optimistic and ill-defined way in his variety of writings. One of the most well-known calls for the new science of politics to emerge from Chicago was Merriam's 1925 volume, *New Aspects of Politics*. This was an ambitious, broad ranging call for Political Science to expand freely into the fields of socio-biology, psychology and other social sciences. *New Aspects* is often lauded as symbolic of the high confidence of the decade with social science: it is described by Dorothy Ross as '[t]he high point of utopian scientism for Merriam'.²⁴⁴ However, although the work was indeed a scientific call to arms, historians misdiagnose his animating preoccupations when they read into it a sense of *fait accompli*. In writing of this project to his colleague and fellow social scientific enthusiast Harry Elmer Barnes, Merriam noted, 'This is a rather small and, I fear, a puny child, and I am not at all certain as to what professor Monroe Smith used to call its viability and for all I know it may be my own undoing, for in this case the scriptural phrase may be reversed, and the sins of the children may be visited upon the fathers.'²⁴⁵ This qualification perfectly summarized the sense of uncertainty that was by the middle of the decade beginning to creep in upon Merriam. He desired not a technocratic science of social control, but a progressive, educative science of politics. As he was discovering, the conditions of the 1920s were not conducive to this second variety.

By the end of the decade Merriam could simply watch, or he could do his best to lobby for his colleagues to stay focused on the mission at hand: the creation of a true science of politics. On many occasions he attempted the latter course of action. In addressing a conference of social scientists at the end of the decade, Merriam stated, '[s]ome of our economic friends like to talk of free trade, as if there were no nations; of currency and credit as if government had interfered with them; of 'pure' business as opposed to impure government; of grafting politicians without looking too carefully to see where the graft came from; of popular whims, fancies, ignorance, prejudice, as if these were not a part of the material of which life is made and into which all social arrangements must be fitted.'²⁴⁶ Merriam warned that social scientists must cease treating problems in narrow disciplinary purview, and embrace instead a holistic, interdisciplinary problem-solving perspective. Only in this way would the future of American government really profit from what the social scientist had to offer; '[t]he planning of the future will not be economic planning. The new synthesis will be a combination of governmental, educational,

²⁴⁴ Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, p.455.

²⁴⁵ 'Speech given by Mr Merriam at NY University November 17 1932 "Universities and Governmental Change"', Charles E. Merriam Papers [Box 284, Folder 19] Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

economic, scientific, ability and aptitude. Out of this the new society will emerge.’ Pausing to reflect on the sort of influence needed besides the mere mathematical and scientific he stated, ‘who will supply the great idealisms that sweep men’s souls from time to time and stir their hearts?’²⁴⁷ The implication was that the study of ‘politics’ must have a place in the science of tomorrow.

Section Four: Political Science and the New Politics, 1927 - 1930

A new Political Science textbook that was to run for many decades and numerous editions first appeared in 1922 and bore the statement; ‘The fundamental social science is sociology, which analyses and describes in a systematic way the life of men in groups or aggregates.’²⁴⁸ The statement that ‘sociology’ was the ‘fundamental’ discipline of the social sciences was nothing new – it had been the refrain of the Progressive Era Political Science textbooks that had explained that politics was an adjunct of sociology.²⁴⁹ However, the contention that sociology ‘describes in a systematic way the life of men in groups or aggregates’ reflected a new trend. Although in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century leading social thinkers were men like John Dewey who portrayed society as an educable mass, by the 1920s, sociologists were beginning to argue that what had been thought of as a singular ‘society’ was in fact nothing more than a collection of ‘groups’. The journalist and public intellectual Walter Lippmann presented this argument to a public audience in 1925 with an attack on the idea of society.²⁵⁰ Arguing that democracy is impossible, and that the increasing prominence of specialized knowledge combined with fearsome power of propaganda prohibited such a theory becoming reality, Lippmann’s *Public Opinion* had attracted some rebuttal from leading thinkers of the pre-war period; Dewey himself penned a rebuttal in 1927 that was titled, *The Public and its Problems*. But, Dewey’s argument and the perspective it represented were wearing thin, and the contention that society was formed of groups was gaining strength.

The whole area provided a complicated, underexplored and seemingly vital territory for the study of politics. The idea of a ‘public opinion’ had been a long-held assumption not only by the American populace but by political scientists such as James Bryce. As we have seen in the previous chapter, some scholars led by Albert Lawrence Lowell had sought to test the concept. However, the

²⁴⁷Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Frederic Austin Ogg and P. Orman Ray, *Ogg and Ray’s Essentials of American Government* (1922; New York, Appleton-Centry-Crofts).

²⁴⁹ For progressive era textbooks see Ross; *Origins of American Social Science*, p.294.

²⁵⁰ See; Arthur S. Link, ‘What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920s’, *American Historical Review*, July 1959, pp.833 – 851; Barry Karl, *The Uneasy State*, p.98

new implication by the likes of Lippmann that what been thought of as a singular ‘public’ was in fact nothing more than a morass of ‘groups’ tested the concept further.

This development had resonances further afield. The political scientist Walter Sharp wrote in a 1924 edition of the *American Political Science Review* of similar tendencies which were emerging in France. As Sharp wrote, the experience of war changed much in the French discipline. Whereas, ‘before the war most professional students of public law in France... regarded la politique as something beneath the notice of a social scientist’.²⁵¹ After the war this had changed, ‘systematized study’ of ‘the party system and public opinion has been until quite recently almost unknown in France’, but ‘the war has given a decided impetus to the exploration of these rich and suggestive fields.’²⁵² In the face of ‘women’s suffrage, the obligatory vote, proportional and functional representation, and even the operation of public opinion have become fairly frequent topics for investigation.’²⁵³

In the United States a few key texts began to address the role of groups in American life, one of which was Peter Odegard’s *Pressure Politics*. Published in 1928 this was the result of a PhD project for the University of Columbia and it was also one of the most significant early works that directly attempted to argue that the study of politics should become the study of groups, rather than institutions and laws – a new approach for the discipline. To convince his reader of the importance of groups to American politics, Odegard told the story of the Anti-Saloon League, and demonstrated how the pressure group was able to gain enough momentum to swamp the cause of anti-prohibition. Odegard traced the roots of the organization surrounding the prohibition movement from the early engagement of brewers and malters in pressure politics during the 1880, through the formation of the Anti-Saloon League in 1893 and up to the period immediately preceding prohibition in 1920. The issue had begun in March 1883, when the New York State Brewers and Malters Association ‘declared that it was an anti-prohibition association pure and simple’ and pledged to organise support or opposition to candidates depending on their stance on the liquor issue’.²⁵⁴ By 1891, ‘the liquor vote’ was a powerful issue but the entry of the Anti-Saloon league into politics in 1893 upped the stakes in the organization of politics, ‘while the booming guns of state-wide prohibition parties were disconcerting, they were easily located and soon silenced, so that up to 1895 the field looked promising for the trade’.²⁵⁵ When the local option campaign of the Anti-Saloon League emerged, it ‘was like sniping from behind trees and stone fences, and the liquor people realized it was to be a

²⁵¹ Walter R. Sharp, ‘Political Science in France’, *APSR*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Aug, 1924), pp. 582-92. p.590.

²⁵² *Ibid.* p.591.

²⁵³ *Ibid.* p.590.

²⁵⁴ Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics: the story of the Anti-Saloon League*, (NY: 1966; Originally published 1928), p.246

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

battle to the death'.²⁵⁶ Such a narrative painted a picture of American politics that was at the same time intriguing, recognisable and – insofar as it symbolised the end of traditional democratic beliefs – a radical contrast to a broader context of American political thought.

Pendleton Herring's *Group Representation Before Congress* was published one year after *Pressure Politics* and displayed a similar intention of understanding the role of organization in society. Just as Odegard's work was the first account of an interest group, Herring's was the first comprehensive study of the system of lobbying in Washington. Herring argued that the growing size and scale of American politics had deadened the usefulness of parties, as 'the citizen must look elsewhere.... it is then that he encounters these new agencies for the expression of opinion and for the protection of specific interests'.²⁵⁷ Explaining that there are more than 500 groups based in Washington alone, Herring argued that between 60 and 100 of these are 'consistently effective'.²⁵⁸ These groups were a rather recent phenomenon, the number of trade associations rose from 800 in 1914 to 1,500 in 1923.²⁵⁹ As he observed, 'the germ of organization has found a culture in this country in which to luxuriate'.²⁶⁰

Both books presented a new picture of American politics: one that was undergirded not by the traditional democratic polity, captured in the vision of men like Bryce, but one that was composed, as sociologists were arguing, of a number of different groups and interests. Both texts implied that the challenges and opportunities of democracy were not what they had been heretofore assumed by Americans. Unlike Dewey and the Progressive Era reformers, neither of these political scientists proposed educating the public. Instead, they both supported organisation. As Odegard wrote, 'Democracy without organization is inconceivable, and public opinion that is unorganized is likely to be evanescent and ineffective'.²⁶¹ From this work, a new picture of American democratic politics was emerging, one that seemed at once more 'realistic' and more complicated.

Propaganda and politics

Whilst Herring and Odegard were considering the organisation of American life, other scholars worked on the problem of forming opinions in an era of largescale marketing and propaganda. Propaganda had largely dissipated since the war. War boards had been dismantled, industries were

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Pendleton Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress*, (Brookings Institution, 1929), p.2.

²⁵⁸ Peter Odegard, 'Review: Group Representation Before Congress by E. Pendleton Herring', p.19 & p.245.

²⁵⁹ Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress*, p.95.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, p.240.

²⁶¹ Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, p.ii.

handed back to private corporations and movie screens were returned to Hollywood. However, Washington continued to regulate new technologies such as radio and aviation, and there was a persistent feeling among intellectuals and reformers that the war had had revealed something sinister about national politics; ‘postwar memoirists praised voluntarism, but there was always a gnawing fear that it had not really worked.’²⁶²

Americans were learning from psychologists that what they had thought of as ‘opinions’ were in fact ‘‘habitual attitudes’ developed from contacts with the ‘social environment’.²⁶³ Harold Lasswell explored how this contention related to the ability of the state to manipulate ‘public opinion’, through his work in propaganda. Merriam had been keen to run a study on propaganda as soon as he had returned from war service with the Italian propaganda department, but his plans had been thwarted when at the beginning of the decade he was told by the University of Chicago Press that ‘there would be no audience’ for such a study.²⁶⁴ No doubt partly as a result of sitting on the many panels and seminars on the subject, at the early APSA conferences and elsewhere, Merriam discovered that the requirements of a full treatment of this problem required expertise in psychological methods that he had not mastered. By the middle of the decade he had ceded his ambition for undertaking the study himself and instead hoped to foster a younger generation with the appropriate training.

In 1927 Lasswell produced *Propaganda Techniques*. Lasswell claimed ‘to go no further than to develop a simple classification of the various psychological materials’ collected by travelling to Europe to interview officials in charge of wartime propaganda in various countries.²⁶⁵ In the process, the young scholar found that, ‘Propaganda is a reflex to the immensity, the rationality and wilfulness of the modern world. It is the new dynamic of society, for power is subdivided and diffused, and more can be won by illusion than by coercion.’²⁶⁶ For Lasswell the notion that ‘Democracy (and, indeed, all society) is run by an unseen engineer’ is a fallacy.²⁶⁷ Propaganda is a natural, necessary part of a democratic system. However, as he further argued, propaganda also represented an evolution from the methods of strict coercion as found in earlier, more primitive, societies, and all nations, even democracies, require controlling; ‘If the mass will be free of chains of iron, it must accept its chains of silver. If it will not love, honour and obey, it must not expect to escape seduction’.²⁶⁸ With this, the lesson was laid bare for the reader: even a democratic nation cannot truly protect individual choice.

²⁶² Karl, *The Uneasy State*, p.48.

²⁶³ James Hart, ‘Review The American Public Mind and Psychopathology and Politics’, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (May, 1931), pp 445 – 447.

²⁶⁴ See; Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p.177.

²⁶⁵ Harold Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Trubner & Co: London, 1938; First published 1927)p.18.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.222.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Scholars in the 1920s thus echoed a larger set of concerns with ‘bigness’ that had also undergirded progressivism. Where scholars such as Bryce, Lowell and Wilson, and other founding members of the APSA establishment had long recognised the necessity of organising and training citizens, by the 1920s scholars were beginning to face the prospect that in an era of groups, propaganda and largescale organisation, the traditional ‘citizen’ was disappearing.

Preserving politics

Whilst Odegard, Herring and Lasswell were investigating the rising role of organization and propaganda in American life, most scholars welcomed their investigations. But not all were willing to accept their conclusions and sacrifice the long-held principles by accepting, as Odegard claimed, that within parties ‘wills are hopelessly at variance upon all but a very few questions’. Nor were they willing to accept the more worrying contention that in this environment ‘The individual plain man’ is ‘swallowed up in a sea of highly differentiated human beings’.²⁶⁹

The challenge facing those who believed in a traditional conception of politics as represented in the context of American Political Science by men like Bryce – a belief that individuals have ‘opinions’ not simply ‘attitudes’, and a belief in the formal structure of parties, not just the morass of interest groups – was to remind Americans of the lasting importance of ‘politics’ as an aspect of human behaviour. This came down to the contention that even as they organised, a modern world would never be entirely free from what Merriam would often refer to as ‘prudence’, but which can be understood more generally as a faith in the role of political values and beliefs stemming from the individual and organised by formal structures such as parties. For some members of a new technocratic elite culture that was extending into American life in the 1920s, such a message might have sounded ominous, striking as it did against the promise of the decade to extrapolate away from the messy world of politics. However, by arguing that ‘political behaviour’ entailed a central, ongoing role in the future, a new faction of political scientists were seeking to guard against a future that they perceived as even more threatening; one devoid of individual citizen-involvement in political affairs.

Merriam was a leading voice among that faction which was unwilling to give up on such an idea. Even as he wholeheartedly encouraged the sort of interdisciplinary work that would violate traditional conceptions of ‘democratic’ politics – such as the application of ‘psychology’ to politics – he sought to find a way of using this same science to preserve his conception of ‘citizenship’ in the new era. As mentioned in the previous section, together with his student Harold Gosnell, Merriam

²⁶⁹ Peter Odegard, *Pressure Politics: Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (NY: 1966; Originally published 1928)

conducted a study of the failure to vote in a Chicago mayoralty election of April 3rd, 1923. Non-voting was a particularly interesting subject area for Merriam and Gosnell because it appeared as a problem that had a ‘real life’ dimension (the poll numbers were clearly dropping), and it also seemed to sit at the heart of the disappearing citizenship hinted at in the new sociological and psychological literature.

Others agreed with Merriam and Gosnell that the topic was an important one. In a textbook on American political parties Harold Bruce wrote, ‘The common failure of Americans generally... to recognize the need of enlightened leadership and to appreciate specialized ability is only half the story of the trend of American democratic government. The other half --- or is it more properly two thirds or three fourths? – is the failure of great bodies of American voters to assume their electoral duties and responsibilities.’²⁷⁰ President Coolidge phrased the question more dramatically in 1924, claiming that voter apathy represented ‘one of the greatest menaces to an intelligently governed democracy.’²⁷¹ It was also a problem that was proving particularly difficult to solve. In 1924, a ‘Get-Out-The-Vote Club’ was organised in Washington in an effort to persuade ‘the chronic stay-at-home’ to be ‘a citizen for one day, at least’.²⁷² However, as Bruce reported in his textbook, ‘Public appeals were broadcast by high government officers, party organizations strove for a large vote, and myriad local societies called upon the voters to go to the polls. The results were distinctly disappointing. In the presidential election the increase over 1920 was only one percent of the voting population, and the figures by states in 1926 showed no general improvement.’²⁷³

Published under the title of *Non-Voting: Causes and Methods of Control*, Merriam and Gosnell’s work, much more than Lasswell’s on Propaganda, or either of Odegard’s or Herring’s, was intended to be a solution to the problem it studied. As Merriam and Gosnell noted in the foreword to their work: ‘the large cities of the US furnish ideal material for the study of democratic processes’ because ‘the varied social classes, the heterogeneous population recruited from all parts of the world and the complicated governmental structures put a considerable strain upon the theory of the competency of the citizens to run their own affairs’.²⁷⁴ However, solving the problem of non-voting was to prove difficult. Against their wishes, Merriam and Gosnell’s book did not come to any positive conclusion about how to prevent the occurrence of non-voting. In considering how to improve turnout, the authors accepted that to enforce a measure of compulsory voting would be troublesome. With this opinion, they were agreement with most contemporary commentators that, ‘Compulsory civic pride is a contradiction in terms.’²⁷⁵ Similarly obtuse was the idea that disenfranchisement could

²⁷⁰ Harold R. Bruce. *American Parties and Politics* (London sir Isaac pitman and sons ltd, 1928).

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Anon. *The literary Digest* (Aug 23 1924).

²⁷³ Bruce, *American Parties and Politics*, p.384.

²⁷⁴ Charles Merriam and Harold Foote Gosnell, *Non-Voting Causes and Methods of Control* (University of Chicago Press, 1924), p. vii.

²⁷⁵ Michael E. McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865-1928*, pp. 193-4.

be employed as a punishment for not voting. Instead, in the opinion of the two authors, the only possible solution would be to educate the nation, and to convince Americans to come to the polls.

Gosnell would go on to study the question in more depth. His next book began with the statement, 'Though the nonvoting study gave us much satisfaction, it failed to answer the question of how to spur people to vote. This is one of the key questions I attempted to explore in the next study, whose results were published as *Getting out the Vote*.'²⁷⁶ The second work was methodologically more advanced, as it involved setting up an experiment in a 1924 mayoralty campaign, where Gosnell exposed some sample group of voters to a number of different forms of stimulation, including leaflets, cartoons, posters, informal reminders, while leaving other groups unstimulated. It was a groundbreaking attempt to experiment in a discipline that did not as a matter of course run experiments. And yet, although Gosnell produced some results that might be considered intellectually stimulating, this second work, like Gosnell's first, ultimately failed in the objective of answering that basic question of how to get people to vote. As Stuart Rice noted in a review for the *Annals*; 'Not a great deal of light is thrown upon the problem of what type of appeal is most effective. One conclusion was that the women citizens were stimulated better by cartoons, while informational reminders were more effective upon the men. Notices in the foreign sections were most effective when printed in the native languages.'²⁷⁷ To add further insult to injury, the reviewer noted, 'The technique evolved is suggestive, but undoubtedly too elaborate to be put into practical use by civic organizations.'²⁷⁸

Whilst Gosnell undertook *Getting out the Vote*, Merriam undertook a different project with a similar hope to better understand what stimulates civic behaviour. Titled, *Studies in the Making of Citizens*, this was a characteristically ambitious project in terms of both intellectual scope and organisation. Assembling contributions from around the world, Merriam hoped that this collection would detail examples of how different nations had produced a sense of patriotism and belonging with the intention of discovering how to indoctrinate a love of state. The study of 'citizenship' in an era where the prominence of groups could not be denied was difficult. A letter written to Merriam in relation to this project by the psychologist Norman Angell captures quite poignantly the tension involved in the project; 'Your letter reminds me that I once tackled the problem of training for citizenship myself. I had a little book intended for popular and school consumption... in the hands of the publisher when the war broke out. The war hung it up; after the war it struck me as inadequate, and I withdrew it. To render modern masses capable of managing their society, of good social judgement and sound collective decisions, seemed to demand mainly things which would be deemed

²⁷⁶ 'Political Methodology', article by Gosnell written in 1990; Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 73, Folder 9], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

²⁷⁷ Stuart A. Rice, 'Review: *Non-Voting*', *AAPSS*, Vol.119, (1925), p.153.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

remote from 'civics' and even more from the cultivation of patriotic feeling.'²⁷⁹ In this friendly note, Angell noted the essential difficulty of Merriam's position as he sought to combine traditional notions of citizenship with new revelations about the depleting stock of civic commitment within American society.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, given the breadth of the subject matter at hand, *Studies in the Making of Citizens* failed to really come to a conclusion on its ambitious question on the sources of 'citizenship'. The contribution which detailed the Italian experience proved one of the most interesting for sheer dramatic content. The author, Herbert W. Schneider, described how, 'There is a considerable and undeniable element of religious conviction and devotion in most Fascists which transcends the limits of political strife and party tactics.'²⁸⁰ The Italian experience of *Making Fascists*, (to quote the title of the volume), had succeeded in overcoming the more worrisome trends of division and self-interest that were so visible in modern America. Merriam praised the study as 'ground-breaking' and declared the case of Italy, 'the world's most interesting for civic processes.'²⁸¹ However, what the psychological dimension had to offer to American politics was less than clear. Merriam saw a difference between Italian and American versions of patriotism, and viewed only the latter as healthy or desirable.²⁸² The reviewers of the volume also viewed it as a fundamentally foreign experience. One described the volume as a study of a 'strange and arresting phenomena', whilst another mentioned that the subject matter was interesting because, 'who can deny that [fascists] are made not born'.²⁸³ Whilst the studies were provocative and interesting, they fell far short of Merriam's quest to shed light on the foundation of democratic society.

The decade of the 1920s presented a number of complicated questions to political scientists interested in the 'big picture' of American government and politics. During the 1920s psychologists and sociologists were constructing new understandings of social behaviour which challenged traditional theories concerning the individual citizen's ability to run their own affairs. In the wake of such discoveries, questions were being raised by a number of political scientists concerning what exactly the science of 'politics' studied, and what it could offer to a new world in an era whose democratic

²⁷⁹ From Norman Angell to Charles Merriam, (Undated, but probably 1927), *Charles E. Merriam Papers*, [Box 25, Folder, 10] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

²⁸⁰ Ido Oren, *Our Enemies and US: America's Rivalries and the Making of Political Science* (Cornell University Press: 2002), p.61.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Karl, *Charles Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p.171.

²⁸³ W.Y. Elliot, 'Review: *Studies in the making of citizens*', *APSR*, (May 1929), p.480.

politics were increasingly defined by largescale organisation, marketing and propaganda. Herring and Odegard had completed impressive works, but the discipline was not yet ready to accept 'groups' as the fundamental premise of political behaviour. Gosnell's work on non-voting in many ways symbolised the tension that had developed: he conducted an investigation into the role of groups and factions in American politics, but he fought against the implication that 'groups' were indeed the fundamental premise of politics and continued, as did Merriam, to search for a way to preserve a conception of citizenship familiar to an earlier period in American life. In this way, the discipline was left teetering at the end of the 1920s, unable to provide a new paradigm of political life but at the same time unable to accept so easily the presumptions about the nature and workability of democracy that defined the discipline in an earlier period.

Conclusion

If most chapters in this thesis explain the growth and ambition of the discipline in relation to the rising importance and striking presence of various challenges facing the American polity, the 1920s are in many ways the exception that proves the rule. On an individual and disciplinary level, these political scientists – who came of intellectual age in the Progressive Era and absorbed a faith in the capacity of government to assist social problems – continued to be animated by the study of the state and they continued to see the importance of 'politics'. But in doing so they experienced intense frustrations, firstly in the immediate work of conducting this research in a more complicated system, and secondly in having their research taken seriously by a wider world.

The combination of the legacy of war – which pushed Political Science into closer cooperation with neighbouring disciplines – and the new social and political climate of the 1920s, which negated the validity of a sociological science of politics and rendered the years between the Great War and the Great Depression complicated ones for the profession. Despite some considerable intellectual advances, emanating from scholars like Herring, Odegard, Gosnell and Lasswell, as well as the emergence of the frontier-pushing department at Chicago, there were nevertheless serious intellectual and professional questions confronting the discipline by the end of the decade. Popular disregard for the discipline in the previous decade, (as discovered by political scientists via the Haines report), could be seen as a curious offshoot of a still-developing society, but the ignorant reaction to the seriousness of the study of politics by the 1920s seemed to signal something more sinister: the disappearance of politics as a powerful source of action in American life.

At the end of this heady decade the United States would be plunged into a devastating economic depression. The period that would ensue would devastate the American economy and bring

untold suffering and deprivation and cripple the livelihoods of many Americans. But this period would also be regenerative to the discipline. Having struggled in the 1920s to distinguish its place and purpose in the nation, the 1930s would bring to crisp focus the relevance and magnitude of political organisation in national life.

CHAPTER III

American Political Science meets the Activist State 1930 - 1939

Introduction

As chancellor of the University of Chicago during the 1930s, Robert Maynard Hutchins famously quipped that American universities had evolved into a sprawl of departments and schools brought together by a shared central heating system. Had he revisited his proposition in the midst of one of Chicago's balmy summers, Hutchins may well have been interested to note a new development. In 1938, at a time when all other sites on campus were equipped with electric fans, a new building was completed at 1313 East Street 58th Street which boasted air conditioning. The total price-tag for construction was a hefty \$1,600,000. The price, however, had seemed justified to those who had backed the venture, for this building was its own intellectual microclimate too – it had its own purpose, outlook and relationship to the world. Fronted by an imposing semi-gothic façade, '1313', as it became known to its occupants, had been designed to house the new University of Chicago Centre for Public Administration. Here the bright minds of Chicago social science would work alongside practitioners in the field of administration to achieve, 'the improvement of the organization, administrative techniques, and methods of government – municipal, county, state, and federal – in the United States.'²⁸⁴

With the prestige which they attached to the problems of 'public administration' and their commitment to bridge the academy and public service, the new occupants of 1313 symbolised one of the most prominent directions in which American social science had developed during the 1930s. When the social sciences had become institutionalised in the American academy in the late nineteenth century they were joined together within a broad coalition of scholars of 'society'. However, in the 1930s an alliance of sociologists, social psychologists and anthropologists concerned with a problem

²⁸⁴The quote is from a pamphlet authored by Charles Merriam and Louis Brownlow in 1963, quoted in Bruce Thomas, "1313's Hidden History", *Hyde Park Herald* (May 23, 2004) p. 1. [<http://www.hydeparkhistory.org/herald/1313HiddenHistory.pdf>.]

of ‘society’ drew apart, in a number of ways, from an alliance of economists, political scientists and lawyers concerned primarily with the problems of political economy and the state. Members of this second alliance, braced by the urgency of the problems at hand, would not only loosen ties to their neighbours concerned with the problems of ‘society’, they would also assume an increasingly important role in American life that extended far beyond the employment of social scientists in federal bureaus and organisations.

As this chapter will explain, American Political Science profited significantly from the events of the New Deal and the Great Depression. Faith in ‘politics’ as an aspect of human behaviour and faith in government as a force for social betterment had coursed through the discipline since its earliest days. Nevertheless, political scientists had often struggled to popularise this perspective, particularly in the 1920s against the backdrop of mass affluence, political apathy and a distinct business climate that seemed to diminish the role of ‘politics’ in American life. However, the decade that contained the Great Depression and the New Deal prompted a decisive shift. The dramatic, unprecedented, and – for political scientists – long-awaited, expansion and professionalization of American government bolstered the understanding that political action and political institutions were of central importance to American life. The originating ambition of the discipline in broad-gauge study of political problems through detailed and empirical research blossomed in this period.

In the standard telling of the development of American social science during the New Deal, the discipline which frequently seems most energized during this decade is Economics which all the historiography has noted led the stakes in federal employment.²⁸⁵ It is of little surprise that historians have focused the most on economists who busily staffed federal bureaus in this period. However, if we change perspective, as this chapter does, and focus primarily on the animating preoccupations, intellectual concerns and disciplinary self-identity, rather than federal employment figures, then the narrative begins to change. In this new telling it is not economists who profit the most from the decade, it is political scientists. Although economists get the most federal jobs, it is political scientists who find that their ideas and preoccupations synchronise most closely with the concerns of the American public at large, while economists become frustrated by their persistent inability to have their new macroeconomic doctrines incorporated in public policy in any systematic way.

To make this argument, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first shows how political scientists reacted to the initial shock of the Great Depression and to the worsening condition

²⁸⁵ See; William J. Barber, *Designs within disorder: Franklin D. Roosevelt, the economists, and the shaping of American economic policy, 1933 – 45* (Cambridge: New York, Cambridge University Press, 1996); Roger Geiger, *To advance knowledge: the growth of American research universities 1900 – 1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877 – 1920* (Cambridge University Press; 1982); Alan Brinkley, ‘The New Deal and the Idea of the State’, in Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, (eds), *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930 – 1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

of democracy worldwide; it considers how political scientists became more directed, vocal and engaged in the nation's affairs. The second section traces how this quest extended during the New Deal, as the subject matter of the discipline became increasingly important whilst the nation debated with increased rigour the political problems of the day. The final section considers just how much had changed by the 1940s, as political scientists took stock of the impact and collective knowledge of their profession, and began to speculate upon the influence and impact it might have in future years.

Section One

Political Science and the Great Depression

Social science and the Great Depression, 1929 - 1933

The most profound and far reaching global economic crisis in the twentieth century began in London on 20th September 1929, with the arrest of the prominent British investor Clarence Hatry and his associates on charges of fraud. The scandal that surrounded these arrests caused the London Stock Exchange to crash. For reasons hotly contested at the time, and by economic historians ever since, the world economy soon slid into a devastating economic depression.²⁸⁶

Over the course of three years from 1930 to 1933 the American economy disintegrated. For three weeks following Hatry's arrest the United States stock exchange demonstrated extreme volatility, with the market stuttering between periods of recovery and collapse. By 13th November shares had lost \$30 billion in market value and the nation began to follow European economies by sliding into economic depression. Industrial production and housing construction contracted, banks closed, and by 1930 25,000 businesses had failed. The nation's farms, already suffering in the 1920s, were by 1932 in throes of the worst crisis in the industry's history. By late 1931 the unemployment rate had reached 20 percent, then 25 percent by 1932, affecting 13 million workers. Not only did the Depression portend economic collapse: it portended political collapse as well, as Hoover struggled to apply his New Era associative state doctrines in a way

²⁸⁶ For 1930s's sources see; Irving Fisher, *Booms and Depressions: Some First Principles* (New York: Adelphi, 1932); Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Business Cycles: A Theoretical, Historical, and Statistical Analysis of the Capitalist Process* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939). For later histories see; Robert S. McElvaine, *Encyclopaedia of the Great Depression, 2 Vols* (New York: MacMillan, 2004), Michael A. Bernstein, *The Great Depression: Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America, 1929 – 1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Great Crash, 1929*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin), Nicholas Spulber, *Managing The American Economy from Roosevelt to Reagan* (Indiana University Press: 1989). For a historiographical survey see; Daniel A. Schiffman, 'The Economic Historiography of the Great Depression (1929 – 1933)', in Katherine A.S. Sibley (ed) *A Companion to Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover*, (John Wiley & Sons, 2014).

that meaningfully addressed the economic crisis. In April 1929 Hoover reacted to the crisis with a plan for an Agricultural Marketing Act, the first major government program to help farmers maintain prices. A year later he proposed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff to increase protection on seventy-five farm products. But neither innovation provided significant relief to the nation's struggling agricultural sector.

For most economists and sociologists, as for many other ordinary Americans, the Great Depression arrived in American life as a shocking and unexpected rupture to good times. They had grown accustomed to prosperity and 'normalcy' during a decade dominated by one-party politics and a tightening relationship between government and business. Rising incidents of ethno-cultural tensions, radicalism and the plight of thousands immigrants had blighted the decade, but sociologists were among those involved in eradicating 'social' problems, and such ventures as Hoover's *Recent Social Trends* seemed poised to beckon a new and more peaceful era. When in 1928 the President had waged a re-election campaign beneath the slogan, 'Party of Prosperity' there was no indication of significant scepticism on the part of social scientists.

So it was that when the Depression occurred, it was unexpected and, at least initially, inexplicable to many experts. Writing in 1935 Charles Beard was to reflect on this period,

Then again, as often in history, something unexpected by 'gentlemen of position and influence' happened, with the suddenness of a rifle's crack. Adam and Eve were driven out of their paradise, just as they were eating their golden apple. The routine of acquisition and enjoyment were violently disturbed as is if by an earthquake, aches and pains were felt in places hitherto calm and placid, and so thought began again. How did we get here, and how can we get out? ²⁸⁷

Beard's question hung in the air. In the immediate aftermath of the first wave of depression all that could be said for certain was that the calm and optimism of a decade was shattered.

Economists had few answers. The prevailing attitude among most American businessmen and politicians held that the crisis was 'inherent to the system' and would eventually work itself out.²⁸⁸ 'Orthodox' economists agreed with this position, and advocated that the economy be allowed to continue its natural course. However, this opinion was far from unanimous, and a number of voices were raised against those whom the University of Chicago economist Jacob Viner described as 'apostles of inertia and painful waiting'.²⁸⁹ Opponents to economic orthodoxy formed a large, but

²⁸⁷ Charles Beard, 'The Historical Approach to the New Deal', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Feb., 1934), pp. 11 – 15, p. 14.

²⁸⁸Nicholas Spulber, *Managing the American economy from Roosevelt to Reagan* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 4.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 6.

inwardly-divided chorus, and agreement could not even be met on what sort of a phenomenon it was that needed solving: some held that it was a problem suited to monetary solutions, including government bonds and actions by the Federal Reserve to stabilize the changing value of the dollar, whilst others argued that it was a problem of ‘demand deficiencies’, located in the relation between prices and costs and therefore curable with attention to tax rates. To add to the list, there were also those economists such as Thorstein Veblen who saw the problem on the ‘supply side’. Veblen stated that the economy had been so efficient that it resulted in overproduction. Within these general divisions of intellectual opinion, there were many more fractures still.²⁹⁰

Nevertheless, between the crash of 1929 and Roosevelt’s inauguration in 1933, professional economists made a concerted attempt to influence public debate and national policy: demonstrating a continuation of the urge to influence and guide society that had emerged in the Gilded Age. When in 1931 the New National Advisory Council on Radio took a programme of ‘public concern’, it was to the economists that they turned. Twenty-nine of the thirty addresses were by economists, with the thirtieth being given by Jane Addams on ‘the social consequences of business depressions.’²⁹¹ Monographs were rapidly assembled, and economists published more than thirty books during 1930 and 1931 on the subject of the Depression.²⁹² Members of the profession also sought to use their influence to intervene in public policy, over one thousand economists signing a petition against the tariffs included in the Smoot-Hawley bill.

However, despite the rush to exert influence over the course of events, the impact of professional economists on national policy was very limited. The petition against the Smoot-Hawley bill failed, pre-empting a new sense of limitation on the part of the nation’s economists. As Michael Bernstein has argued regarding the years leading up to 1930, for ‘close to a half century, American economists had struggled both to establish the rigor of the processes by which individuals were admitted to their ranks and to demonstrate the usefulness of the skills of which their credentials and institutional affiliations bespoke’. But the failure of economists to exert influence in the early 1930s exhibited ‘how meagre were the returns of their earlier investments’.²⁹³ This problem would grow greater during the years that followed. In the early 1930s professional economists increasingly called for substantial expenditures on public works, as a means of restoring purchasing power, a strategy that offered ‘the hope of economic engineering in the service of peace and prosperity’.²⁹⁴ But this was a call that fell on deaf ears as

²⁹⁰ See works cited in footnote 3.

²⁹¹ Charles Camic, ‘Sociology during the Great Depression and the New Deal’, in Craig Calhoun (ed) *Sociology in America*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007) p. 247.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Michael A. Bernstein, *A Perilous Progress: Economists and Public Purpose in Twentieth Century America* (Princeton University Press; 2014) pg.2.

²⁹⁴ Richard P. Adelstein, ‘The Nation as an Economic Unit: Keynes, Roosevelt and the Managerial Ideal’, *Journal of American History* Vol. 78, No1 (June 1991), p. 176.

President Roosevelt continued Hoover's associative era policies with the National Industrial Recovery Act. In opposition to the prescriptions of economists the NIRA sought to create artificial scarcity in the midst of overcapacity.²⁹⁵

The frustration of economists in the wake of the Great Depression is best demonstrated by the experience of John Maynard Keynes. For many years considered the intellectual designer of the New Deal programmes, by the end of the twentieth century historians including Richard Adelstein and Alan Brinkley had come to consider the frustrations he faced in having his new macroeconomic doctrines accepted by Roosevelt. In 1933 Keynes published an open letter in the *New York Times* in which he expressed his serious concerns with the NIRA, and the doctrine of artificial scarcity which undergirded it; 'I lay overwhelming emphasis', he added, 'on the increase of national purchasing power resulting from governmental expenditure which is financed by Loans and not by taxing present incomes. Nothing else counts in comparison with this.'²⁹⁶ After an initially warm reaction to the letter, Keynes was invited to the White House. But here the advances stalled. The economist found Roosevelt to be perplexed and impassive at his ideas. Roosevelt wrote to his advisor Felix Frankfurter afterwards with the note, 'I saw your friend Keynes. He left a whole rigmarole of figures. He must be a mathematician rather than a political economist.'²⁹⁷

American sociologists, meanwhile, found little to say in the aftermath of the Great Depression. Where the Great Depression splintered and frustrated economists, the framing of the Depression as an 'economic' problem in national debate led sociologists to view it as far outside of the discipline's purview. In 1930 the president of the American Sociology Association, Howard Odum, delivered an address to his society which 'gave no inkling that the country was then in the grips of a deepening depression'²⁹⁸ This was the case for the following three years. In December 1933, 'the darkest hour of the Great Depression' the ASA program 'featured Ellsworth Faris speaking on 'Culture and Personality among the Forest Bantu''.²⁹⁹ Exceptions existed in subsections including rural sociology and social work. But these were few and far between, and, as Charles Camic has argued, an ongoing association of social work as being low-paid and female dominated seems to have prevented greater interest in developing this professional branch even in time of severe social crisis.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ On the NIRA see, Richard P. Adelstein, 'The Nation as an Economic Unit: Keynes, Roosevelt and the Managerial Ideal', *Journal of American History* Vol. 78, No1 (June 1991), pp. 176 – 7; and, Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, pp. 232-5.

²⁹⁶ Adelstein, 'The Nation as an Economic Unit', p. 177.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Camic, 'Sociology during the Great Depression and the New Deal', p. 259.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

Political scientists respond to the Depression

In contrast to the nation's sociologists and economists, American political scientists had never quite accustomed themselves to the peace and prosperity of the 1920s. For over a decade many political scientists had worried about the global state of democracy.³⁰¹ They had watched events in Europe and they had worried about the health of democratic techniques to survive amidst modern industrial capitalism. At home they had witnessed the rise of mass-marketing, the extension of propaganda techniques forged in war, and the gradual disappearance of the ordinary 'voter' in a sea of interest groups and apathy. Nevertheless, the idea that this was a *crisis* was new. The fact that America was now in the worst financial depression in recent history, and that politicians had so few tools to draw on in meeting it, demonstrated to American political scientists the deepening severity of the challenges facing democratic institutions. When the first glimmerings of economic collapse emerged, John Farlie began his 1930 APSA presidential address by describing the current state of democracy with the following words:

It may be said that the top-heavy stage coach of dynastic rule has about disappeared, and that the new political vehicles have a more extended basis of popular support, greater power of action, and more concentrated control at the steering wheel. Traffic signals, and a traffic court, have been provided. But the roadway, tires, and shock absorbers do not seem adequate to furnish complete smoothness of motion; and some vehicles show signs of serious internal difficulties.³⁰²

This speech focused on the problem of political centralization in the context of technological change. He noted that, 'An important field of work for the members of this Association is the investigation of such tendencies and problems. This calls for intensive inquiry into the facts of the situation, with the impartial attitude of the physical scientist.'³⁰³

A reformist zeal – a progressive impulse to improve the conditions of American life through careful adaptation of the political system – had been present in the discipline since the founders of the American Political Science Association. It had been evident in the foundation of the APSA, and in the attempts to found a new science of politics in the 1920s. As we have seen in the previous chapter, this

³⁰¹ See; Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*; Henry Jones Ford, 'Present Tendencies in American Politics', *APSR*, Vol. XIV, No. 1 (February, 1920), pp. 1-13; E.A. Ross and Selig Perlman, 'Soviet Government in Russia', *APSR*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (May, 1920), pp. 317-323; APSA Committee on Instruction in Political Science, *APSR*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (February, 1922), pp. 116 – 124.

³⁰² John Farlie, 'Political Developments and Tendencies', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Feb, 1930), pp. 1 – 15, p. 7.

³⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 15.

zeal had been challenged during the 1920s, but facing the spectre of devastating national crisis, between 1930 and 1933 a number of familiar aims resurfaced. In the first place, political scientists pushed to further the discipline's original goal of 'civic education'. In 1931 the American Political Science Association worked with the National Broadcasting Company to put on a series of half-hour weekly evening radio shows. These broadcasts were scheduled for a peak-time Tuesday evening slot with an expected audience of several million listeners. The APSA Committee in charge of negotiations adopted a tentative budget totalling \$125,000 a year for four years, and the value of the time slots donated by the Radio Council was valued at 'more than a million and a half dollars'.³⁰⁴ In pursuit of 'good educational results' steps were taken to advertise the programme well in advance, and 'to supply syllabi, reading lists, and printed copies of the address after its delivery'.³⁰⁵ As a report of the APSA Committee on Policy declared, the 'project which this committee has before it affords the greatest single opportunity directly to affect citizenship in the United States that has ever been offered. The Political Science Association cannot afford to neglect it.'³⁰⁶

As we saw in the first chapter, the place of Political Science in schools had been an early concern of the founding members of the APSA. But in the context of the new political and economic crisis, political scientists furthered their original interest in bringing the insights of Political Science to American schools. In 1932 the APSA set up a subcommittee to 'advance the place occupied by government among the social studies now taught in secondary and elementary schools'.³⁰⁷ As one report noted, 'It has sought contacts with teachers' colleges and normal schools, in which the bulk of our teachers are trained, and has established cooperative relations with important education groups interested in the social sciences.'³⁰⁸ In a letter to a friend Charles Merriam described the opportunities of an increased presence in schools, junior colleges and teachers colleges as one 'of the largest untilled fields'. As he further noted, 'I think the time is rapidly approaching when thousands of teachers of social science will find it necessary to do a more preliminary work in Government and when a considerable percentage of them will find it desirable to have a complete training in Government.'³⁰⁹

Not all new ventures begun in this period were successful. The Depression period gave rise to a new attempt to bring the discipline into a closer relationship with the 'public at large' sponsored by the Carnegie fund, at the cost of £67,500 for five years.³¹⁰ Central to this was an attempt to bring the *American Political Science Review* to a wider public audience. Results did

³⁰⁴ Thomas reed, 1932 'Report of the general Chairman of the Committee on Policy for the Year 1931.' *APSR* (26: 136 – 49), p. 145.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ 'Letter to William Anderson' (1931) *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 25, Folder 7] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³¹⁰ See Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behaviouralism*, pp. 99 – 100.

not follow the investment, and one expensive experiment to expand the membership of APSA with mail flyers held in Pittsburgh resulted in only 12 new members, whilst another recruitment attempt aimed at civics instructors and high school teachers also failed.³¹¹ Nevertheless, in these ventures the discipline demonstrated a new energy and a new sense of urgency. The last time that political scientists had sought to improve the role of the discipline in schools in any comparable way had been in the mid-1910s with the Haines Commission (as mentioned in the first chapter). The fact that the quest was reopened now symbolised that a new vein of confidence was pulsing through the profession. It is with such feeling that Thomas Reed could report with satisfaction that the discipline was advancing on a rapid course of progress: ‘It is hoped that some genuine progress can be made toward effective citizenship training in which the study of government will have its rightful place.’³¹²

An important motivating factor behind these efforts was a real sense that the laws and principles of the American political system might be imperilled, and that political scientists might have something to say. As we have seen in the previous chapter, during the 1920s American Political Science had become increasingly sensitive to the idea of ‘irrationality’ in politics. The presidential addresses presented to the APSA in the mid-1930s made references to the state of democratic principles among the general public. By far the starkest account emerged in 1934, when Walter Sheperd – echoing a strong Progressive Era theme – argued that ‘the dogma of universal suffrage must give way to a system of educational and other tests which will exclude the ignorant, the uninformed and the anti-social elements which hitherto have so frequently informed elections.’³¹³ Whilst other addresses did not go as far as Sheperd’s in arguing for the narrowing of suffrage, there was a prominent sense that the level of knowledge in government among Americans was not compatible with the needs of the nation’s democratic system. As Isidor Loeb had stated a year before, ‘in political relations, devotion and adherence to principles and institutions that were formulated during by-gone centuries are factors that exercise a profound influence.’³¹⁴ This he contrasted with the spread of knowledge from natural science disciplines, ‘there is widespread popular acceptance of the application of the principles established by scientific research in dealing with matters of our physical environment. No one today seriously contends that physical problems affecting health and safety, transportation and communication,

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Thomas H. Reed, ‘Progress Report of the Committee on Policy’, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Nov., 1931), p. 1063.

³¹³ Walter J. Shepard, ‘Popular Government: A Re-examination of its philosophy and practical orientation’, *APSR* Vol. XXIX (Feb, 1935) p. 19.

³¹⁴ Isidor Loeb, ‘Fact and Fiction in Government’, *APSR*, Vol. XXVIII, (Feb, 1934), p. 2.

industry and agriculture, should be solved in accordance with the knowledge of natural phenomena that prevailed in the mediaeval world.³¹⁵

Other political scientists accomplished a similar feat in a 1933 special edition of the *Annals*, dedicated to the ‘CRISIS of Democracy’. The editors had envisioned the edition in the following way,

In these days of social and economic stress the problems of government have become matters of vital concern to everyone. It is evident that people are becoming increasingly interested in public affairs and that there is a growing desire to promote the effectiveness of governmental agencies in dealing with current difficulties. There appears to be a widespread disposition to subject the various branches of government to searching analysis and in some quarters the fundamental bases of our institutions are being seriously questioned.³¹⁶

In this edition William B. Munroe of the California Institute of Technology considered the role of ‘political bosses’ within American democracy, and came to what would have been a striking conclusion for many Americans used to the progressive rhetoric of ‘good government’ - that political bosses were a good thing for democracy, and ‘Reformers should stop harassing the boss. They ought to tame him and make him draw their chariot.’³¹⁷ Similar conclusions were drawn by Harold Gosnell in an article on political machines, arguing ‘What is needed is a resurrection of civic morale in the great urban communities of this country’.³¹⁸ Peter Odegard also grappled with the concern that minority views were distorting the basic principle of ‘majority rule’, writing; ‘if modern legislatures seem helpless in the face of organized minority pressures, it is not because democracy has failed, but because we have not yet had the courage to overhaul an eighteenth-century political structure to meet the needs of the present hour.’³¹⁹

This *Annals* edition represented a significant accomplishment in broadcasting the research of political scientists. The journal had a wide public readership – one prominent newspaper had described it as ‘the granddaddy of the forums’.³²⁰ Moreover, the readership was broader than many social science journals, ‘between those who are ready to seize eagerly and thoughtlessly on any and every new idea and those who resist them all, there is a vast body of

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ ‘Invitation to contribute to special edition of *The Annals*’, (1932). *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 25, folder 10] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³¹⁷ William B. Munroe, ‘The Boss in Politics – Asset or Liability?’ *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 169, The Crisis of Democracy (Sep., 1933), p. 20.

³¹⁸ Harold F. Gosnell, ‘The Political Party versus the Political Machine’, *AAAPSS*, Vol. 169, The Crisis of Democracy (Sep., 1933), pp. 21 – 28, p. 28.

³¹⁹ Peter H. Odegard, ‘Majorities, Minorities and Legislation’, *AAAPSS*, Vol. 169, The Crisis of Democracy (Sep., 1933), p. 46.

³²⁰ Ernest Minor Patterson, ‘Foreword: The Constitution in the 20th Century’, *AAAPSS*, Vol. 185, (May, 1936), pp. xvii.

thoughtful people anxious for a better world but conscious that not all change is good.... It is this intermediate group of thoughtful business and professional people that the American Academy seeks to serve.³²¹ Often the journal was populated by economists and law experts, but in this edition, published in 1933, four out of the five leading articles written by social scientists were written by political scientists, the fifth by a legal scholar, and the other five leading articles written by public administrators and journalists. For all these reasons, the edition symbolised important progress by the discipline in taking control of matters of public concern, and in encouraging Americans to rethink their assumptions about democracies and democratic theory.

Finally, political scientists also attempted to bring their studies to contribute more directly to problems that had emerged in the Depression. In October 1931 the Minnesota political science professor William Anderson wrote to Merriam suggesting that Political Science find some role among the service intellectuals at land grant colleges. Anderson's suggestion had arisen from the precedent set by the institutionalization of rural sociology and agricultural economics in farm bureaus during the 1920s, as the government had intervened to help solve rural problems during the 1920s when American agriculture had 'faced not only problems of suitable production techniques, but now also questions of economic and efficient production, marketing and competition in world markets.'³²²

In Anderson's letter he stated the figure of \$60,000 that was being received by land grant institutions. 'It is a very interesting fact,' he added, 'that the land grant colleges and the experiment stations which are spending this money have recently turned much of their attention to the problem of rural local government, a problem which has become very serious, due to the collapse of farm prices and farmer's incomes, and the difficulty of bringing down the tax-rates in rural communities proportionately.' Yet,

the research upon this problem has been turned over in almost every state to men who are not trained in the study of government, but whose training is rather in economics and sociology. To this I believe there are very few exceptions. It occurred to me some time ago that there ought to be some way in which we could get the land grant colleges to consider men trained in political science for some parts of this research work.³²³

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² William Anderson to Charles Merriam, October 1931. Charles Merriam Papers, [Box 25, Folder 7]. On the Purnell Act see, Joel P. Kunze, 'The Purnell Act and Agricultural Economics', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 62, No. 2. Publicly Sponsored Agricultural Research in the United States: Past, Present, and Future (Spring, 1988), pp. 131 – 149. Also see; Richard S. Kirkendall *Social scientists and farm politics in the age of Roosevelt* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press; 1966); Harry C. McDean, "Professionalism in the Rural Social Sciences, 1896-1919," *Agricultural History* 58 (July 1984):373-92; Harry C. McDean, "Professionalism, Policy, and Farm Economists in the Early Bureau of Agricultural Economics," *Agricultural History* 57 (January 1983):64-82.

³²³ Ibid.

There were also moves to implement a new series of conferences which would ‘promote better understanding between political scientists, politicians and public officials’.³²⁴ Conferences were held at the University of Wisconsin on the subject of rural local government; in Dallas, Texas, on the subject of state finance; at the University of Missouri on the theme of county government; and at Princeton, New Jersey, on the reports of a New Jersey Tax Survey commission dealing with local government reorganization and finance.³²⁵ The American Political Science Association also recommended a project prepared in detail by Dr Luther Gulick for a ‘comprehensive survey of training for the public service’. As Reed reported, ‘No more timely and significant subject of research could be suggested to the Association. The future of our profession, and of our country itself, depends on the development of an intelligent corps of public servants trained not only in the specific tasks committed to them but in the general field of politics and administration.’³²⁶ This venture also commanded a significant budget, with the committee authorised to raise \$169,000 for a period of three years.³²⁷

In these ways political scientists rekindled the reformist zeal of an earlier period. They were speaking to broad audiences and educating them in the structure and the promise of democracy, and they were attempting to bring technical advice to current problems. Beyond these activities, political scientists reflected in a positive way on the prospects of the discipline. In 1933, Isidor Loeb had reflected that, ‘Governmental affairs have felt the influence of the work of this Association during the past thirty years, but the effect has not corresponded with the great progress and accomplishments of this organization and its members. Of more significance is the fact that even less influence in general has been exercised upon the electorate or its leaders.’ But his address went on to state that the discipline could accomplish significant goals. Referring to attempts to improve teaching in Political Science, he noted ‘Schools and colleges may be made effective agencies for promoting realistic tendencies in political affairs.’ And he praised the APSA radio programmes stating that, ‘There is ample evidence of the educational value of these programmes. Every effort should be made to provide the facilities necessary to secure the continued gratuitous allotment of valuable time on radio broadcasts for this purpose.’³²⁸

³²⁴ Thomas H. Reed, ‘Report of the General Chairman of the Committee on Policy for the Year 1931’, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Feb., 1932), pp. 136 – 149. pp. 141-2.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid. p. 139.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Loeb, ‘Fact and Fiction in Government’, p.8.

Interregnum

The months that separated Franklin Roosevelt's election in November and his inauguration as president in March were the most difficult of the entire Depression decade. The days sloped by in an excruciating sequence of global and domestic emergencies. As one city administrator recalled, 'nineteen hundred and thirty-three came in the midst of gloom. During January municipalities were defaulting on their interest obligations. Cities were retrenching and dismissing employees, thus adding to the lengthening lists of unemployed and the mounting demands for relief.'³²⁹ The misery of this period was deepened by the political stasis which hovered over American government, as Hoover unsuccessfully attempted to overcome his lame duck status by forging links with his successor-in-waiting. A legislative stalemate quickly ensued. When Hoover outlined a legislative program to Congress in December 1932 he included many urgent causes, including a new economy and budget balancing measures, a new commission to renegotiate the inter-Allied war debts, a liberalization of the branch banking and bankruptcy laws, but of a long list of proposals Hoover urgently wished to see come to fruition, Congress only enacted the bankruptcy bill.³³⁰ When in January the British government demanded a review of the international debt payments and proposed to suspend payment of a \$95 million debt-service instalment, Hoover invited Roosevelt into the White House, proposing that they might work together to craft a response. Roosevelt declined these overtures. He refused either to turn away from his campaign pledge to rework the structural foundation of the economy or to become embroiled in the final stuttering attempts of his Republican opponent to involve him in war debts, the 'Tar baby of American politics'.³³¹

In these few months many social scientists, like Americans more generally, faced fresh anxieties. The years of 1932 to 1934 were a dismal period for many social sciences marking the end of a period of cushioning that had protected the universities from the initial effects of the economic downfall. In 1932 the state institutions of California, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin became the first to fall victim to the Depression, suffering cuts to their funding. As Roger Geiger has argued, 'the nadir was reached in 1933 – 34'.³³² The American Sociological Association felt the crisis particularly acutely and established a special committee 'to study the opportunities for trained sociologists in non-teaching fields'.³³³

³²⁹ Louis Brownlow, *The autobiography of Louis Brownlow* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1955).

³³⁰ Hawley, *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order*, pp. 216-7.

³³¹ David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from fear*, (New York: Oxford University Press; 2004) p. 105.

³³² Geiger, *To advance knowledge*, p. 248. Cuts for Michigan in the 1933 state appropriation was 44 percent lower than that for 1929, whilst 'cuts in other states ranged from 30 percent in Wisconsin to 15 percent in California'.

³³³ Camic, 'Sociology in the Great Depression and the New Deal', p. 242.

In April 1933 a subcommittee of the American Political Science Association's Committee on Policy circulated a report that bestowed a similar mood of pessimism. Its purpose was to solicit 'the mature views' of those 'who occupy key positions in the political science teaching professions.' Originally intending to enclose a simple questionnaire, the committee then decided that, 'we need something more... Recent economic disorders have so seriously affected educational institutions that a study of conditions now prevailing in them may reveal little more than a pathological situation.'³³⁴ The wording was bleak, and seemed to imply a serious professional crisis on the horizon.

Nevertheless, even as the Committee fretted, a certain pregnant expectation also ran through this letter. As the subcommittee looked towards 'the outlook for political scientists in America' it raised a series of rather hopeful questions;

Would you say that public service will be more widely opened to [political scientists]? Party service, research bureaus and research institutions? High school teaching? Newspaper work? May we expect to see an increase again in the college and university demand for PhDs in Political Science? Are there important fields of activity which we have overlooked? Specifically, what is the outlook in your own section of the United States, and in the activities with which you are especially familiar? And what should the American Political Science Association be doing about the matter? Has it a responsibility?³³⁵

Charles E. Merriam's response declared that the opportunities facing the discipline vastly outweighed the challenges of the recent dip in employment prospects for new graduates. Merriam declared to the committee that 'In my judgement, the need of trained men in Political Science is incomparably greater than ever before in the history of our nation. I regard the outlook for men in this field as most promising.'³³⁶ For Merriam these new roles would come in the field of education, through the expansion of college work and additionally through 'the necessity of trained men in various branches of governmental service.'³³⁷ Ever the optimist in matters relating to the future and purpose of political and social science, Charles Merriam wrote to a colleague that despite anxieties across the nation and within the research universities, Political Science was 'not a subject to shun', and he refuted whisperings of personnel anxieties by noting, 'I do not believe there is any more difficulty in finding a place in Political Science than in any other present day occupation'.³³⁸

Of course, those political scientists who did not hold senior positions in the discipline were rather more sceptical as to the discipline's projected growth. At the hardest hit institutions there was a

³³⁴ 'Letter to Quincy Wright from the APSA' (April 1), *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 44, Folder 8] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ 'Letter to William Anderson' (April 11, 1933) *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 44, Folder 5] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid

sense that new opportunities for the discipline would involve creative adaptation to what was rapidly becoming a far less comfortable professional environment. Political scientists had finally been affected by the crunch of the Depression, and membership figures of APSA dropped for the first time in its history. Things were worst for the most vulnerable members of the profession. Female graduate students such as Marion Irish found it especially hard-going, losing a fellowship in the cutbacks, and writing 'letter after letter' to universities with the hope of replacing her Yale position.³³⁹

Nevertheless, there was some basis for Merriam's confidence. As he was well aware, in just three years political scientists had taken dramatic steps to extend their reach further into society: advising federal government, reaching out to public audiences, and commanding an increasingly important and significant subject matter. Viewed against the backdrop of the American economy crashing down around him, Merriam may seem optimistic for stating that increased opportunities were on the horizon. But, viewed from the perspective of the striking advances made by those in the discipline, his attitude was understandable. In 1933, the very worst year of the crisis for academics, the American Political Science Association's Committee on Policy noted that 'The general public has more confidence in university professors than ever before' and pushed for thought into how the Association might foster more research on matters of practical concern.³⁴⁰ In another meeting the Committee also pushed for the continuation of the radio programmes begun three years previously, in the aftermath of the Depression. Describing their venture as an opportunity 'of fundamental significance to the country in the present crisis', and one that might 'provide civic education for masses of the people during one of the most crucial periods in the history of the country', the committee urged for the finances to be raised.³⁴¹ Even with the American academy in dire financial straits, a considerable ambition was rising within the ranks of American Political Science.

Section Two : Political scientists in the early New Deal; 1933 - 1936

The beginning of the New Deal was to provide another set of opportunities for political scientists. If the Great Depression had given these scholars a taste of relevance and public influence, the New Deal increased the stakes still further. A significant number of political scientists gained federal employment. More importantly, the majority of scholars who were not directly employed in the new

³³⁹ Marian D. Irish, in Baer, Jewell and Sigelman (eds), *Political Science in America; Oral Histories of a Discipline* (University of Kentucky Press; 1991), pp. 85 – 6.

³⁴⁰ '[Anon] Minutes: Subcommittee on research of the committee on policy of the American Political Science Association.' *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 44, Folder 5] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³⁴¹ 'To Robert A. Milliken California Institute of Technology' (Sept 23, 1933) *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 44, Folder 5] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

government positions found that the work of their discipline was gaining more recognition than ever before. Amidst concerns relating to the nature and size of American government, the nation's political scientists spoke to public debate, established new institutions and even invented new ways of looking at 'political' affairs.

Political Science and the Federal Government; 1933 - 1936

No sooner had he been sworn into office on a cold, grey Saturday in March, than Franklin Roosevelt embarked upon an ambitious and wide reaching programme of reform initiatives designed to jump-start the American economy and to contribute to the revival of American industry, jobs and purchasing power. The Emergency Conservation Work Act of March 31st established the Civilian Conservation Corps which provided young men with jobs in work camps that assisted national resource conservation. By 1935 approximately 500,000 men were at work in 2,900 camps. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration gave loans to states to operate relief programs. By 1935 FERA was to have served over 20 million people. Meanwhile, the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act created the Public Works Administration and provided private contractors with billions of dollars to spend on construction projects. Over the next few years as the state of the nation's economy began to stabilise, Roosevelt replaced these emergency measures with other ventures whose focus shifted from relief for a struggling middle class towards ameliorative social action to help the nation's poorest. Crowning the 1935 legislative session was the multibillion dollar Works Progress Administration which gave jobs to a further 8,500,000 Americans and pumped \$11 billion into building efforts, including 650,000 miles of road, 125,000 public buildings and 8,000 parks.³⁴² Its funding for 1935 constituted the largest appropriation in federal history, and symbolized a vast expansion in the scope of government.

After only twenty-two months of FDR's first term, the political scientist Leonard White wrote, 'We were engaged in the World War for less than two years; we have now been engaged in the war on depression for over four years. Already this baffling peacetime problem has caused greater changes in government structure and policy than the crowded years of War, and the end is not yet.'³⁴³ White correctly inferred that relief programmes carried out by Hoover and especially Roosevelt represented dramatic expansion in the responsibility of American public policy. But, more than that, as White noted, the very structure of government was shifting. When Roosevelt took office he began

³⁴²For figures quoted see; Barry Karl, *The Uneasy State: The United States from 1915 to 1945* (University of Chicago Press, 1983) p. 135. Also see; David Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*; Patrick D. Reagan, *Designing a new America: the origins of New Deal Planning, 1890 – 1943* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press)

³⁴³Leonard D. White, 'Towards a new civil service', *Fortune*, Vol. 7, (November, 1934), *Leonard D. White Papers* [Box 3, Folder 16] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

to reform one of the most longstanding and controversial arrangements in American political history: the relationship between the executive and parties.

In keeping with previous presidents of the twentieth century, Roosevelt supported a platform of progressive reform that proposed new rights and was driven by the possibility of an increasingly active and responsible government. But unlike his cousin Theodore, or his former boss Woodrow Wilson, who had both undertaken programs of party transformation to achieve their policy goals, FDR used traditional party structures to achieve a series of reforms whose effect was to weaken the role of the two party system and to embed a new set of administrative structures that increased the role of the executive in American politics.³⁴⁴ Much of this would play out in his second term, but even within the first one hundred days Roosevelt's inner core of trusted advisors were responsible for drafting policy, writing speeches, and even drawing up legislation, a sharp and dramatic break from precedent.³⁴⁵ Congress had dominated American government during the nineteenth century and had been a severe break on presidential ambitions throughout the Progressive Era, so this was something new.

To design, operate and continue these new projects, employees of the federal government sought social scientists. As we have seen, economists and sociologists were internally divided in the face of the new problems, and ill-equipped to offer much in the way of usable solutions. Nevertheless, statisticians were in particular demand for their ability to process and analyse large quantities of data necessary for the smooth operating of many of these programmes. For this reason federal employees milked the nation's economics departments for new recruits, 'virtually every university in the country was combed by various federal agencies for competent economists'.³⁴⁶ Academics with expertise in law were only marginally less sought-after than were the economists. Even though they too had very little to say on the root cause of the general malaise, their skills and expertise nevertheless had a more immediate practical use. Increasingly, lawyers were necessary to defend the President's policies against legal challenges. It was lawyers who made up the largest percentage of the second 'Brains Trust', Roosevelt's famous advisory committee, and who were primarily responsible for drafting new statutes, leading new agencies and commissions and negotiating New Deal regulations. Around 7,000 social scientists entered federal employment in the early New Deal, with about 5,000 economists in tow.³⁴⁷ Political scientists – as competent and able individuals – also played an important role in the New Deal. Of the 2,000 non-economists employed in Federal Government a majority of these were

³⁴⁴ See, Sidney Milkis *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System Since the New Deal* (OUP; 1993).

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Camic, 'Sociology in the Great Depression and the New Deal', p. 251.

³⁴⁷ See; William Anderson, *Report of the Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council Studies in Administration*: Volume XII.; George A. Graham, *Education for Public Administration: Graduate Preparation in the Social Sciences for Public Administration* (1941).

lawyers and political scientists. As Somit and Tanenhaus have noted, the ‘Activities’ section of the *APSR* featured practically every New Deal agency.³⁴⁸

Aside from direct employment by the federal government, the New Deal invited academic disciplines to inject their expertise into the public sphere. The challenge of evaluating and understanding what was happening within Roosevelt’s first term as it was happening was a considerable one. This was far from business as usual; instead, it was the most concentrated moment of legislative activity in the history of the Republic and it carried a raft of repercussions which historians still debate. It was therefore a considerable test for American social scientists to speak to the current state of American politics and society, and not all social scientists found themselves well-served by their existing arsenal of intellectual and methodological tools.

Sociologists struggled the most. Some sociologists did try to drag their colleagues out of the apparent treacle of apathy to the national crisis that had so far engulfed the discipline relative to other disciplines. In December 1933, the respected figures of F. Stuart Chapin and E.A. Ross had taken to the floor of an ASSA conference to chastise their colleagues for ‘following the example of the emperor Nero [and] fiddl[ing] while the world burns down about them’.³⁴⁹ American sociologists found little to speak to in the current set of national issues. Instead, the specialty sections with which sociologists were primarily concerned were overwhelmingly dominated by matters including, in order of interest, Social Psychology, Social Research, Family, and Social Work. This worked two ways, not only did sociologists not study the state, they also had no way of imposing their professional preoccupations upon New Deal policy. As Camic has argued, ‘a basic congruence seems to have existed between the way sociologists understood the purview of the discipline and the common consensus about which disciplines could address the contemporary situation. Missing from the policy debates of the New Deal was much focus on ‘social’ issues, such as race, family organization and urban problems’.³⁵⁰

Legal scholars found their expertise to be far better fit for the problems of the day. Edward Corwin was a notable figure who was not only involved in the New Deal but publicly lobbied for its programmes.³⁵¹ Corwin flatly denied the accusations that the legislation was authoritarian or against the premise set by the Constitution. Nevertheless, legal scholars were tested. The premise of legal scholarship held that laws and context can adapt, but such a fast pace of change was widely unanticipated by legal scholars; and this invited other disciplines to participate in the conversation. In 1936, John Winant, a professor of public administration, argued that the problem of social security

³⁴⁸ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behaviouralism*, p. 141.

³⁴⁹ Camic, ‘Sociology in the Great Depression and New Deal’, p. 261.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 256.

³⁵¹ Corwin would notably change his position later. See; Edward S. Corwin, *The President: Office and Powers* (New York University Press; 1940).

‘seems to me more than a legal one.’ As he continued, ‘the question is whether a great objective of national policy – the security of a people against the major hazards of modern industrial life – has, by the constitutional Fathers, been put beyond the reach of government. Such an issue belongs to public policy; it is of concern to every American citizen; upon it a public official, even though unlearned in the law, has a right to be heard.’³⁵²

Whilst economists retained a slightly better monopoly on the topic of their expertise, the experience of FDR’s first term drove existing divisions among them ever deeper. The mainstream of American Economics was at this time wedded to a belief in fiscal conservatism, they expounded a belief in balanced budgets and limited spending and many feared too much government regulation in business.³⁵³ This set of assumptions was difficult to reconcile with the increasingly lavish spending by government that had occurred during the New Deal and with the emergence of programmes like NIRA to regulate businesses. As mentioned above, the discipline was nevertheless highly divided on many of these key points. Some economists abandoned a longstanding belief in fiscal conservatism in response to New Deal programmes, among them Roosevelt’s advisor Henry Morgenthau (who convinced himself during the President’s first term that New Deal spending was concomitant with fiscal conservative beliefs). But others flatly refused to make this compromise. In 1934 Harvard economists spoke out against the changes in government on the premise that it was demonstrating a crucial threat to economic liberty.³⁵⁴ In an attempt to drum up yet more attention to this matter, in 1935 Lewis Douglas delivered the annual the Godkin lectures at Harvard. What Douglas presented was, in effect, a ‘diatribe’ against the New Deal.³⁵⁵ Whilst ‘thinly veiled’, Douglas argued against the current trends in government which, he posited, were destroying a longstanding ‘liberal tradition’.

One effect of the tumult of the American Economics profession in these years was the outpouring of a considerable number of theoretical arguments, but a relative scarcity of actual, applied work. In a speech to the American Political Science Association in 1935, that year’s president, Francis Coker launched a targeted attack on economists, announcing, ‘Most of the economists whose utterances on the New Deal I have recently read or heard have been concerned more with the theoretical than with the practical aspects’.³⁵⁶ Coker reflected that should ‘economists have anything worthwhile to propose, let their proposals be concrete, set forth with specific estimates as to expected

³⁵² John G. Winant, ‘The Constitution and Social Security’, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 185, The Constitution in the 20th Century (May, 1936), pp. 22-28. p. 22

³⁵³ See, Alan Brinkley, ‘The New Deal and the Idea of the State’, in Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, (eds), *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930 – 1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Julian E. Zelizer, ‘The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal: Fiscal Conservatism and the Roosevelt Administration, 1933 – 1938’ *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Jun, 2000), pp. 331 - 358

³⁵⁴ Ibid

³⁵⁵ Gunnell, *Imagining the Nation’s Polity*, p. 198

³⁵⁶ Francis W. Coker, ‘American Traditions Concerning Property and Liberty’, *The American Political Science Review* Vol. XXX, (Feb, 1936), No. 1, p. 22

changes in prices and profits and in the incomes of all substantial groups of the people.’³⁵⁷ Twisting the knife, Coker further opined, ‘Economists appealing to economic laws, or crusading against the Communist Manifesto, seem to me to be of not much more practical value, in the actual situation, than politicians and propagandist organizations eulogizing liberty and misrepresenting Jefferson.’³⁵⁸

Political Science and Public Administration

The field of public administration was traditionally something of a hybrid field, with one foot in Law and the other in Political Science. During the 1930s, public administration scholars made closer links as a subfield of Political Science. In a 1934 edition of *Fortune Magazine*, the doyen of the subfield of Public Administration, Chicago’s Leonard White, wrote that, ‘A survey of the present position of the civil service of the federal government must commence with the frank recognition that this country is confronted with a problem unparalleled in size and complexity in its whole peacetime history.’ As White continued, ‘[f]aced with a contemporary industrial and economic world sorely distressed by an unparalleled depression, what kind of organization does the country have to meet the tempest?’³⁵⁹ In asking this, White represented how the concerns of public administrators had become increasingly oriented to the problems of government organisation.

At the time of writing, White’s own institution, Chicago, had become the epicentre of activity to set up a centre to bring together public administrators and political scientists. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund which had done so much for Chicago Social Science had been liquidated in 1928 and replaced by a new Spelman Fund with an endowment of around \$10,000,000. This new Fund supported the vision of a group of Chicago men including Charles Merriam, Louis Brownlow and Leonard White had approached the Fund in 1938 to request support to set up a new building that could bring administrators and social scientists into closer contact.³⁶⁰ The timing could not have been better. The First World War had expanded both government and the social sciences, but not until now did America have a political context that dictated so sharp a break with traditional, limited conceptions of the domestic responsibilities of the state. Now, it seemed, was the chance for political scientists to bring public administrators and academicians together, and to entrench a permanent, well-trained civil service in American life.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Leonard D. White, ‘Towards a new civil service’, *Fortune*, Vol. 7, (November, 1934), Leonard D. White Papers, [Box 3, Folder 16].

³⁶⁰ ‘Beardsley Rumml interview with Louis Brownlow Beardsley Rumml Papers’, [Box 2, Folder 3].

President Roosevelt was aware of the happenings at Chicago since his days as Governor of New York, when he had sat on a Committee which received counsel from Chicago social scientists. When he was elected, he continued to use the university and its guidance. As Harold Gosnell has recalled, 'The new President welcomed the talent furnished by the university and its affiliated organizations.'³⁶¹ Roosevelt appointed Professor Leonard White from the Political Science department as a member of the Civil Service Commission, and also appointed the Public Administration scholar Marshall Dimock Assistant Secretary of Labour and local Chicago political reformer Harold Ickes for Secretary of Interior. With such a rush of prestigious employment, the department became incredibly well connected. Gosnell later recalled, 'as the New Deal unfolded it had a profound effect upon all members of the Political Science department of the University of Chicago'³⁶²

A group of scholars further west, associated with the University of California, sought to emulate the Chicago model, led by the institution's president Robert Sproul. Writing to the political scientist Samuel May, Sproul enthusiastically praised Chicago's initiative, noting, 'I hope that we may be able to do more here along the lines where Chicago has made such great progress.'³⁶³ The starting point at California was the Bureau of Administration that had informally begun in 1920, its early activities limited to the collection of pamphlet materials. In 1930, a joint financial arrangement between the Rockefeller Foundation and the University resulted in a three-fold program of library development, research, and training in public administration with a budget over a 6-year period of \$262,000.³⁶⁴

It was Samuel May who led the charge in California: as his colleagues in the field of public administration later reflected, 'with one toe in the political science department, seven toes in the Bureau, and two in outside agencies [May] gave some institutional vitality to public administration'.³⁶⁵ That he felt motivated to create this new institution was rooted in a deep faith in the vision expressed by White in a cadre of trained civil servants. Writing to Sproul, May claimed, 'that the creation of a tradition of public service is one of America's greatest needs, and if educational administrators attack the problem without preconceived solutions, there is every possibility that they can greatly influence the progress of American life which is so dependent upon government and the ability found therein.'³⁶⁶

³⁶¹ 'Unpublished autobiography' *Harold F. Gosnell Papers* [Box 3 folder 12] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ 'Letter to Samuel May from Robert Sproul', (June 13, 1933), *Bureau of public administration archives, 1921- 1962. CU. 46* [Box 1, Folder 17] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

³⁶⁴ 'A concise statement'. *Bureau of public administration archives, 1921- 1962. CU. 46* [Box 1, Folder 21] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

³⁶⁵ Alice B. Stone and Donald C. Stone, 'Appendix: Case Histories of Early Professional Education Programs' in Frederick C. Mosher (ed), *American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future* (University of Alabama Press, 1975), p 274.

³⁶⁶ To President Sproul from Samuel May (Oct. 24, 1934), *Bureau of public administration archives, 1921- 1962. CU. 46* [Box 1, Folder 17].

The result of May's efforts was the transformation of the Bureau of Public Administration from its recondite early focus on 'the solution of current practical problems,' entailing 'short intensive studies and disseminating existing information, in response to requests from public officials'.³⁶⁷ The bureau was unusually benefitted by its close location to San Francisco, where most Federal agencies had a Pacific Coast headquarters and much of the research conducted at the bureau came as a request of government officials, on a cooperative basis. This work included such items as a 1933 survey of unemployment relief administration in the City and County of San Francisco.³⁶⁸ The published result of the bureau came in the form of bibliographic guides to existing literature on public administration, including *The Bibliography on Crime and the Administration of Criminal Justice*, which included over 13,000 items; studies on the interrelationship of federal, state and local governments in California; and studies in county government in finance including on taxation, economic and social planning. Between 1933 and 1934 Bureau staff and graduate students published approximately 75 studies in the field of public administration.³⁶⁹

Political scientists at Harvard had a more difficult time in convincing the upper echelon of the university administration of the merits of such an institution. In March 1934 Harvard University Professor of Government Carl Friedrich issued the proposal that the university establish an institute more specifically dedicated to the problems of public administration which would answer a pressing demand for a 'higher type of public official, especially in the Civil Service'.³⁷⁰ Friedrich's recommendation was frustrated by the higher ranks of the university who supported the basic concept of training for civil service, but were wary, as President Conant wrote, of 'setting up more institutes around this University'.³⁷¹ Harvard had suffered under the Depression with the withdrawal of Foundation funding. More to the point, in recent years the university had sprouted a number of new professional schools which were becoming a matter of contention for some traditionalists in the administration and in the various faculties. Faced with this resistance, Friedrich's plans would have to wait until 1935 at which point the university would receive unexpected support in the form of an offer of \$2 million to create a school of public administration from the Republican congressman and industrialist Lucius Littauer. A graduate of the class of 1878, Littauer was moved to donate to the school out of fear of 'New Deal' experiments, as Morton Keller noted it was, 'a thinly veiled slap at the New Deal'.³⁷² The money was put towards the creation of a new Graduate School of Public

³⁶⁷ Report of the Bureau of public administration, 1933 – 34, Bureau of public administration archives, 1921-1962. CU. 46 [Box 1, Folder 20].

³⁶⁸The bureau also profited from the Civil Works service of the Federal Civil Works Administration who provided 47 individuals, including 19 researchers and bibliographers, 11 lawyers, 4 trained librarians, 6 proof-readers, 7 clerical assistants and 2 Hollertigh operators. 'Report of the Bureau of public administration'.

³⁶⁹ 'Report of the BPA 1933- 34', p.4 *Bureau of public administration archives, 1921- 1962. CU. 46* [Box 1, Folder 20] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

³⁷⁰ Quoted in Morton and Phylis Keller, *Making Harvard Modern*, p. 130.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid, p. 230.

Administration, which would spawn in a few decades time the more famous Kennedy School of Government.

American politics had become a rich tapestry of activity and as scholars of ‘politics’ it rested with their profession to sift through the unfolding events and explain to the nation what was happening and what was at stake. From 1934 the *Review* published annual surveys of the development of public administration in the previous year. And in 1935 John Gaus and Leonard White surveyed that year’s developments in public administration, noting a large number of legislation, reports and commissions at the state and local level. The conclusion noted the continuing extension of power to the administrative commissions, but ‘it was not easy to determine what were the important and what the trivial events and developments in public administration’.³⁷³ This statement suggests just how far political scientists had come over just a few years, since the 1920s when the challenge was not sifting through the developments to separate the ‘important’ from the ‘trivial’, rather it was to interest politicians and citizens alike in the basic usefulness of studying politics.

One sign of the rapid maturation of the study of public administration was an attempt to get a more detailed perspective on what was occurring within the nation’s administrative structure. When Lindsay Rogers wrote to Merriam in 1933 regarding the new National Recovery Act, he emphasized the importance of first hand insight: ‘I argued to a number of people last summer – Ruml, Crane et al – that the setup of this huge piece of administrative machinery ought to be described in current detail and largely on the basis of personal experience and observation. The thing can’t be described on the basis of written materials and if it is not described adequately the students of public administration will lack lessons from the most fruitful source of lessons, that, to my knowledge, this country has ever produced.’³⁷⁴ All around the country insight gained by political scientists as participant observer in the nation’s expanding bureaucracy was leaking into their writing and classrooms. In Wisconsin, a young Leon Epstein (a future political science professor), recalled being impressed by the references that his professor, John Gaus, would make to involvement in government commissions, ‘he represented a kind of almost glamor in the subject’.³⁷⁵

The coterminous rise of public administration within American life and within Political Science indicated that the discipline was wrestling purposefully with some of the most important problems of the day. Even though economists outstripped political scientists in terms of jobs in Washington, political scientists were coming to assert their own special significance from the sidelines. In the research institutes of Chicago, San Francisco and elsewhere, political scientists had front-

³⁷³ ‘Public Administration in the United States in 1934’ John M. Gaus and Leonard D. White *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Jun., 1935), pp. 442-451.

³⁷⁴ ‘Letter from Lindsay Rogers’, (Nov. 6, 1933), *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 55, Folder 19] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³⁷⁵ ‘Interview with Leon Epstein’, p. 21 [Box 26] *APSA Papers*, GWU, SCL, Washington.

row seats in what was rapidly becoming the most striking development in American life since the Civil War.

Evaluating Early New Deal Programmes

Another important trend in American Political Science during the early New Deal was a proliferation of criticism of the inefficiency of government under Hooverian mechanisms. One such reaction was to the National Industrial Recovery Act, which in many respects was a continuation of Hoover's associative policy, resting on voluntary cooperation among business, labour and government. In a letter to a friend written in October 1933, Peter Odegard wrote of his concerns about the scope of the National Industrial Recovery Act, writing that, 'it strikes me that what we are trying to do under the feverish Codification of American industry is to establish here in modified form the German Cartel system'.³⁷⁶ The German Cartel system did indeed bear similarities to the NIRA to the extent that it set up industry-wide cartels in the manufacturing sector of the US economy with the hope of raising prices. At this time it was a popular policy, praised by businessmen and Americans more generally. However, Odegard did not embrace it because of a suspicion that Americans did not yet take the requirement of proper political organisation and administration seriously enough, which led him to wonder 'just what is in the minds of responsible officials with reference to the whole problem of organization and control'.³⁷⁷

In particular, Odegard worried that politicians failed to place the NIRA within a broader context, to consider the larger implications of the act or how they might be solved; 'My great perplexity over the entire NIRA is that so far I have been unable to discover any satisfactory 'rationale' for it. Does anybody in Washington have any idea of what it is all about beyond the day by day problems involved in running a grand national ballyhoo?'³⁷⁸ Odegard's instincts and political science training ultimately put him against the NIRA, 'I am still sceptical about the possibility of effective control and planning without a more rigorous exercise of governmental power than we have yet had.' Noting that ownership by the state of industry is not in all cases necessary, Odegard nevertheless opined that, 'The administration has thus far done little beyond socialising bad loans and the losses of agriculture. If we are to stop there then NIRA is a snare and a delusion'.³⁷⁹

Odegard's scepticism in retrospect seems prescient. At the time of writing this letter in October 1933, the NIRA was still very popular. But by 1934 business opinion would begin to turn

³⁷⁶ 'From Odegard at Ohio State to 'Rosy' (October 11, 1933), Peter Odegard Papers [Box 6, folder 1 of 5] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

against it and by 1935 it would be declared unconstitutional, in a case concerning a poultry company that had violated certain NIRA codes. Later, scholars and civil servants would seek to uncover why it was that the NIRA was such a policy failure. The Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council published a series of studies in 1938 one of which explored the, 'The administration of an N.R.A code' which, as the subtitle noted, was 'A Case Study of the Men's Clothing Industry'. This work pointed to the main problems of the NIRA as being rooted in poor administration and generally lacking foresight and planning as to the problems it would create, including harmful monopolies. Lindsay Rogers wrote the foreword to this work, 'There are many lessons to be learned from an examination of the shambling scaffold that was the National Recovery Administration and of the behaviour of the men who temerarily [sic] and precariously manned it. Nearly five years have passed since the Blue Eagle was hatched, grew quickly to full stature, enjoyed a few months of glory, and then, in the opinion of many, became an uncontrolled bird of prey.' To this Rogers wistfully added, 'had the hatching been less impromptu and had the flights been more controlled, the eagle might well have escaped the death sentence of the Supreme Court of the United States in a case which, ironically, dealt with sick chickens.'³⁸⁰ This overview bears a striking resemblance to Odegard's initial concerns, which had been rooted in existing concerns of political scientists in the 1920s. Historians too would come to the conclusion that the NIRA was a failure for reasons not dissimilar to those first aired by Odegard.³⁸¹

When looking at the overall picture of American politics rather than at individual policies, political scientists found more to celebrate, with a departure from Hoover's policy to a more centralised control over government. As such, Odegard celebrated the overall direction of the New Deal. He would express his views on the New Deal in 1934 when he transferred from Ohio State to Stanford for a temporary year-long teaching post and delivered a lecture on recent political patterns. As a college newspaper reported, Odegard spoke on the aims of the National Recovery Act and the extent to which it had accomplished them in practice. Whilst retaining a critical appreciation of the inadequacies of the Act in practice, the New Deal was nevertheless a considerable advancement in the ability of democratic politics to attempt a stronger set of controls. Afterwards the students and Odegard engaged 'in a talk fest after the meeting had formally adjourned in which pet theories on the condition of the country and the relative probability of democracy and fascism entered.' By 1936 Odegard would write of regret over 'administrative imbecilities' and lack of guiding control, but

³⁸⁰ Robert H. Connery, *The administration of an N.R.A. code: a case study of the men's clothing industry* (Chicago: Pub. For the Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council by Public Administration Service; 1938), p. vii.

³⁸¹ See, Bernard Bellush, *The Failure of the NRA*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975); Paulsen, "The Federal Trade Commission v. the National Recovery Administration, 1935," *Social Science Quarterly*, March 1989; J. E. Taylor, (2002), The Output Effects of Government Sponsored Cartels During the New Deal. *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, Vol.50: pp.1–10.

nevertheless hearkened to a ‘warm admiration for a guiding philosophy that was admirable and for courageous and imaginative inventiveness’.³⁸²

Odegard’s appreciation of the New Deal was born from a very real fear in earlier years that democratic politics was too weak for present demands. This had been the fear of some political scientists in the 1920s, inflamed by events and exacerbated by the Great Depression, and it was evident too in popular debate. The front page of *Liberty* magazine (‘America’s Best Read Weekly’) at the beginning of January 1933 shrilly asked ‘Does America Need a Dictator?’ with the subtitle ‘A warning to selfish wealth and narrow-minded politicians to uplift our capitalistic civilization’.³⁸³ But in Roosevelt’s first term these fears abated, reflecting his ability to pass dramatic pieces of wide-ranging legislation, to operate with a core body of advisors, and to express what was – despite the ad hoc nature of the programmes – still a remarkably coherent philosophy. All of this represented a striking and important extension of executive authority.

These developments had a resounding significance for many political scientists, suggesting that ‘democracy’ was working and they took it upon themselves to publicly articulate this fact. One scholar who took up this challenge was Lindsay Rogers, the Burgess Professor of Public Law at Columbia University since 1922, following several years on the faculty of the University of Virginia. But he also had from the late 1920s begun to involve himself in national politics. In 1928 he had been called upon by the Democratic candidate Al Smith to edit the Democratic National Campaign book and in 1933 took a job as Deputy Administrator of the National Recovery Administration.³⁸⁴ Already drawn into national affairs in this way, Rogers set out to educate a wider audience as to what exactly was the significance of recent events. In 1934 Rogers published a monograph titled, *Crisis Government* in which he declared that the President, ‘has demonstrated that you can have all the advantages of a dictatorship and not abandon democracy.’³⁸⁵ The fact that the new president had been able to temporarily strengthen the presidency was, for Rogers, an important sign that at a time when democracies around the world were falling, American democracy was still working. Unlike in Italy, Germany, Japan or any of the many other countries which had collapsed to authoritarian demands, Americans had retained a democratic president and Rogers’ book was a celebration of this fact; ‘In sum, the American system of government, in normal times so leisurely and so checked and balanced – has evolved a crisis government as strong as is necessary.’³⁸⁶

³⁸² Peter Odegard, ‘Dr Gallup’s Statistics’ *The New Republic* (November 1, 1939), p. 358.

³⁸³ Colonel E. M. House, *Liberty Magazine*, (Jan 7 1933) in *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 267, Folder 5] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

³⁸⁴ On Rogers see: Amy Fried, “The Forgotten Lindsay Rogers and the Development of American Political Science” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 100, No. 4, Thematic Issue on the Evolution of Political Science, in Recognition of the Centennial of the Review (Nov., 2006), p. 557.

³⁸⁵ Lindsay Rogers, *Crisis Government* (NY: 1934), p. 129.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Despite his enthusiasm for the saving of democracy, Rogers, a 'New Dealer' himself, did not go so far as to suggest that Roosevelt and the New Deal had solved the problems of machine-age economics. Rather, it was the fact that Roosevelt's methods had worked better than European, totalitarian methods that was the single most important fact of the book. In this respect Rogers shared some of Odegard's restraint and critical approach towards the developing problems. In response to avid New Dealers who expected 'National Planning' or the 'New Deal' to solve all problems in a single day, Rogers quoted an Irish peasant who was told that his country might have Home Rule;

'May the Good Lord have pity on us,' said the peasant.

'What?' asked the politician. 'Don't you want Home Rule?'

'I'll tell you,' said the peasant. 'Now, you, sir, are a good Christian. Aren't you? Like me, you want to go to heaven. But we don't wish to go there this evening, do we?'³⁸⁷

This was not a book to analyse the whole New Deal and its problems. Rather it was directed at the New Deal's critics who failed to appreciate the broader significance of new president's the show of power. As Rogers noted 'A few fearsome spirits profess to be shocked and alarmed. They should read the 70th number of the *Federalist*.... Republican governments might be compelled to become energetic governments.'³⁸⁸

The fact that Rogers could appear to be offering his unreserved support of the New Deal and democracy was not because Rogers was blind to any failings of either, rather it was because Rogers felt impelled to extract and publicise only this basic message of democracy's 'soundness' to a wider audience. Without this effort the American public would be left undefended from the hysterical shrills of a mass-media unable to distinguish between appearance and reality in the affairs of Europe and America. The book was well-received, listed as 'Among the Outstanding Books of the Week' in June 1934 by the *Literary Digest*.³⁸⁹ Meanwhile, Harold Laski wrote in the *New Republic* that it ought to be read by anyone who still believes that 'in any form of dictatorship there lies a short cut to political salvation.' More interestingly, he added, 'It is, I think, the essential lesson of Professor Rogers' reflections that the sooner political scientists get back to the discussion of first principles, the greater the service they will render to our time. It is good to read a book that goes straight to the central issues'.³⁹⁰

Throughout FDR's first term, political scientists grew more confident that Americans were voting themselves the powers they needed and were not having them thrust upon them, as was happening elsewhere. They also continued to publish work that highlighted the differences between

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ 'Among the outstanding Books of the Week', *The Literary Digest* (June 2, 1934), pp. 28-9.

³⁹⁰ Harold J. Laski, 'Government by Consent', *The New Republic* (June 20, 1934), p. 162.

American and European systems. When in 1935 the University of Chicago's Frederick Schuman published *The Nazi Dictatorship: a study in social pathology and the politics of fascism* this was listed among the hundred best books of the year by the *New Republic* and among the fifty best books of the year by the *Nation*.³⁹¹

During Roosevelt's first term, political scientists carved new inroads in American government and created new institutions with which to bring public administrators and academics together. More generally political scientists found that their discipline placed them in a peculiarly advantageous position for understanding both the challenges and the opportunities of these tumultuous years. Not only did scholars study administrative problems, the technical difficulties of developing government programmes – overlooked by others because of a lack of interest in 'political' structure and organisation. They also saw the headline story of democracy's survival in Roosevelt's operation of the Executive Office. Political Science, as a perspective that looked at political organisation and the structure of the state, and which enjoyed a cameo public role of defending democratic theory, was rapidly becoming the crucial perspective via which the problems of the modern day might be brought into focus. If the onset of the Great Depression had reenergized the discipline, the first few years of the New Deal had accelerated this process. Political scientists were commenting upon the affairs of the present day with new authority and gravitas, seeking to speak to larger audiences and assisting government. Never had the original goals of the discipline been more clearly on display or functioned to great such effect.

³⁹¹ Figures come from, Harold Gosnell 'unpublished autobiography', *Harold F. Gosnell Papers* [Box 3, folder 10] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

Section Three

Political Science and the Permanent New Deal; 1936 – 1940

The election of 1936

‘This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny.’

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1936

During 1936 Americans underwent one of the most unusual election campaigns in history. Economic recovery had taken centre stage in the election of 1932, but by 1936 they were being related to large philosophical questions about the role of the state and the meaning of the New Deal. Roosevelt saw the campaign as an opportunity to stake out a new philosophy of government; one which would turn the presidency, rather than the parties, into a mechanism for progressive reform.³⁹² For the nation’s political scientists this was a long-awaited development as the campaign focused on the very issues with which American political scientists had been concerned with for decades; the structure of government, the functions of parties and the role of the executive.

The election of 1936 was to provide a turning point for the discipline, a critical moment in which the recent advances of the discipline into state and society would cohere as all social science disciplines would have to wrestle with the realisation of the activist state that had enlivened the discipline of Political Science since the beginning of the New Deal. From this moment forward, political scientists would represent a distinct and widely-accepted perspective on politics that would prove capable of answering global critics of democracy and, in future years, evaluating the emergence of a yet-bigger democratic system.

When Roosevelt accepted the Democratic nomination for President in late June 1936 he declared to the nominating convention that ‘Economic royalists complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America. What they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power. Our allegiance to American institutions requires the overthrow of this kind of power.’³⁹³ In the cross-hairs of this attack on the so-called ‘enemies of reform’ were members of such conservative and pro-business groups as the Liberty League which, founded in 1934, had attempted to prevent the federal

³⁹²See, Milkis, *The Presidents and the Parties*.

³⁹³ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, ‘Acceptance Speech for the Re-nomination for the Presidency’, Philadelphia, Pa. (June 27, 1936) [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15314>].

government from regulating commercial activity. Over the following months the president would travel across the country delivering some of his most aggressive speeches to date and attacking the ‘old enemies’ of ‘organised money’. This was a gutsy campaign message, one that not only incited anguished opposition from business leaders but also confused some of Roosevelt’s own advisors who balked at his economic radicalism.³⁹⁴ However, Roosevelt’s choice of enemy was also cleverly calculated. By attacking so called ‘economic royalists’ his intention was not to exacerbate class lines but to align the party against entrenched privilege. It was a campaign not to oppose private enterprise, but to enable it by removing the structures imposing economic inequality. It was an attempt, in the words of one his closest advisors, to paint ‘the New Deal as the real Americanism’.³⁹⁵

In June, the Republican Party nominated Alf Landon, Governor of Kansas, for their candidate. Landon was an old Bull Moose progressive and moderately liberal oil man who feared government intervention in the economy. He was by no means a clear counterfoil to the New Deal and he began his campaign on the somewhat limited premise of protection of the economic sphere from government. However, during the campaign Landon’s platform evolved into a stronger stance against the trademark policies of the Roosevelt administration. By October a debate had begun to focus around the size and uses of government. In this month Landon addressed a Los Angeles audience with the words, ‘I do not believe that a temporary depression is reason enough for changing our whole form of government’.³⁹⁶ Punctuating every other syllable with a raised fist he rallied against the flagrant distortions to the constitution seemingly initiated by FDR’s recent legislative propositions. As one newspaper reported, ‘Terming ‘planned society’ an alternative to ‘representative government’, the candidate said it was ‘spreading rapidly throughout the world,’ destroying freedom of speech, press and conscience and robbing ‘people of those great guarantees of personal liberty and rights of property that we enjoy under the American system.’³⁹⁷

Shadowing the debate between the two candidates was a growing sprawl of disaffected populist movements.³⁹⁸ Before he was shot dead in late 1935, Huey Long, a Senator from Louisiana, had attracted national attention with his ‘Share the Wealth’ movement. By early 1935 the Senator was ‘conservatively estimated’ to have appealed to more than 3 million Americans with a message that the New Deal had not gone far enough in ensuring social welfare.³⁹⁹ Among his supporters was the radio preacher Father Charles E. Coughlin who himself united crowds of 8 million Catholic Americans to his ‘National Union for Social Justice’.⁴⁰⁰ Not only did these figures offer more ideological variety to

³⁹⁴ See; David Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, p. 284-5.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Address at the Democratic State Convention*, Syracuse, N.Y. (September 29, 1936).

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Karl, *The Uneasy State*, p. 132.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Nichols and Nichols, *The Growth of American Democracy* (1938), p. 730.

the debate, they also threatened to siphon away potential supporters of Roosevelt's new coalition and complicated the claim that American democracy had regained its equipoise.

Political Science and the 1936 election

Political scientists reacted to the 1936 election with a near-unanimous enthusiasm. The growth of executive power, the spectacular growth of administrative agencies and the adoption of a permanent civil service had been among many changes harkened for by scholars within the discipline for decades – although they did not envision the scale of the New Deal, the claims of various Progressive Era political scientists such as Wilson and Henry Jones Ford looked towards a future of American government in which the public administrator played a central role. Political scientists welcomed FDR's new activist philosophy of government. Among the many political scientists who supported Roosevelt was Chicago's Harold Gosnell who later recalled, 'I admired Roosevelt's first term record of legislative achievement... These were inconsistencies in these programs and in their administration but confidence was being restored and the economy was moving ahead. I became a New Dealer and voted for Roosevelt's re-election in 1936 with enthusiasm.'⁴⁰¹ At Brooklyn College, which had benefitted from WPA funds, 'Roosevelt received a warm support from the overwhelming number of faculty and students'.⁴⁰² Even Harvard's Arthur Holcombe, previously a Republican with conservative views, became a New Deal Democrat.⁴⁰³ And the University of California's Peter Odegard, a sceptic of the NIRA and a supporter of labour unions (therefore a potential flight-risk to the third party socialist candidates), overlooked the details to lend support to Roosevelt's key message.⁴⁰⁴

By the time the election campaigns had begun in earnest, a number of scholars reached out to a public audience to comment upon the stakes of the election. In June, Charles Beard concluded his educational 'You and Your Government' series with an investigation of the 'Living Constitution' in which he argued that it was flexible and adaptable, 'Even conservatives should regard the flexibility of our Constitution as its most admirable feature, and in fact they do, when they are in power in Washington.'⁴⁰⁵ Leonard White wrote about the importance of administration to government in various public forums.⁴⁰⁶ In campuses all over the country scholars were speaking on the subject. In

⁴⁰¹ 'How I voted', Harold Gosnell Papers, [Box 3, folder 12].

⁴⁰² Belle Zeller interview, in *Political Science in America: Oral Histories of a Discipline*, p. 45.

⁴⁰³ See, 'Byrnes, Holcombe, James Roosevelt at Rally Tonight' *The Harvard Crimson* (October 26, 1936).

⁴⁰⁴ See, Odegard, Dr Gallup's Statistics, *New Republic*.

⁴⁰⁵ Charles Beard, 'Living Constitution', June 9, 1936. You and Your Government series. *Vital Speeches of the Day*, pp. 631- 2.

⁴⁰⁶ See; Leonard D. White, 'Careers in Government' *Scribners*, (March 1937), pp. 58 – 62; and, 'Administration as a Profession', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (Jan., 1937) pp. 84- 90.

Chicago, Merriam and his colleagues regularly led discussions on the 'Round Table' series; in Harvard, Arthur Holcombe spoke to the Democratic club; and in Illinois, California and Texas, similar patterns were repeated.⁴⁰⁷

Polling day brought a stunning result for Roosevelt as Landon lost in a landslide. The Kansan Governor could not even carry his own state and only Maine and Vermont swung Republican. Landon would later adapt a familiar political homily, 'as Maine goes, so goes the nation' to the effect, 'As Maine goes, so goes Vermont'. No sooner had the results been read than political scientists declared the election a turning point. The December meeting was parenthesized by two optimistic speeches which pointed to the great moment. The first was Merriam's speech on 'Recent Progress in Planning'. The original title requested was 'Planning in Modern Society', but Merriam had requested the addition of 'recent progress'. He had also requested to have 'at least an hour' as 'so much has happened recently that I should not try to deal with the question in too superficial a manner'.⁴⁰⁸ The last address of the meeting came from that year's president, Arthur Holcombe, and it was titled 'The Political Interpretation of History'. Although operating at a rather theoretical level, this speech suggested that 'politics' was a perspective that was, at last, coming into clear focus.⁴⁰⁹

Shortly after the election, Louise Overaker secured funds from the Social Science Research Council to study the effects of 1936, and she noted, 'A study of the financing of the 1936 campaign is particularly interesting since it may show what, if any, effect the 'New Deal' program has had upon political alignments.'⁴¹⁰ The conclusion pointed to a widening division in who funded campaigns, with the Democrats 'abandoned' by rich financiers, and 'with less support than usual from representatives of the larger manufacturing interests'.⁴¹¹ Instead the party drew on the legal profession, from liquor and tobacco, and from office-holders and the South, and from a new corner of 'organized labour'. This, Overaker concluded, might well point the way forward to a new 'Labour' party and 'the realignment on 'liberal' and 'conservative' lines that many have hoped for'.⁴¹² American political scientists recognised 1936 as a turning point. During the campaign political scientists had set aside concerns about specific public policy programmes to vote on principle. In the same way, they had also interjected in public debate. Now, in the immediate aftermath of the result, it was a moment to reflect on the largescale implications of what had happened.

⁴⁰⁷ For Merriam see, Anon. 'What's on the Air', *The New Republic* (Oct. 13, 1937). For Holcombe see, 'Byrnes, Holcombe, James Roosevelt at Rally Tonight' *The Harvard Crimson*, (October 26, 1936).

⁴⁰⁸ To Cullen Gosnell from Charles Merriam, (April 1, 1936) [Box 44, Folder 3] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁴⁰⁹ Arthur Holcombe, 'The Political Interpretation of History', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 21 Issue 1. (Feb. 1937), p. 1 -11.

⁴¹⁰ Louise Overaker, 'Campaign Funds in the Presidential Election of 1936', *APSR*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Jun, 1937), p. 473.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

1937 – 1940; 'The End of Reform' and the Permanent New Deal

Roosevelt faced many challenges in his second term. Mounting an attack on the developing New Deal, which now included initiatives such as Social Security, conservative Democrats as well as Republicans worried about the irresponsive nature of the growing state bureaucracy and they criticised the growing state and provided a series of challenges which stalled future reforms. Events came to a head when Roosevelt issued the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill in 1937, or, as it came to be known his 'court packing plan' in which he attempted to overcome the role of the Supreme Court in voting many of his legislative initiatives unconstitutional. However, this attempt incited boisterous opposition, and ultimately failed. By 1938, with America entering a new period of economic downturn, the reform energy of the New Deal had dissipated. To add to the urgency, the global crisis was moving to the foreground, and this increasingly preoccupied the president.

Nevertheless, even as the period of active New Deal reforms screeched to a halt in terms of new legislation, the image of an active, reformist government continued to shape social science research. Uniquely among advanced industrial powers, the United States had been slow to develop an active reformist role over social and economic areas of life. But by the beginning of 1936 a series of projects were in place which were for all intents and purposes permanent features of the American political landscape. Since 1933 a National Resources Committee had overseen matters of soil conservation, the preservation of forests, flood control and animal disease management. During FDR's first term the Rural Electrification Administration and the Agricultural Extension Service had sought to 'make farm life profitable and attractive'.⁴¹³ By 1937 it would be announced that 'It is now quite generally recognized that governmental assistance is indispensable for dealing permanently with many phases of the farm problem'.⁴¹⁴ Beginning in 1935, the Works Progress Administration oversaw programmes such as a National Youth Administration which granted financial aid to students. The list of pioneering expansions was seemingly endless and by 1940 4,000,000 Americans would become civil employees, excluding military personnel and those on WPA or relief lists.⁴¹⁵ From control of natural resources to advice to new mothers, the state pervaded American life in many new ways. Viewing such events Odegard declared that, 'The democratic state has long since ceased to be an agency concerned primarily with restraint symbolized in the figures of prosecutor, judge and jailer. It

⁴¹³ Peter Odegard, "The Political Scientist in the Democratic Service State" *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, p. 151.

⁴¹⁴ Bushrod W. Allin, "Is Planning Compatible with Democracy?" *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Jan., 1937), p. 512.

⁴¹⁵ Odegard, "The Political Scientist in the Democratic Service State", p. 149.

has become a service agency – symbolized in the school teacher, the public health officer and government engineer.⁴¹⁶

For no discipline was the changing size and responsibilities of American government so important as for Political Science. In the first place, the discipline profited in terms of inter-university politics. The late 1930s saw an expansion of departments, graduate students and new projects and political scientists attracted new funding, such as the Walgreen Foundation grant of \$550,000 to the University of Chicago for the study of American institutions.⁴¹⁷ As one scholar reacted, the grant was of significance and reflected that ‘America is ‘coming of age,’ and until now no adequate preparation has been made in our institutions of higher learning for exploring the implications of this fact.’⁴¹⁸ Public administration also continued to attract new scholars and foster new research. This had some detrimental effects on other areas. According to one report, during the winter of 1940 ‘there were at least six attractive professorial positions in the field of American local government that were vacant because no qualified teachers could be found.’⁴¹⁹

Nevertheless, despite the special growth of public administration most benefits reached all areas of the discipline. The increasing relevance and importance of Political Science and political scientists brought the whole discipline into greater prominence. The University of California Los Angeles, in a typical pattern, reported a ‘marked increase’ of students enrolled in the introductory courses in both 1939 and 1940.⁴²⁰ Most notably, in 1939 the American Political Science Association took steps to increase the permanent endowment of the association. The level of income was currently at \$7,600 but political scientists eagerly noted that other organisations had much larger trust funds – the American Philosophical Society commanding funds amounting to a staggering figure of over six million dollars.⁴²¹

Besides the direct institutional gains, there were considerable intellectual ones. The problems under the remit of the discipline were becoming interesting, important and relevant. The peak moment of the entire period was the passage of the Executive Reorganization Act in 1939. This Act was the result of the work of three Chicago political scientists, Leonard White, Louis Brownlow and Charles Merriam who had consulted Roosevelt on the structure of American government in 1936. An initial proposal of the bill had failed in Congress in 1937, (the same time as a furore was rising over FDR’s

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, p. 158.

⁴¹⁷ See; ‘Guide to the Charles R. Walgreen Foundation Records 1938 – 1956’, The University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Centre [<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php>]

⁴¹⁸ ‘Letter to Robert Maynard Hutchins from John Gaus’ (April 19, 1938) *The Papers of the Charles R. Walgreen Foundation, 1938 – 1956* [Box 1, Folder 3] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁴¹⁹ ‘Reports to the president of the University of California from the academic department, 1930 – 42’ (July 1942), *Papers of the Political Science Department, 1940 -42. UCLA.* [Box 5, Folder 1] BSC, BL. Berkely, California.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ To Charles E. Merriam from Charles Grove Haines, Charles E. Merriam papers, [Box 44, Folder 5].

‘court packing plan’). But in 1939, scaled back and originating in the House, the recommendations of these political scientists formed the basis for the creation of the Executive Office of the President. This was an act which profoundly affected the subsequent history of American government and more generally it represented how political scientists were arriving at a state of professional maturity and being widely recognised as a discipline well-poised to critique the state and structure of American politics.⁴²²

Finally, by the late 1930s political scientists had also found a distinct voice with which to speak not only to national problems, but international ones. American political scientists had struggled to figure out how to engage the crisis that engulfed many democracies at the beginning of the decade, initially content to express platitudes and a deep well of faith in the essential soundness of democracy. But, by the end of the 1930s political scientists had begun to speak to these problems with a new confidence. The discipline had formerly expressed a rather naïve faith in the ability of democratic politics to solve human problems and this was exposed amidst the global crisis of democracy and the distinct business and economic climate of the 1920s. However, the events of the 1930s and the emergence by the end of the decade of a newly activist state, gave new vigour to the discipline. So it was that scholars of the late 1930s and early 40s pointed with one hand to the expansion of services in American life, and with the other to the continued importance of ‘politics’ in the affairs of government, and announced that democratic politics was fundamentally sound.

This argument had been percolating among scholars since the early years of the decade, when in the heat of the Great Depression Lindsay Rogers had penned *Crisis Government* which argued that the American democratic system fared comparatively better when dealing with the problems of machine-age economics than did any other system internationally. But when this argument was repeated at the end of the decade it had added punch. Not only had American government survived an enormous economic crash, it had adapted to modernity with a range of new services. The sources for democratic action were in fine health within the local associations, city governments and within Roosevelt’s own administration. To later scholars – with the important exception of Sidney Milkis – FDR has been an experimenter, a pragmatist and an ad hoc inventor. But to contemporary scholars of politics, FDR represented an important example of concerted action to reform the structure of American government.

On numerous occasions in the late 1930s and early 1940s political scientists took to a public stage to deliver this argument. In December 1940 the Chicago Times ran an article with the title, ‘Democracy Best System – Dr Merriam’ which criticised the attitude of Republicans in Congress and

⁴²² For the best history of the Committee see; Barry Karl, *Executive reorganization and reform in the New Deal, the genesis of administrative management, 1900 – 1939*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1963).

Liberty Leaguers, in the fear of 'big' government. Merriam noted, 'There are some who are still struggling with nostalgia for the small, afraid of the large, back to the tribe, back to the Swiss hillsides, back to the town meeting, back to Hyde Park Town – afraid of anything that is enlarged, in reality, afraid of life and its pulses, forces in the modern day.' As Merriam continued, 'The basic reason why we need not make radical changes in our system is that it rests upon sound principles upon tested experience and possesses great flexibility and adaptiveness. We know how to make changes at strategic point without changing everything in revolutionary fashion.'⁴²³

His confidence was not unique, it extended throughout the nation's community of political scientists. In writing to Carl Friedrich, Merriam noted that the two were very much in agreement 'upon fundamentals'.⁴²⁴ Friedrich led a seminar in Harvard concerned with Democracy and its problems and he too shared the understanding that democracy was flexible, that it was workable and that, ultimately, this had demonstrated that the American system was fit for purpose.

One member of Friedrich's seminar was to expand the faith in Democracy to a theoretical statement. In his 1940 book *The Politics of Democracy*, Pendleton Herring presented an account of administrative politics which neutralised the bad of American politics with the good. Alongside the recent New Deal changes, the global context is also critical for explaining Herring's admiration for American pluralism and constitutional structures, as democracies around the globe were teetering into dictatorship. Herring described a spectacle of politicians inflating arguments, pursuing selfish interests, succumbing to wide varieties of pressures and generally contributing to moments that resemble 'Chinese warfare, wherein each side tried by superior din and terror-inspiring banners and slogans to scare the others into surrender.' But, according to Herring, when the smoke of battle clears, 'the carnage was usually found to be negligible'. As such, despite the histrionics involved, democratic politics is sound politics because, as the title of one review recalls, 'The important thing is, it works.'⁴²⁵ It worked because it provided a formula through which to 'seek a closer relationship between our pressing social needs and our picture world of aspirations' and to 'scrutinize the adequacy of existing institutions' without collapsing under the pressure of debate between conflicting sides. The 'bad' side of democracy was only really bad if the observer insisted on keeping to an antiquated view of 'representation' with educated citizens and responsible leaders. If they would reconsider this doctrine, then Americans would be able to see that politics and democracy 'bear the same relation that housework does to homemaking'.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ 'Newspaper article', *Charles E Merriam Papers* [Box 284, Folder.] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁴²⁴ 'Letter to Carl Friedrich from Merriam' (1940), *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 48, folder 12] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁴²⁵ M. E. Tracy; "Important thing is, It Works" *The Saturday Review* (April 13, 1940), p. 14.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*

The book was well-received by political scientists who viewed it as an immensely important statement. In a review for *APSR*, E.E. Schattschneider remarked that it was ‘required reading’, and that ‘[A]s a consequence of this re-examination, the whole subject undergoes a substantial transformation’.⁴²⁷ Not only did Herring’s work reflect a new understanding, but it also belied a ‘new mood’ in which, ‘Confronted with the prospect of losing our institutions, we look at them with new eyes and discover that even the faults of the system have something to be said for them.’ This, Schattschneider astutely observed, ‘was a mark of the times.’⁴²⁸ Peter Odegard offered a similarly glowing review, commenting on the book’s significance as, ‘one of the most lucidly expressed and penetrating analyses of the theoretical assumptions upon which American democracy rests that I have seen. At the risk of hyperbole I should not hesitate to bracket it with De Tocqueville’s treatise’⁴²⁹ Outside of the discipline, the book received a warm write-up in the *Saturday Review*, where M.E. Tracy quoted Herring extensively and admiringly. And he praised the realistic and street-level view, ‘Mr Herring’s scholarly book – and it is scholarly from beginning to end – illustrates nothing so beautifully as the difference between the way things are discussed academically and the way they are actually done.’⁴³⁰

There were, inevitably, also some criticisms to the work from within Political Science. Schattschneider who had given the work a glowing review, was a proponent of a somewhat different account of American politics a year later. Herring had privileged the ‘easy going, rough-and-tumble politics of compromise and barter’ and saw strong parties as an impediment to this process as, ‘Public policies are too broad, intricate, and dynamic to be handled thus.’⁴³¹ For Schattschneider, however, the scale of American government required more programmatic party organisation than Herring seemed to accept. Schattschneider’s 1941 *Party Government* provided, among other things, an extended argument for a strong two party system. In it, he observed that around 33,000 bills were introduced in the American House of Representatives in the sixty-first Congress, which ‘Professor Herring seems to associate this condition of Congress with democracy, adequate representation, liberty, etc.... But democracy is more than mere confusion.’⁴³²

Nonetheless, there was an important thread linking Schattschneider and Herring which drew them together in this moment. What was ultimately important was the way in which groups and individuals came together to compromise on diverging interests without endangering the whole system of government. This marked an important moment, a rejection of the ‘republican’ tradition,

⁴²⁷ E.E. Schattschneider, “The Politics of Democracy, by Pendleton Herring” *American Political Science Review*, (August 1940), p. 788.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Peter Odegard, “The Politics of Democracy, by Pendleton Herring” *Political Science Quarterly*, (September 1940), p. 474.

⁴³⁰ Tracy, ‘Important thing is, it works’, p.14.

⁴³¹ Ibid, p. 238.

⁴³² E. E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (Greenwood Press: 1942), p. 141.

and the growing acceptance of coalitions and compromises. For this reason, even without subscribing wholesale to Herring's analysis, Schattschneider could conclude that 'His book does something to the subject'.⁴³³

By 1940 political scientists had reflected upon the state of the discipline and concluded that the subject matter marked a considerable importance in American life. As Odegard noted in a 1940 article,

The need for precise knowledge in the science of government becomes daily more urgent. The Jacksonian assumption of equality of competence and the naïve reliance upon Providence to pull us through were never wholly valid. But their invalidity is certainly greater today than in Jackson's time, since we have substituted for a relatively homogenous, simple agrarian order a 'highly specialized society of engineers, machinists, bacteriologists, electricians, and masters of a thousand or more professions, crafts and arts.'⁴³⁴

Amidst the complexity of the day, a discipline that could speak authoritatively on the problem of political organisation and administration and could provide insightful and distinctive analysis on new policy initiatives, was highly prized.

Moreover, it was a discipline that could not merely analyse and describe. It was a discipline that could persuade and inspire. Amidst a global crisis of democracy, political scientists had found a way to reassure democrats, at home and abroad, as to the fundamental saliency of their system. For this reason Odegard also noted, 'our job is one not alone of scientific description and dissection but also of propaganda for those great human values that lie beyond the reach of logic or of science.'⁴³⁵

⁴³³ Schattschneider, "The Politics of Democracy, by Pendleton Herring" p. 788

⁴³⁴ Odegard, "The Political Scientist in the Democratic Service State" p. 160

⁴³⁵ Ibid, p. 157

Conclusion

American political scientists were energised by the activity of the 1930s and FDR's response to the Depression. It enabled the discipline to perform the sort of role in American life that scholars had hoped to play for decades. The fate of the discipline had experienced a dramatic transformation from the 1920s when some scholars had feared that Political Science was losing its place in American society. Going into the 1940s political scientists had a new significance to American life, both as research scholars acting as critical watchmen with studies concerning the health of American institutions and the merits of new public policy propositions, and as propagandists and public figures, reminding Americans of their democratic faith. The challenges facing America on the eve of another European war were no doubt considerable, but bolstered by the recent advancements, political scientists were poised to play an active role in whatever challenges now faced the nation.

The experience of the Great Depression and the New Deal were very different for political scientists than for other scholars in the social sciences. On the surface there were considerable commonalities between those who focused on the 'state' versus those who focused on 'society', with the former taking a much more active role in public policy debates and analyses, and in government employment. Nevertheless, for all disciplines apart from political science, the 1930s provided a decade of readjustment. Like a painful tooth pushing through the surface of a gum, economists and legal scholars had to adjust to the emergence of a large and activist state right in the middle of their research programmes. For sociologists, the apparent neglect of this subject was, paradoxically perhaps, a symbol of the growing acceptance that the 'state' mattered as a distinct entity.

Political scientists did not have to adjust to a radically different vision. Nevertheless, the unprecedented growth of the state did prompt new directions in research and yielded new understandings of American politics and government. When Pendleton Herring died in 2004 at the age of 100, he left to the American Political Science Association a collection of political artwork. Drawn from around the world, his collection of prints, sketches and paintings converged around the central theme of 'political behaviour'. Now hanging in the offices of the American Political Science Association in Washington D.C., the pictures present artful illustrations of political bargaining, politicking, and vote grubbing. Where thoughtful citizens are pictured dutifully casting a ballot, they are juxtaposed with the egregiously unprepared, maliciously inclined, or quite obviously drunk. Such depictions present engaging and instantly recognisable accounts of politics as seen by painters and artists over many years and many continents. And yet, by the end of the 1930s, these accounts of politics as a dynamic process in which interests are pursued and compromises struck, had become part of the image of American democracy subscribed to by a growing number of American political scientists.

Had Herring donated his collection not to the APSA but to the University of Chicago to be hung in 1313 East Street, in what became in the 1970s the Charles E. Merriam Centre for Public Administration, then his paintings might have appeared somewhat incongruous. The building had been designed ‘to recognize and honor public service practice’, and the architects had brought this to life with an interior ‘suffused with an elegant sobriety; wood-panelled and wood-trimmed, marble stairwells, fireplaces in conference rooms’.⁴³⁶ Visitors to the main conference room were also treated to the spectacle of wood flooring ‘largely covered by a reddish-hued Persian rug’.⁴³⁷ Here was the manifestation of the respect held by Charles E. Merriam for an efficient administration that supported and implemented the work of democracy. And this was a view of politics that was becoming increasingly challenged.

In many ways, a striking accomplishment of Political Science in the 1930s was to simultaneously embrace the image represented by Herring and that of Merriam. Not all political scientists viewed the image of political deal-making with the same paternal pride as Herring, who joyously termed it the ‘smoke of battle’. But the essential idea of a broker state, where various interests, political machines and groups collide to make a working democracy permeated the discipline. Progressively throughout the decade political scientists had sought out public audiences to persuade them as to the essential soundness of the American system, reasoning that despite the problems, democracy ‘works’. At the same time, political scientists also studied the structural and organisational flaws of the system. Studies at new institutions such as the one in Chicago analysed these developments in detail, asking how American politics might be better administered and how the institutions of government might be better organised.

The two primary concerns of the discipline – the theoretical defence of democracy and the practical interest in the problems of American democracy – were unlikely companions which pointed to dramatically different stances towards politics. On the one hand was a rather lackadaisical view that willingly downplayed faults in the system to assume an outward confidence in the stability of ‘democracy’, and on the other hand was a laser beam gaze that detected many hidden and difficult flaws of the system. But, these two perspectives were intricately related, both were sourced in the same concern that had festered in the discipline in the 1920s when the discipline endured frustration that politicians, other social scientists, and members of the public were not taking seriously, or seriously enough, the primacy of ‘politics’ in American life.

⁴³⁶ Bruce Thomas, “1313’s Hidden History” p. 3

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

American Political Science and the Warfare State

1940 - 45

Introduction

Young, idealistic and something of a visionary educational reformer, the president of the University of Chicago in 1940, Robert Maynard Hutchins, viewed the preeminent role of the university as that of ‘general’, rather than ‘professional’, education. The prime function of higher education was, ‘nothing less than to procure a moral, intellectual and spiritual revolution throughout the world’.⁴³⁸ Hutchins had little time for the frivolous pursuits of a wealthy or lazy undergraduate class and in 1939 he received popular notoriety for abolishing the university’s intercollegiate football team, ‘The Chicago Maroons’, stating that he had no desire to sacrifice educational goals to commercial ends. A hero to those such as President Lowell of Harvard, whose anti-athleticism had deep roots in educational ideals, Hutchins declared that, ‘[f]ootball has no place in the kind of institution Chicago aspires to be.’⁴³⁹

Whilst Hutchins could demand an end to the football team, he had felt constrained to accept the presence in his university of other groups which, he believed, transcended the ‘true’ purpose of the academy and jeopardized its independence. In particular Hutchins resented the existence of the Public Administration Clearing House, whose political scientists were frequently consulted by practitioners, civil servants and local groups. Although Hutchins respected the work that public administrators and men like Charles E. Merriam and Leonard D. White carried out in the field of policy formation and

⁴³⁸ Quoted in William G. Bowen and Harold T. Shapiro (eds), *Universities and Their Leadership* (Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 112

⁴³⁹ Robert Maynard Hutchins, ‘College Football is an Infernal Nuisance’, *Sports Illustrated* (Oct 18, 1954) [Accessed, <https://www.si.com/vault/1954/10/18/546757/college-football-is-an-infernal-nuisance>]

advice at the local and national level, he was wary of the dichotomy that these men posited between ‘politics’ and ‘administration’. Hutchins viewed the PACH as a thinly-formed attempt to give academic status to political participation by men who identified themselves – rather dubiously considering the strong political visions they also carried – as non-partisan. Despite the attempt of men like White to argue the opposite, Hutchins, not unfairly, believed that ‘administration’ could never be a science.⁴⁴⁰

Hutchins also had a fraught relationship with political scientists working in the nearby Social Science Research Building. In later years the political scientist Harold Gosnell would characterise the president as having believed that all ‘worthwhile ideas were to be found in the Great Books. Social Science research in a metropolis was trivial.’⁴⁴¹ Although overstated, Gosnell’s observation contained an element of truth. Hutchins approved of some social scientific research, such as that being carried out by the university’s sociologists into groups and attitudes, but he could also be explicitly critical of attempts to conduct empirical research on ‘social’ problems which he considered to be contrived, or lacking a serious ‘scientific’ foundation. This criticism was particularly directed towards the university’s political scientists and on occasion Hutchins would accuse Merriam of creating in the department he chaired a ‘monument to his passing whims’.⁴⁴² This contention was a rather harsh critique of the work of men like Harold Gosnell and Harold Lasswell, both of whom were to gain considerable distinction within the discipline in future years. But it also held some veracity as Hutchins rather perceptively noted the dilemma that the whole discipline faced in balancing its interest in political affairs with a claim to produce dispassionate and impartial research.

The war was to sweep aside the problem with which Hutchins had been grappling. Following the war, the vision of the role of the university shared by Hutchins and a healthy smattering of university presidents – which privileged the ‘general’ training of meritorious undergraduates – would be spectacularly overshadowed by the unrelenting rise of the professional research university. This transformation was underway well before any bombs fell on Pearl Harbor. During watchful months of formal ‘neutrality’ at the turn of the 1940s, the impending international crises worried university leaders that American science was not in a satisfactory state of preparedness for whatever challenges might unfold. Tackling this problem were men including Harvard President James Bryant Conant, and Vannevar Bush, President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, who were brought together in the National Defense Research Committee (NDRC). Even though American science was in far better shape in 1939 than it had been at the beginning of the First World War (expenditure for applied and basic research in the natural sciences had reached \$200 million compared with \$30 million at the start

⁴⁴⁰ See; Michael Heaney, ‘The Chicago School that Never Was’, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 2007), p.755.

⁴⁴¹ Harold F. Gosnell, ‘Autobiography’ (Undated.) *HFGP* [Box 3, Folder 10] SCRC, RL, Chicago.

⁴⁴² Barry Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p. 278.

of the 1920s), according to the nation's leading scientists and university administrators the American academy was yet to reach its full potential.⁴⁴³

The members of the NDRC devised a system of contract research in which the government would provide contracts to academics, which included most famously the Manhattan project to produce an atomic bomb, and the Radiation Laboratory at MIT, charged with developing an effective microwave radar. Such projects sucked most of the natural sciences into new defence-orientated laboratories so that even before Pearl Harbor a large proportion of the nation's physicists had relocated.⁴⁴⁴ This system had come about because the members of the NDRC were largely conservative Republicans who had grown dissatisfied with the expansion of government during the New Deal, and were troubled by the idea of yet more federal involvement in the private sphere. As a solution to a difficult dilemma, 'contract' research was successful and widely accepted by university presidents. Even Hutchins, a principled advocate of the private research university and a recognised anti-war spokesperson, invited the federal government onto campus to conduct such research of national importance. With some irony, the pacifist president allowed nuclear testers to be placed under the bleachers at 'Stagg Field', the former playing field of the Chicago football team, as part of the famous 'Manhattan Project' to develop nuclear weaponry.

Over the following years, led by the natural sciences, the nationalization and further institutionalization of American academic disciplines proceeded apace. This trajectory would not entirely eclipse general undergraduate education as universities continued to command considerable importance over their own offerings. Nevertheless, a new development was in place, later to be described by Clark Kerr, in which university presidents had far fewer powers and central organization gave way to the whims of individual departments based in national communities.⁴⁴⁵

These trends were most notable for the harder sciences, but we shall see in this chapter that they would also significantly elevate the work of the occupants of American social science departments and of institutions like Chicago's Public Administration Clearing House, which acted as a bridge between academics and public servants. Unlike natural science, social science did not have a formal system of contract research from government that could clarify the divide between private expertise and public service. Nevertheless, any lingering doubts as to the proper responsibilities of the social sciences quickly evaporated amidst the national emergency.

⁴⁴³Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁴Ibid. p. 7.

⁴⁴⁵Kerr would term the phrase 'multiversity'. See; Clark Kerr, *Uses of the University* (Harvard University Press; 2001, 5th Ed).

America's entry into World War II precipitated a vast expansion of the American Political Science profession. General trends prompted a nationalization and professionalization of graduate education and of social science but beyond this, as this chapter will argue, the nation's political scientists also manoeuvred itself to take particular advantage of these trends. As we shall see in this chapter, for no division of scholars was the experience of war quite so invigorating or transformative as it was for political scientists. The impact of the Second World War on the discipline was quite different to that of the 'Great War' of the 1910s. The First World War had inspired mixed feelings for political scientists who were broadly Progressive in their outlook: on the one hand the massive growth in government, and demonstration of its ability to move swiftly and purposefully on a large scale had had a galvanizing effect. But on the other hand, the subordination of social goals to the national security state had concerned scholars.

In contrast, the Second World War inspired a much clearer and less conflicting message to the discipline. Political Scientists in the 1940s were engulfed by an unmistakable sense that the nation had come to demand greater things from the discipline than at any previous juncture. The war had prompted a massive expansion of the American state apparatus and in viewing these changes political scientists were moved to expand upon the theories and methods and reorient their discipline around the challenges of studying a big and diffuse permanent government, unprecedented even in the most dramatic and heady years of the New Deal. In the process, American political scientists pushed into the public realm, and envisioned a new, more integrated and activist role in American society.

The experience of American political scientists in the Second World War also marks a notable distinction with the experience of practitioners in other social science disciplines. Numerous social scientists revised their research programmes and accepted a new wartime role in American society in response to the new emergency conditions. But political scientists were particularly energized. The rise of the state and the sheer immediacy of 'political' issues in this period elevated their subject matter. Moreover, the experience of seeing first-hand the levers of government from within proliferating war bureaus was enough to enliven the discipline over and above kindred divisions of scholarship for whom the experience was no less affecting, but somewhat more disorienting and less clearly energizing.

There has been little work on the development of American Political Science during the Second World War. Besides the general disregard for the history of Political Science among historians, in large part this lack of attention has been exacerbated due to the fact that the period is parenthesized on either side by the New Deal and the Cold War; two periods long-understood by historians as important moments in the development of social scientific expertise in the United

States.⁴⁴⁶ Because of this, scholars interested in investigating important topics like the growth of the American social science profession or changes in social scientific research programmes have come to view the war as at best seedtime for developments that come into fruition later, or, in more extreme cases, as a period of little interest, as the urgencies of war distracted from the development of academic research. In particular, Daniel Bell's important work on post-1945 American social science offers the impression that the major developments of twentieth century American social science begin only once the war has ended.⁴⁴⁷ As he wrote, 'the attention to the social sciences and the claims made by the social sciences were largely during the post-war period, and one is therefore justified in considering the period between 1945 and 1970 as a single period in which a set of promises were made – in disciplines, in methodology and techniques, and in social programs – which indicated that the social sciences had come of age.'⁴⁴⁸ What this ignores, of course, is the vibrancy and importance of the social sciences in the earlier period.⁴⁴⁹

This lack of attention is particularly acute in the field of Political Science compared to that of other social sciences such as Economics and Social Psychology. Although the vast majority of scholarship concerning these other disciplines also focuses on either the New Deal or the period post-1945, occasionally the war context is seen as an important period of seedtime for new methodological developments.⁴⁵⁰ In contrast, because American Political Science is often viewed as having been methodologically backward until at least 1960, there has been little incentive to do any digging into the development of research programmes during the war.⁴⁵¹ Or, scholars have even used the war as partial explanation for the lack of development, pointing to the high federal employment figures of social science in war agencies to imply that this led to disruption in the proper course of research.⁴⁵² Exceptions are among those who are interested not in the fate of home-grown academic traditions, but

⁴⁴⁶ See especially works cited in chapters 3 and 5.

⁴⁴⁷ See; Daniel Bell, *The Social Sciences Since the Second World War* (Transaction Books, 1981). This is also true for the more recent volume, Blackhouse and Fontaine (eds) *The History of the Social Sciences Since 1945* (CUP, 2010).

⁴⁴⁸ Bell, *The Social Science Since the Second World War*, p. 23.

⁴⁴⁹ For a related argument see, Joel Isaac, 'The Human Sciences in Cold War America', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Sep, 2007), pp. 725 – 746.

⁴⁵⁰ Daniel Bell holds this view. Also see; Mary S. Morgan 'Economics' in Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross (eds.) *The Modern Social Sciences. The Cambridge history of science*; Ellen Herman, *The romance of American psychology: political culture in the age of experts, 1940 – 1970*, (University of California Press; 1995); James Sparrow and Abbot, 'Hot War, Cold War: The Structures of Sociological Action, 1940 – 1955', in Craig Calhoun (ed), *Sociology in America A History* (An ASA Centennial Publication. University of Chicago Press; 2007).

⁴⁵¹ This refers to a widely-held claim that the methodological equipment of the discipline was revolutionised by a 'behavioral revolution' in the 1950s. For an influential founding statement to this idea see; Robert A. Dahl, 'The Behavioral Approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest', *APSR*, Vol. 55, No. 4, (Dec., 1961), pp. 765 This narrative continues to exert a strong hold on the discipline, but it is also largely ahistorical and will be challenged in following chapter.

⁴⁵² See; Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess and Behaviorism*; Terrance Ball, 'American Political Science in its Postwar Political Context' in James Farr and Raymond Seidelman (eds), *Discipline and History*, (University of Michigan Press, 1993); and, David Easton, John Gunnell and Luigi Graziano (eds), *The Development of political science: a comparative survey* (Routledge; 1991).

in the introduction of a new tradition of ‘political theory’ informed by the stark European experience with the holocaust.⁴⁵³

Nevertheless, as this chapter argues, the war years were not merely a lacuna in the discipline’s history; rather they were crucial in fostering new ideas and ambitions among American political scientists. In these years political scientists pointed to the exceptional circumstances of war to expand the scope and remit of the discipline, to suggest new ventures for research and to impose upon American society a greater public role for its practitioners – greater even than the role they had played in the New Deal. Not only did political scientists seize, under emergency conditions, an enhanced role in American life, but they envisaged a permanent expansion in the role and scope of the discipline in American society.

This chapter makes that argument in three sections. The first focuses on the role of political scientists in public service roles, showing how scholars became deeply integrated into the fabric of a rapidly expanding federal government. The second section builds on the first to trace how these experiences in government fostered changes in the perspective and research programmes of political scientists. And finally the third section shows how political scientists engaged in public debate during the war, rivalling in the first instance entrenched isolationism in American society and in the second instance a new version of intellectual anti-statism that emerged in the United States during the war. Throughout each of these sections, we see shall how the war at once stimulated and invigorated the discipline of Political Science in the United States.

Part I

Political Science in the Warfare Academy, 1940 - 45

America on the Eve

With the spectre of dictatorship spreading across Europe, Roosevelt had made a series of gestures towards preventing a global conflagration. But parrying these moves was a large and firmly rooted isolationist opposition. For many Americans, the memories of the First World War and the failures of the League of Nations still lingered. For some, like Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota, the wartime experience held an even starker lesson: one of malicious collusion among military and industrial

⁴⁵³ See; John Gunnell, *The descent of political theory: the genealogy of an American vocation* (University of Chicago Press; 1993); Ira Katznelson, *Desolation and enlightenment: political knowledge after total war, totalitarianism, and the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press; 2003).

officials, coldly marching the nation into a bloody and deadly conflict. As the head of a 1936 committee into the investigation of the cause of American entry into the First World War, Nye had publicised this popular theory and by the late 1930s, as head of an ‘America First’ movement, he continued to argue that ‘When War Comes, Democracy Goes’. Forced to accommodate the isolationist chorus, Roosevelt had expressed sympathy with the forces of democracy worldwide but committed the United States to no formal involvement, signing five different neutrality acts between 1935 and 1939.⁴⁵⁴

With the forces of Nazi Germany encroaching upon Eastern Europe in late 1939 Roosevelt continued to uphold the popular demand for neutrality. In September FDR announced, ‘This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well’.⁴⁵⁵ Nevertheless, following the fall of France in June 1940, American attitudes quickly changed. Roosevelt’s warnings about the Nazi threat appeared increasingly appropriate, even among Republicans. Two days after the fall of France, the internationalist Wendell Wilkie defeated the isolationist contenders William Howard Taft and Arthur Vandenburg for the Republican nomination. Faced by the immediate threat of German National Socialism, Americans came to accept that the U.S. could not be entirely disengaged. One poll taken after the fall of France demonstrated that 60 percent of Republicans approved of FDR’s international stance.⁴⁵⁶ By December of the following year, following the Japanese attack on the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, America entered the war. After a few months, isolationist sentiment was significantly depleted.

Experts and the State; 1940 – 1945

Social scientists were to become deeply involved in the war effort. Federal civilian employment in the United States more than tripled between 1939 to its highest point in mid-1943. More than two million jobs were created in these years, many immediately after Pearl Harbor – a time when ten major new administrative structures were created. Academic social scientists were key figures responsible for filling these jobs. In part, social scientists filled these posts because of their expertise. As a post-war report noted, ‘the academic group proved themselves to be surprisingly practical and adaptable. Graduate training in a number of fields demonstrated its practical value in the quality of the service

⁴⁵⁴See; James Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (Knopf, 1995); David Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929 -- 1945* (OUP, 1999); Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: the New Deal and the origins of our time* (Liveright Publishing, 2014).

⁴⁵⁵ Franklin D. Roosevelt, ‘120 – Fireside Chat’. 3rd September 1939. *The American Presidency Project* [Accessed; <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15801>].

⁴⁵⁶ Gareth Davies, in Davies and Zelizer (ed) *America at the Ballot Box* pg. 159.

rendered by students with advanced degrees, notably in economics, business administration, public administration, political science and law'.⁴⁵⁷ To this extent the 'professional', specialist attributes of social scientists was being appreciated by government and the particular characteristics of each discipline were largely irrelevant. As in the First World War, it was the basic training of social scientists that government found attractive in employing these men and women.

On the other hand, the concentration of social scientists was less a result of the active need for specialist knowledge and training than of the fact that many employers were reliant upon a series of 'old boy' networks. Because of this there were often groups of particular divisions of social scientists in particular bureaus. Psychologists were heavily recruited to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), where they conducted intelligence work. Economists were also recruited to the OSS, where they worked with natural scientists and engineers in departments such as the Enemy Objectives Unit and the Statistical Research Group.⁴⁵⁸ Meanwhile, political scientists were placed at the National Resources Planning Board, the Bureau of the Budget and recruited to train members of the military at the school of government being conducted by the US Army at the University of Virginia, whose purpose was to train Army officers in the various fields of government in order that they might take over and successfully operate the governments of occupied countries.⁴⁵⁹

Even if social scientists were not explicitly recruited for their professional knowledge, the experience of working in government and being part of the war effort had a significant impact on how these scholars viewed their role in society, and that of their discipline. As Mary Morgan has argued, the war helped economists to view their discipline and subject matter in terms of social engineering.⁴⁶⁰ Psychologists too changed their expectations of public service, paying increased attention to practical problems such as social management and decision making.⁴⁶¹ The war even pushed sociologists to a greater role in war related research. Outside of the relatively estranged subfield of 'social work' sociologists had been among the most recalcitrant of all the social sciences in terms of public responsibility during the New Deal. And yet, the war encouraged sociologists such as Louis Wirth to 'flirt with the idea of a science of social technology'.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁷ Joseph Erigina McLean, *Public Service and University Education* (Princeton University Press; 1949), p. 30

⁴⁵⁸ Roger E. Blackhouse and Philippe Fontaine, 'Toward a History of the Social Sciences', in Blackhouse and Fontaine (eds) *The History of the Social Sciences Since 1945* (Cambridge University Press; 2010), pp. 186-7

⁴⁵⁹ 'Letter; Wylie Kilpatrick to Edwin Cotrell', (July 27, 1929). Stanford University Department of Political Science, records, 1919 – 1988, [SC0124 ACCN 1988-079.] DSCUA, SUL.

⁴⁶⁰ See; Morgan 'Economics'; and, essays in, Blackhouse and Fontaine (eds) *The History of the Social Sciences Since 1945*, p. 186.

⁴⁶¹ See; Herman, *The romance of American psychology: political culture in the age of experts, 1940 – 1970*, (University of California Press; 1995).

⁴⁶² Sparrow and Abbot, 'Hot War, Cold War: The Structures of Sociological Action, 1940 – 1955', p. 299.

The war had a huge impact on how American political scientists came to view their role in society. From the outset of the war, political scientists had already begun to develop a pronounced sense of professional self-assurance. In 1939 Gabriel Almond heard from an acquaintance, Fred Schuman, with news of his latest book, *Europe on the Eve*. As Schuman explained this would be ‘a kind of undiplomatic history and will attempt to show exactly how, why, and at what tempo the world is going to hell. Alfred Knopf, my publisher, was so depressed by reading the first chapter that he couldn’t bear to complete it. But he’s publishing it anyway.’⁴⁶³ By 1940, as the global crisis was building and Almond received another letter from his friend and Iowa State political scientist John Vieg, which said the following; ‘[t]he world that we have known and which you and I have dreamed of improving is reeling under our eyes I can’t be sure that we in America are even yet sufficiently resolved to do what we can to prevent the final catastrophe.’⁴⁶⁴ In his letter to Almond, Vieg had described how he considered that a new level of permanent, formal international cooperation between the six major English speaking nations was the only way of averting near-certain global political and economic disaster. As he explained, ‘[b]ecause I feel all of this so keenly, I am afraid I give even more of my time than I should to public speaking throughout the state. During the month of October alone, I shall have given two addresses in Des Moines, one in Grinnell, and two at state-wide conferences held here on the campus.’⁴⁶⁵

When the United States officially entered the war in December 1941 a report of the American Political Science Association’s Committee on Wartime Services stated the following; ‘It seems to the Committee that the customary individualism of the profession is a luxury that cannot be unimpaired in war-time; political scientists must not go through the war with a business-as-usual attitude toward research and critical writing. The crises upon the nation and awaiting the nation demand that the profession recognize priorities in its scholarly work’.⁴⁶⁶ As this report implied, the discipline was thrown into the service of the war. Networks of political scientists built up in the past two decades, particularly centring in the Public Administration Clearing House in Chicago, became orientated towards helping America mobilize for war. The question of mobilization was an important one, as was starkly demonstrated in the Senate when Harry Truman chaired a Special Committee

⁴⁶³ Letter to Gabriel Almond from Fred Schuman, (Feb 10, 1939). Box 1. Folder 1. Gabriel A. Almond Papers, ACCN 2002 - 254 (SC0339). Dept. SCUA, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.

⁴⁶⁴ ‘Letter: John Vieg to Gabriel Almond’, (March 4, 1940), *Gabriel A. Almond Papers*, ACCN 2002 - 254 (SC0339). [Box 1. Folder 1] DSCUA, SUL. Stanford, Calif.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁶ Committee on Wartime Services, ‘War-Time Priorities in research: A Statement by the Research Committee of the American Political Science Association’, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 37, Issue 3, (June 1943), pp. 505 – 514.

Investigating National Defense ‘which revealed major organizational problems in our war mobilization programs’.⁴⁶⁷ As American forces mobilized, public officials were faced with large questions relating to the organisation of the administrative branches of government.

Thanks in large part to the developing system of networks spawned in the 1920s and 30s among public administrators and political officials, certain senior political scientists already played an important role as advisors before America’s entry into the war. No sooner had formal entrance been declared than scholars at the PACH churned out a comprehensive bibliography of civilian mobilization.⁴⁶⁸ Among the earliest and most impressive achievements was the role played by Charles Merriam and Floyd Reeves, professor of administration in the Department of Education, in encouraging the passage of the GI Bill. In a speech delivered in 1950, Charles E. Merriam recalled to a gathering of city planners an encounter with President Roosevelt which he claimed, ‘I’ve always felt that was my high spot’. The episode occurred in late 1941 in a meeting with FDR where Merriam outlined the idea of a proposal containing extensive provisions for servicemen. As Merriam recalled, ‘President Roosevelt was appropriately enough reluctant, ‘what might people say?’ he remarked, taking a long puff at his cigarette, ‘what might people say if before we had our army mobilized, the world would begin to comment on the fact that we were already demobilizing before we struck a blow. How could we explain that? Perhaps we’d better not – at this time.’⁴⁶⁹ But, as Merriam described, together with Reeves the two men had been able to convince the President and ‘brought harmony’ out of a great deal of negotiation and what Merriam described, ‘looked like difficulty from hell to breakfast.’⁴⁷⁰

Peter Odegard was another political scientist who offered advice at the upper echelons of government. In the early 1940s Odegard took a job as Assistant to the US Secretary of the Treasury where he became an architect of the Defense Savings Program and the War Savings Program, which placed 50 billion dollars of securities ‘in the hands of more than 80 million Americans’. Odegard was also responsible for designing a ‘Freedom Train’, which carried documents on American democracy to all parts of the country. As discussed in the previous chapter, during the 1930s Odegard had written about the role of political scientists in a ‘Democratic Service State’, describing a role that served an expanded service function of the state.⁴⁷¹ In many ways his war work helped Odegard to realise his

⁴⁶⁷ Barry Karl, *Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics*, p. 275.

⁴⁶⁸ Pendleton Herring et al, ‘Civil Military Relations’, Report prepared for the Committee on public administration of the Social Science Research Council. (Public Administration Service; 1940)[Accessed <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001766895>].

⁴⁶⁹ ‘Speech given to University of Chicago Planning Club’, (April 17, 1950). CEMP. [Box 3] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Peter Odegard, “The Political Scientist in the Democratic Service State” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, pp. 140- 164.

aspirations sooner than he might have supposed possible, as the remit of American government swelled during these months of mobilization.

The 'Washington Committee' and new directions in research

It was not only at the highest levels that political scientists assumed a confident posture in relation to the war effort. Upon America's entry into the Second World War in late December 1942, a large number of political scientists had taken up jobs within the federal government at lower, administrative positions. A 1942 report noted that 341 members of the profession were currently involved in the war effort, with 196 in civilian pursuits and 145 in military roles.⁴⁷² By 1943 a widely quoted figure estimated that every large state university and most of the smaller private colleges had at least one member of the department in war service, many of whom had taken up civilian service in Washington D.C.⁴⁷³

Although these jobs were generally rather routine administrative posts, by the admission of the many political scientists who held them they were important; as Harold Gosnell wrote of his work in the Division of Field Operations, 'I am trying to do what I can for my country in time of war.'⁴⁷⁴ So great was the rush to the nation's capital that many political scientists actively sought out these positions. A young Gabriel Almond angled his former teacher, Merriam, for news of a suitable position, but received the cautionary reply, 'it is worth remembering not everyone can be in Washington.' Tellingly, however, this caution was not heeded. Almond soon joined the ranks in the Office of War Information, analysing enemy propaganda and becoming head of the Enemy Information Section.

The experience of working in government had a significant effect on how political scientists understood their role in society. Already heightened by the New Deal, scholars fiercely defended their identities not merely as administrators, but as scholars in the broad sense. As had their predecessors in earlier periods, these scholars believed that the discipline was a research-driven enterprise which fed a knowledgeable society. This is evident in the fate of the American Political Science Association during the war. Political scientists faced serious logistical challenges that threatened to disrupt the functioning of the American Political Science Association. In normal circumstances, an Executive Committee of APSA delegates based in universities around the country would meet early in the year

⁴⁷² Committee on War-Time Services of the APSA, 'The Political Scientist and National Service in War-Time-', *APSR* Vol. 36, No. 5 (Oct, 1942), p. 942.

⁴⁷³ Committee on Research, 'Instruction and Research: War-Time Priorities in Research', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (June, 1943), p. 514.

⁴⁷⁴ 'Letter: Harold F. Gosnell to Dean Redfield' (July 20, 1942), *CEMP* [Box 11, Folder 6] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

to make decisions concerning logistics for an annual conference, programmes for the year and other such matters. However, as the Executive Director of APSA Robert Cushman wrote to his colleague James Fesler, the Executive Council lacked funds for travel expenses, and federal travel restrictions made 'it impracticable to hold a meeting of the Council at the very time when we most badly need one.'⁴⁷⁵ Rising costs and travel restrictions made it difficult for the association to function, and compelled the cancellation of the annual Association conventions between 1942 and 1945.⁴⁷⁶

In the face of such challenges, APSA members went to extraordinary levels to continue the working of the professional association. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the discipline had achieved a heightened sense of importance at the end of the New Deal, and now in the wartime years there was little question for its practitioners that the profession had a role to play. As Fesler wrote to the APSA secretary Kenneth Colegrove in 1942, 'Since we have felt that the APSA and the American Society of Public Administration have a role to place in national defense in the maintenance of public morale and the development of governmental personnel and techniques, we should continue our annual meeting unless the government positively asks us to refrain.'⁴⁷⁷ Between 1942 and 1945 a committee based in Washington and known as the 'Washington Committee of Political Scientists' took on a number of the major responsibilities of the Association. Under the chairmanship of Marshall E. Dimock, the Committee organised to continue the annual meetings during wartime in Washington D.C. where so many of the APSA members were already resident. Turnout was high considering the logistical constraints facing scholars with the very high restrictions on travel. A single 'smoker', in November 1944 drew together a crowd of 83 people.⁴⁷⁸ Moreover, radio technology allowed for at least six half-hour sessions to be broadcasts across the country.

The Washington Committee was important for a number of respects, not least in stoking the continued sense of relevance of the discipline and its professional association which in other circumstances might have dissipated during the war years, as scholars such as Bell suggest happened. One of the major successes of the Washington Committee was to keep the association solvent. During the war a large number of resignations came from men filling military service, or from tightened finances. In the 1943 meeting, it was decided that each member of the Washington Committee would be involved in drawing up lists of potential members. A person in each of the major agencies of government already a member of the Association would 'be asked to meet with two or three of his

⁴⁷⁵ 'Letter Robert E. Cushman to James W Fesler'. (Feb., 1943) *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. 'Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board'. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

⁴⁷⁶ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, pp. 92 – 93.

⁴⁷⁷ 'Letter James Fesler to Kenneth Colegrove' (June 25, 1942). *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. 'Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board'. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

⁴⁷⁸ Anon. 'Fortieth Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Feb., 1945), p. 144.

colleagues and between them to work out a list of prospective members'.⁴⁷⁹ Among those targeted were administrators, lawyers, and board members in the upper echelons as well as those below 'Class One' but above the lower grades of scientific management and budgeting; researchers, 'dealing with political and governmental data, including international and foreign affairs'; and young men and women 'who have had a year or more of graduate work in political science and who, but for the war, would normally be teaching or continuing graduate work or research.' This latter category principally concerned those of 'junior technical assistant' rank.⁴⁸⁰ To produce this membership, a letter was circulated among members of the profession, asking them to invite any colleagues, 'governmental officials, researchers, newspapermen, lawyers or other public-spirited citizens who should be invited to membership at this time.' As the letter continued, '[w]e feel that the activities of the Association are making an important contribution to the war effort and post-war reconstruction.'⁴⁸¹

The network of scholars brought together in the Washington meetings also helped to stoke ideas of disciplinary revision that would blossom in the next decade. In 1943 James Fesler was one of a number of self-described 'young turks' who lobbied to rejuvenate the *APSR*, reflecting the fact that many of its membership and readers were increasingly involved in government bureaus. The *Review* had been under the dedicated purview of Frederick Ogg for a number of decades now, and Ogg had continued to singlehandedly review and publish the journal. But, now with a greater degree of scholarship being written in government bureaus the demands of the journal were changing and scholars wanted more up to date information about government, a greater focus on the administrative arm of government and less arid description of legislation. A group of younger scholars working in the bureaus began a movement, beginning with a letter stating their position addressed to the President of APSA. As Fesler replied to the letter's author, David Truman, 'I am immensely encouraged by the very fact that these things have been put down on paper and will get a sympathetic consideration by the President of the Association. I still doubt that the Old Guard is aware of the number of political scientists that are in a Young Turk mood about the Review.'⁴⁸² It would wait until the end of the war until these changes would be fully felt, but when Ogg was convinced to retire in 1949 he was replaced by a much larger, more sophisticated staff and the journal would be reoriented to the new demands. The transformation of the *Review* would reflect a growth of knowledge about government in tandem with a growth of government.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid. pp. 139 – 140.

⁴⁸¹ 'Letter from Ken Colegrove', *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. 'Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board'. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

⁴⁸² Letter to David B. Truman from James W. Fesler, (July 24 1943) *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. 'Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board'. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

Finally, the continuation of APSA, under the guise of the 'Washington Committee' was important for sustaining a location in which to discuss the overall nature, scope and purpose of the discipline, specifically it allowed scholars to stake out new directions in neighbouring social sciences. As detailed above, attitudes within the field of public administration were shifting towards a new 'realistic' and broad account that placed administration not as a separate science from politics but as a vital part of the political order itself. This new perspective required greater interaction between scholars of different disciplines. Responding to a letter sent around by the APSA president soliciting advice on the future direction of research, James Fesler responded, 'Just as the economists have had to take government into account, political scientists must increasingly take into account the social purposes of government, forces that vie for influence on it, and, in sum, the reactions of government to the stimuli of the environment.'⁴⁸³ As Fesler continued, '[i]t would be my hope that your group would aid less the scholar with a standard approach than the scholar with a non-traditional approach, - that is, one who was concerned about the interaction between government and its environment, and concerned more about the central problems than about the separate branches of the social sciences and the established fields of political science.'⁴⁸⁴

At the same time, other disciplines seemed to be encroaching onto intellectual territory that was previously the sole preserve of political scientists. As one report prepared for APSA in 1943 stated, 'the contribution to the understanding of political phenomena made by... other sister fields of knowledge is undoubtedly the inevitable and wholesome by-product of the fact that administrators are confronted, not by discrete phenomena, but by situations in their totality and complexity'. Pendleton Herring was one among a number of leading figures in the discipline to hold this view and in 1944 he warned a meeting of the APSA Washington Committee that, 'A new field of usefulness is offered our profession. If we do not meet the need, it will be met- by other professions, perhaps less well prepared from the standpoint of political scientists.'⁴⁸⁵ By 1945 he was to offer a more optimistic attitude, in the pages of the *Review* with an article on the future role of Political Science in the United States, in which he emphasised great changes and stated, 'The common concern of other social sciences with problems impinging upon government will help in expanding the scope of Political Science.'⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ 'Letter to William Anderson' (August 12, 1944), *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. 'Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board'. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

⁴⁸⁴ Kenneth Colegrove, 'Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Feb., 1944), p. 136.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁶ Pendleton Herring, 'Political Science in the Next Decade', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 39, (Aug, 1945), p. 766.

Part II

Transformations in the study of politics

The decampment of political scientists from the academy to war bureaus prompted a transition in the discipline as it became clear to many scholars-turned-administrators that certain questions with which they and their predecessors had been concerned during the 1920s and 30s were at odds with the actual set of problems these scholars were now encountering. This transition had been developing in the previous decade, as we have seen in the previous chapter, and the beginning of the war years coincided with the emergence of a number of studies that had been initiated in the late 1930s and had viewed the political nature of public administration. In 1942 James Fesler's large, nationwide study of state regulatory agencies was a prime product of a newly developing Political Science that was more interested in administration than in legislative politics. As the entry to the book stated, '[t]ransference to administrative agencies of powers traditionally associated with legislatures and courts has destroyed old categories of political science and makes necessary a re-examination of established concepts of governmental organization and democratic control.'

If these transformations were already underway the Second World War nevertheless instigated a gear change, as scholars became increasingly uneasy with existing scholarship on public administration and hungry for a new type of more 'realistic' and wide-ranging research. As one scholar has reflected, the 'academics among them who arrived clutching Leonard D. White's and John M. Pfiffner's textbooks found little occasion to consult them. Returning to the campuses they brought a zest for teaching and writing in a wholly new vein.'⁴⁸⁷ In part, desk-bound researchers such as Leonard D. White and his acolytes had never become truly integrated into the institutions which they studied. But more importantly, there was a transformation afoot in government itself. As government was taking on more and more, the essential nature of American politics and public administration transformed from one dealing with questions of economy and efficiency, to a broader question of mobilization and management of resources.

The transformation of the American state between 1942 and 1945 was indeed extraordinary, greater in magnitude than anything as yet witnessed by American political scientists during the twentieth century. A new system of war finance would embed the federal government more deeply within American society than had the earlier attempts of the New Deal, creating mass income taxation

⁴⁸⁷Rowland Egger, 'The Period of Crisis: 1933 to 1945', in Frederick C. Mosher (ed), *American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future* (Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, and The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration; University of Alabama Press, 1975).

and vast structural deficits for the first time in the nation's history.⁴⁸⁸ A new War Production Board took control over 'vital materials' as well as the proliferation of war contracts directed by the military which dwarfed the earlier efforts of the National Recovery Administration and involved the federal government in affairs of management and labour much more extensively than the Wagner Act of the last half of the 1930s. Then in 1942 the State War Powers Act expanded the authority of the president. If the New Deal had seem to create a vast 'alphabet soup' of agencies during the previous decade, they were dwarfed in size and scope by these new War Agencies. Lend-Lease alone spent more in six years than all of the New Deal emergency programs had in a decade, spending \$50 billion between 1941 and 1946, compared with \$40 between 1933 and 1943.⁴⁸⁹

In 1940 the Texan scholar and former Chicago graduate student V.O. Key Jr. published an *APSR* article which provided a first glimpse of the reorientation that was afoot in the discipline. Key had taken up a position at the Bureau of the Budget which had been set up in the late 1930s. In an essay titled 'The Lack of a Budgetary Theory', Key questioned the division between 'administrative' and 'political' aspects of budgeting. He argued that with too much attention placed on the former, the 'absorption of energies in the establishment of the mechanical foundations for budgeting has diverted attention from the basic budgeting problem (on the expenditure side) namely: On what basis shall it be decided to allocate x dollars to activity A instead of activity B?'.⁴⁹⁰ In other words, Key had discovered that whilst public administrators had spent years considering how to spend circumscribed budgets efficiently, they had ignored the real problem: how to decide how to divvy up resources. This second question was larger, less technical, and more complex and asking it would raise all sorts of questions resting on value-laden presumptions. It was in contemplating this that Key asked, 'What factors govern decisions of budgetary officials?' Public administration had come to seem much less antiseptic than before.⁴⁹¹

During the war, the Bureau began to take on a more active role under the leadership of a new director, Harold D. Smith. This organisation might well have taken a prominent role in the orchestration of American resources in the 1930s, but, as John Gaus reflected in 1946, for a number of years it had 'continued to be dominated by the ideas that characterized it in the twenties', including the clear cut division between 'administrative' and 'political' matters.⁴⁹² Stepping into the role in 1939, Smith, like Key, saw the role of the Bureau as far more political than administrative, and he

⁴⁸⁸See; Elliot W. Brownlee, *Federal taxation in America: a short history*, (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004, 2nd edition).

⁴⁸⁹ James Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴⁹⁰ V.O. Key Jr., 'The Lack of a Budgetary Theory', *American Political Science* Vol. 34 Issue 6 (1940), p. 1138.

⁴⁹¹*Ibid.*

⁴⁹²John M Gaus, *Research in Public Administration* in William Anderson and John M. Gaus, *Research in Public Administration: Part I. Report of the Committee on public administration of the Social Science Research Council*, (Chicago: Committee on public administration of the Social Science Research Council by Public Administration Service, 1945), p. 127.

really extended the role of the Bureau into a central agency of the Executive Office. As James Sundquist, a graduate in public administration recruited by Donald Stone, recalled, the Bureau served ‘as an extension of the White House’ in the war years; ‘we were indoctrinated with the idea that every time we acted, it was the President himself acting.’⁴⁹³ The Bureau also became a hub for the discipline of Political Science, or at least the subfield of public administration. As Sundquist further recalled, the Bureau ‘carried out a very active recruiting program to skim the cream of the Public Administration people out of the colleges and it was a training ground for public administration personnel throughout the government.’⁴⁹⁴

As a member of the Bureau, Key watched the transformation of this organization closely. At one APSA meeting he praised the efforts made by members of the Bureau to document and retain the records of their work for assistance and recommended ‘the publication early after the war of such accounts and related documents, to the end that in future national emergencies the United States we may build upon the lessons currently being learned, and that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President and heads of war agencies.’⁴⁹⁵ For Key, and for many other scholars, the Bureau was a modern administrative organ par excellence, and its members were not robotic number-crunchers but significant public servants truly integrated into the political order. It was not only within the Budget Bureau that political scientists discovered that questions of public administration were less narrow and technical than textbooks suggested. We shall see in the next chapter how the end of the war would mark a stark transition among scholars of public administration who would revolt against the classic divide between ‘politics’ and ‘administration’ in the study of American government as assumed by Progressive Era political scientists, and codified in Leonard White’s foundation textbook *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration*.

There were other innovations afoot as well. In particular, many scholars were discovering the important role of personnel management. With gushing exuberance one scholar wrote from a position in the Farm Securities Administration:

I’m chief of the planning and analysis section in rural rehabilitation work in Farm Security. It’s a fascinating job.... Golly, it’s fun. It’s applying the scientific technique to government administration. I have to laugh at myself every once in a while about being in this job, because when I was at UNC and Harvard, I used to skip all chapters in all books having to do with statistics, agricultural economics or administration. Now I’m supposed to be an ‘expert’ in each, which of course I’m not, but the staff is pretty darned competent and my job’s to run it.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ Oral History Interview with James L. Sundquist, by Charles T. Morrissey. (July 15, 1963). Harry S. Truman Library. Independence, Missouri. [Accessed; <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/sundquis.htm#transcript>].

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ Kenneth Colegrove, ‘Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting’, p. 138.

⁴⁹⁶ ‘Letter: Hal Hammon to Fesler’ (undated), *James William Fesler Papers*. (MS 207) Accession 1988-M-41. [Box No. 1. ‘Correspondence: 1941- 1946, War Production Board’. Group No. 207] MA, YUL. New Haven.

As this quote suggests, the experience of war thrust scholars into the real world of the expanding federal bureaucracy, fostering a new sense of the problems and challenges faced by the public administrator.

By the end of the war these various changes had begun to come together in the discipline setting the stage for a new spread of public administration research. If the research was yet to fully blossom, the groundswell was palpable. The experience at the coalface of government had produced a new perspective into the actual operation of administrative bureaus that had been denied to earlier generations. As a 'Committee on Research' of the APSA wrote in 1943, 'it is obvious beyond any shadow of doubt that these men are having an experience of government in action that will have a profound influence upon their teaching and research when they return to their college or university'.⁴⁹⁷

Part Three: Political Scientists in public

The Problem of Big Democracy

During the war political scientists engaged in new research concerning the fate of American democracy. In 1941 Harold Lasswell published a critical article depicting a possible future emergence of a 'Garrison State', in which he conjured a hypothetical model for the future of the United States, one governed by a political-military elite, in which 'the specialists on violence are the most powerful group in society'.⁴⁹⁸ This article became highly notorious, kindling a creeping fear that had already set in American minds during the previous two decades, as represented in the Nye Commission. Another prominent contribution to public debate by a political scientist in at beginning of the war was the publication in 1942 of Pendleton Herring's study *The Impact of War*. An entire decade before the much quoted 'military industrial complex' had entered American lexicon, Herring was writing about the role of civil-military relations in the United States.

Written as a one-hundred-and-fifty-year history of American attempts at military interventions this book exposed what Herring terms a firmly rooted 'civilian mind' among his countrymen. This mind-set emerged from a just and appropriate disapproval of war, but resulted in an

⁴⁹⁷The Research Committee on the American Political Science Association, 'Instruction and Research: War-Time Priorities in Research Source: The American Political Science Review, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Jun., 1943), p. 514.

⁴⁹⁸ Harold Lasswell 'The Garrison State', *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 46, No. 4 (Jan., 1941). pg 455 – 468. Pg 455. Also see, Edward Corwin, *Total War and the Constitution* (Knopf; 1947).

irrational reluctance to support a regular established military on a scale sufficient to defend the nation if and when unforeseen contingencies bring about the need for war. Intended for a wide audience, the message of Herring's book is quite clear. In a provocative last chapter entitled 'Traditional Values and New Imperatives' he wrote, 'To insist upon the perfection of our own social and economic institutions before meeting external threats is like insisting that we abolish sin before driving away the thieves who are rifling the church poor box. Democracy, like virtue, must be unceasingly sought; it is not something that can be captured and held eternally safe thereafter.'⁴⁹⁹ As one reviewer for *The Saturday Review* aptly observed, 'There is a ring of bugles in the author's credo'. To elaborate his statement, the author quoted some of Herring's sabre-rattling, 'Democracy, as the highest form of social life, holds the highest expectation of each man's capacity to cooperate with his fellows. This is the *duty* of all those who would live in a free country... Today new demands are being made. They provide not simply a challenge but an opportunity as well for reasserting through action the duties of citizenship.'⁵⁰⁰

As the war continued and the Warfare state assembled Herring's assertion that Americans must rid themselves of the cursed 'civilian mind' gained strength. By 1947 the public administration expert Lincoln Gordon would write to Charles Merriam that the problem of civil-military relations was in his judgement 'one of the most important in the whole development of our society under present conditions.' As Gordon noted,

It has always seemed to me that, until the recent war became imminent, we professional political scientists tended to give almost no attention to the military side of government activity or to the importance of national security considerations in shaping public policies and influencing government activities. Pen Herring's book 'The Impact of War' was a good start, and of course the war itself brought about a very broad realization of the importance of this topic.⁵⁰¹

Defending 'Big Democracy'

If a few political scientists probed the challenges facing democracy, another group set about defending it to the American public. Charles E. Merriam, doyen of the Chicago Political Science department, and by this point a well-known presidential advisor, offered by far the most optimistic projection. In a speech given to alumni of the University of Chicago in 1940, he announced, 'Friends say to me at times, 'Well Merriam, of course it must be admitted that democracies are not and cannot be as well organized or as efficient as autocracies.' My reply is, 'Who told you that, a student of organization and efficiency understanding either public or private management – either administration

⁴⁹⁹ Pendleton Herring, *The Impact of War: our American democracy under arms* (Farrar & Rinehart, 1941).

⁵⁰⁰ R. Ernest Dupuy, 'War and Integration' *The Saturday Review*, November 1, 1941, p. 17.

⁵⁰¹ 'Letter from Lincoln Gordon', (Jan. 17, 1947) *CEMP* [Box 63, Folder 5] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

or politics?’⁵⁰² As a progressive reformer in earlier days, Merriam had a resolute faith in the power of scientific organization, indeed he had dedicated his career to it.

Lindsay Rogers also contributed to this discussion in an October 1941 edition of *Foreign Affairs* – just months before the bombs would fall on Pearl Harbor, but as Lend Lease was already underway. In this article Rogers spurred the president on to assume greater responsibilities, arguing that despite some lack of Congressional support, there was plenty of room for FDR to manoeuvre into a prominent international role; the ‘President of the United States has emergency powers already granted that give him, as Commander in Chief, sufficient freedom of action to make or mar his reputation and perhaps save or sacrifice his country.’⁵⁰³ In reading this work Charles E. Merriam wrote to Rogers, ‘I am not walking out on our Chief, Lindsay, and am glad that you are not. Although you and I might suggest some improvements, he is the world’s great symbol for democracy at the present moment.’⁵⁰⁴

Not only did political scientists battle the forces of isolationism at the beginning of the war; they also came to defend the enlarged scale and scope of ‘planning’ and government activity that emerged between 1941 and 1945. Inevitably, Charles Merriam was a leading figure among this group of scholars. In the early 1940s he wrote to fellow political scientist, James Fesler, with the following update; ‘I am working hard on my ‘Systematic Politics’, begun in 1905, and I am making some progress, on paper at any rate... this is the summation of my experience, observation, reading and reflection on government.’⁵⁰⁵ *Systematic Politics* was intended as a synoptic account of Democracy of the sort that Merriam had hoped to write for decades. John Gaus, a friend of Merriam’s and himself an eminent scholar of public administration, commented positively on a draft he had been sent. Gaus went so far as to declare, ‘In your final chapter on ‘The Future of Politics’ I find every one of the topics makes me lick my chops in anticipation of your remarks.’⁵⁰⁶ Similarly, in a series of exchanges with Carl Friedrich at Harvard, Friedrich wrote that the work was ‘one more indication that we are very much in agreement upon ‘fundamentals’.’⁵⁰⁷ To which Merriam replied that he would very much like to talk “about the problems of democracy” with him and his Harvard seminar.⁵⁰⁸

Friedrich’s use of the word ‘fundamentals’ and Gaus’ reference to the Future of Politics were part of the same observation. Both men believed, as did Merriam, that American democracy was on the cusp of a new political order, in which the future would be defined by on the one hand a greater

⁵⁰² Charles E. Merriam, ‘Democracy: An Alumni School Address’, *The University of Chicago Magazine*, (June 1940), *CEMP* [Box 284, Folder 1] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁰³ Lindsay Rogers, ‘National Defense: Plan or Patchwork?’ *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Oct., 1940), p. 8

⁵⁰⁴ Letter: Lindsay Rogers from Charles E. Merriam’, (19 Oct, 1940). *CEMP*, [Box 55, folder 19] SCRC, UC.

⁵⁰⁵ Letter to James Fesler’. *CEMP*, [Box 48, Folder 2] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁰⁶ Letter from John Gaus’ *CEMP* [Box 48, Folder 18] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁰⁷ ‘Letter to Carl Friedrich’. *CEMP*, [Box 48, Folder 3] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

role of government in American lives, and on the other hand a greater commitment of citizens to the American state. The fundamental message of *Systematic Politics* was one of a coming modernity, in which the forces of democracy, supported by science and technology, were entering into a new period. Merriam exhibited a profound faith in the workability of science and administration to secure a better future, and his book was layered with a faith in the ideals of responsible administration and representative government. In a perceptive comparison, one reviewer commented on the ‘Condorcet-like optimism’ that the work displayed.⁵⁰⁹ Merriam exuded a faith in the future of liberal democracy, and the ability of science to perfect society. Others also picked up on this same aspect, with reviews having such titles such as ‘A working Faith in Freedom’, and ‘No Cynic’.⁵¹⁰ In the *American Political Science Review*, Herring declared that ‘Professor Merriam’s sturdy and lofty confidence in his fellowman enables him to weigh political phenomena in their weaknesses and strengths and to emerge with a systematic over-all view that holds out hope for a world both of freedom and order.’⁵¹¹

Merriam had absorbed his faith at the turn of the twentieth century, from the minds of scholars like William Dunning and Henry Jones Ford. Now, after the experience of the First World War and the New Deal, the idea of ‘planning’ as ‘the idea that the government of modern industrial states required systematic projections of future actions based on scientific research, comprehensive collections of data, and objective testing of results in order to build continuous cycles of governmental policy-making’ had emerged triumphant.⁵¹² New conceptions of corporate management and modern statism had come to replace traditional beliefs in laissez faire, parliamentary democracy, and the ideologies of individualism – nostrums in which Merriam had never believed, and to which he was eager to bid farewell.

The reaction against government

By the end of the war Merriam’s growing faith in the modern American variant of the democratic welfare state would be tested by a developing wave of conservatism which had emerged in American politics and scholarship in the late 1930s and strengthened through the war. Republicans triumphed at the mid-term elections of 1946 with the demand ‘Had enough?’ For most political scientists this popular lack of enthusiasm for the regulatory state was concerning. More concerning still, was an intellectual conservatism that wafted over from Europe in the form of scholars like Friedrich von Hayek, Ludwig Von Mises, Karl Popper, and Hannah Arendt. Shaken by the horrors of the German version of ‘National Socialism’, these scholars intellectualised their revulsion at any attempt to extend

⁵⁰⁹Horace Kallen, “A Working Faith in Freedom”, *The Saturday Review* (February 2nd, 1946), pp. 29-30.

⁵¹⁰ Herbert Aptheker, “No Cynic”, *New Masses* (January 22nd, 1946).

⁵¹¹ Pendleton E. Herring, “Book Reviews and Notices: *Systematic Politics* by Charles E. Merriam”, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 40, No.1 (Feb, 1946), p. 131.

⁵¹² Barry D. Karl, ‘Constitution and Central Planning: The Third New Deal Revisited’, *The Supreme Court Review*, Vol. 1988, p. 165.

the power of the state. This new intellectualised conservatism was in many respects more unnerving than the more familiar chorus of anti-New Deal Republicans, and it was to this critique that political scientists at the end of the war fielded their most impassioned attack.

On the afternoon of Sunday April 22nd 1945, in a radio debate aired by the National Broadcasting Corporation in association with the University of Chicago, the new conservatism of the Old World came face to face with the emboldened progressivism of the New. The setting was an episode of the weekly live discussion show, 'The University of Chicago Roundtables'. For the first few decades of the twentieth century, faculty members of the University of Chicago had been forbidden from speaking on the radio unscripted. This rule was designed to preserve the public appearance of the university and avoid unwarranted attention or controversy. During the 1930s the University's governing body agreed to make an exception in order to facilitate the Round Table programme and for a number of years the show was aired without complaint. But in April 1945 the show's producers began to regret their lack of control over the extemporised format. They had assembled a stellar cast of three leading social scientists to discuss a popular new book, *The Road to Serfdom*. Star guest was the author himself, recent addition to the University of Chicago's economics department, Friedrich Hayek. But once the microphones were switched on and the professors began to speak, it became clear that the conversation was at risk of overheating.

Facing Hayek on the opposite corners of the recording studio's little triangular table were the recently retired chair of the Chicago political science department, Charles E. Merriam and the economics professor and former presidential candidate for the Socialist Party of America, Martin Kreuger. The two quickly formed a pincer attack on the invited guest and Merriam in particular assumed a palpably patronising manner. His behaviour was so argumentative that a few days later the producers wrote Merriam a letter rebuking him for his failure to engage with Hayek's thesis and informing him that he should not expect to receive another invitation to appear on the programme.⁵¹³ With one last display of nonchalance, Merriam hardly seemed to care. Instead, after writing a brief and formal note to the radio station, he proceeded to treat the whole incident with amused indifference.⁵¹⁴

What had incited Merriam's combative attitude was Hayek's use of one word – 'planning'. *The Road to Serfdom* had been written as an 'attempt to persuade' socialists of all varieties that their embrace of government planning would 'overload democracy' and result in totalitarianism.⁵¹⁵ To Merriam, this was a ridiculous assertion, one that overlooked not only the historical facts of the rise of totalitarianism in Europe, but the richness of the term 'government planning' as understood and

⁵¹³ 'Letter from U.C.' [Box 284, Folder 18] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵¹⁴ See Merriam's report of the incident to Beardsley Ruml; 'Letter to Ruml', (5 May, 1941), *Beardsley Ruml Papers*, [Box 3, Folder 11], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵¹⁵ Charles E. Merriam Papers, [Box 284, Folder 18], SCRC, University of Chicago Library.

studied by political scientists in America. To him, the war and the New Deal had demonstrated the successful orchestration of national resources, and put America on the road to greater freedoms. As radio listeners tuned in, they heard the political scientist defend his turf, ‘it seems to me that the great gap in Hayek’s studies, among many gaps, is that he does not reckon with public administration and with management.’⁵¹⁶ Verging into thinly-veiled mockery, Merriam began to ape an apology to Hayek for having provided him with such a revelation, with jingoistic undertones he declared to the European, ‘It must be a disappointment to have me, an American planner, tell you that we do not use your term in that way and we do not like how you push it on us.’⁵¹⁷

The question with which Merriam and Hayek tussled – the basis of democracy in a modern mass society, and the proper limits of government action in a modern democracy – was an important one for both men. Before the meeting Merriam had been sharpening his claws, in a letter that he mailed to his son a week before the broadcast. Merriam had written, ‘I have no intention of being gentle with him, in view of his slippery book – in form liberal but in fact highly reactionary.’⁵¹⁸ And before this he had penned a review of Hayek’s work in the *American Journal of Sociology*. Needless to say, the impassioned professor pulled no punches.⁵¹⁹ This review was joined by those of other progressive social scientists such as Alvin Hansen in the *New Republic* which argued ‘This kind of writing is not scholarship. It is seeing hobgoblins under every bed.’⁵²⁰ Such reviews were greeted by merriment by other members of the political science profession, including John Gaus who wrote to Merriam, ‘I thought your review of Hayek was splendid and now along comes the excellent article by Hansen in the recent *New Republic* to turn the last shovel of earth over his coffin. It is good that you people who can speak with authority are taking the offensive against this tribe of defeatists and squealers. I really don’t understand why they actually admit most of the case for government action which they are attacking.’⁵²¹

⁵¹⁶ Ibid

⁵¹⁷ Ibid

⁵¹⁸ ‘Letter to Robert Merriam’ (19th April, 1945) *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 2, Folder 7], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵¹⁹ CEM, ‘Review of *The Road to Serfdom*, by Frederick A. Hayek,’ *American Journal of Sociology*, 50 (Nov. 1944), pp. 233 - 34

⁵²⁰ Alvin Hansen, ‘Hayek’s *Road to Serfdom*’, *The New Republic*, January 1, 1945.

⁵²¹ ‘Letter from John Gaus’, (25th Jan., 1945), *Charles E Merriam Papers*, [Box 63, Folder 2], SCRC, RL. Chicago.

Conclusion

The war marked a crucial period in the history of American political science; the nature, scope and stability of American democracy in the modern world was thrown into stark relief by the emergency of war, and political scientists were not only deeply interested in these changes, they were also in many cases viewing them from a new perspective that placed them at the heart of government itself. During the war political scientists advised at the highest and lowest levels of policy decisions and performed many roles as both presidential advisors and administrators in the war bureaus. From a wide variety of bureaus and agencies, scholars developed a viewpoint on American government and its complexities entirely unprecedented in earlier years. The political science profession thrived in the emergency and in the process scholars sharpened their ideas about American government and politics that had germinated in the New Deal, assumed a more public role and became increasingly ambitious as to the role of the discipline.

In spite of wartime stringencies on research, the associational life of political scientists remained vibrant. Particularly with the creation of the Washington Committee, scholars in D.C communicated among each other, and with those still at home in research universities, about their experiences and reflected upon how this might change the discipline. From positions in the war bureau, scholars like David Truman, James Fesler and Gabriel Almond began to envision a revolution in the study of American government that would reorient the discipline as a study much more focused on administration, and discarding the old assumption that ‘administration’ and ‘politics’ were separate spheres. This was a development that, as we have seen in the previous chapter, began in the New Deal, but noticeably strengthened during the war. In this manner, political scientists took important steps towards reorienting the discipline towards a study of mass democracy that would remain at the forefront of the discipline over the decades ahead. These men and others, including Pendleton Herring, came to call for the improvement and expansion of the existing set of techniques available in the pre-war literature, and envisioned a future collaboration with neighbouring disciplines.

A number of research interests that had emerged in the New Deal expanded in the war: a transfer of attention to administration rather than legislation, a growing interest in the challenge of accountability within a largescale democracy and, most of all, an interest in the stability of American democracy. Scholars were reckoning with these issues in earlier years, but the war environment and the vast expansion of American public administration meant that these transformations occurred to a greater extent and more quickly and fully than scholars could have ever anticipated just months previously. Not only did the position of political scientists in war bureaus provide a rich source of new insights, but the emergency of the times and the pressing threat of impending global destruction

heightened the urgency with which political scientist came to view their contribution to the intellectual and political life of the nation and the world. In this way, as worrying and disturbing as the global crisis was to political scientists, it was also invigorating.

The war also placed political scientists in a more public role. Faced with intransigent isolationist sentiment in the early 1940s, political scientists emerged as advocates of a global democratic alliance united against the forces of fascism. Speaking to public audiences they projected an image of the nation's political system with an account of the necessity of military control, and chastised reluctant countrymen who failed to see the pressing need for war. By the end of the war scholars also squared up to a newly developing conservative critique, represented by scholars such as Friedrich von Hayek. By 1944, a report reviewing a recent APSA conference noted, 'in view of the totalitarian and global war, as well as the planning for the post-war era, there is more need than ever before for the study and discussion of governmental problems, both domestic and international.'⁵²² Scholars in 1945 were more confident in the purpose of their profession than just five years before.

As we shall see in the following chapter, the way in which scholars positioned themselves in the war years would condition their future actions in the years ahead as political scientists dug more deeply into the problems and complexities of a vast, largescale democracy, navigated changing boundaries with neighbouring disciplines and continued to reckon with the fate and fortune of largescale mass democracy in a world that was still dangerous and unwelcoming. A generation that had lived through this period would retain the memory of their encounter with the ordering hand of government in stark juxtaposition to global political chaos. Permanently affected by the events of these years, these men and women would continue their search for a science of politics in the decade and a half that followed from under the shadow of their wartime experience.

⁵²² Colegrove, 'Thirty-ninth meeting', p. 132

CHAPTER V

The Age of Pluralism 1945 - 1960

Introduction

The New Deal followed by the war had created great changes in American government and politics; relieved from the distracting duties of war, political scientists returned to the academy in the months following the formal end of fighting anxious to make sense of what had happened. As the public administration scholar John Gaus stated to his colleagues in 1945, the ‘first responsibility’ of the researcher in public administration after the war ‘will be the reappraisal of government after these difficult years of depression and war and its adjustment to the new conditions that will be present in the years ahead.’⁵²³ Similar challenges lay ahead for scholars in the field of American political democracy more generally. The New Deal had made American politics much more pluralistic, resulting in large changes in electoral politics, and although scholars had glimpsed this change they had yet to make sense of it. Charles Merriam and Harold Gosnell faced a significant challenge in 1946 when they turned their attention to revising their 1926 work *The American Party System*. Merriam more than once suggested that the book had seen its time, as he wrote to Gosnell, ‘Perhaps you ought to write a new book yourself, now or soon.’⁵²⁴ When the new version was published in 1949 the authors reflected on these recent developments as they drew the reader’s attention to several important developments that had emerged in the years since the book was last published in 1940;

we have seen the passing of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the rise of Harry Truman, the third-party candidacy of Henry Wallace, the Republican capture of Congress in 1946, the turbulent affairs of the Eightieth Congress, the surprising Democratic victory in 1948, the

⁵²³ John Gaus, ‘Report to the Committee’ in William Anderson and John Gaus (eds) *Research in Public administration: Part I*. (Published for the Committee on public administration of the Social Science Research Council by the public administration service; Chicago 1945) p.167.

⁵²⁴ Letter from CEM from HFG, Dec 1, 1947, Charles E. Merriam Papers [Box 63; Folder 4] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

collapse of Axis fascism abroad, and the growing rivalry between the system of free enterprise as exemplified by civilization in the United States and the communist way of life as exemplified in the Soviet Union. These events have left their imprint upon our party system.⁵²⁵

Fascinated by what had happened, this pair of political scientists scrambled to make sense of the recent changes: Gosnell fluctuated in his explanations of abrupt change and lingering traditional party identities. But the pair concluded that the Depression marked a new era in American party politics, and further stated that ‘so many other and competing channels of public activity are being opened to those who have a political interest that the party cannot hope to maintain itself on the older basis, except at a very heavy cost in public confidence and esteem.’⁵²⁶

At the heart of American Political Science during the post-war decade and a half was a search to understand on the one hand the new administrative state and on the other hand the increasingly pluralistic nature of American politics. Unlike some economists, psychologists and sociologists who were advancing on ever more esoteric questions about the economy and human behaviour, leading political scientists remained focused on large and concrete concerns relating to recent developments in American politics. This chapter explains how they fared at this task, arguing that the work of American political scientists in these years faced a difficult challenge in explaining the stark and pronounced growth of government and changing political landscape, but the scholarship of leading figures nevertheless yielded some important and influential new insights about the current state and future prospects of American democracy. In this way, post-war political scientists continued a tradition begun with the founding of the profession at the turn of the century: these scholars pursued genuinely ambitious scholarship, aspiring to be useful by conducting close, granular research that might illuminate larger problems related to current political challenges.

Political Science and the study of Society in 1945

American social science continued to rise in influence and prestige in years following the war. New methodological techniques such as systems analysis had been developed in government bureaus during the war a means for assisting with the complex planning needs of modern warfare. These techniques continued to be developed after the war, in centers such as the think tank Project RAND (later the RAND Corporation): a heavily funded private institution which became the centre of new and important attempts to deconstruct government decisions into manageable segments. Initially set up in 1945 by members of the War Department and the Office of Scientific Research and

⁵²⁵ Charles E. Merriam and Harold Foote Gosnell, *The American Party System: Fourth Edition* (Macmillan; 1949), p. i.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid*, pp.457- 8.

Development with the mission of considering long-range planning of future weapons, its findings applied in the first instance to military strategy and ‘wargaming’ and latterly to a host of non-defence and commercial issues.⁵²⁷

Not only did the American social science profession continue to attract the interest of the Federal Government after the war, it also attracted attention of generous private philanthropists. Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations continued to fund social scientific research but by far the most impressive contribution came from the Ford Foundation which became the major player in social science philanthropy in the United States, donating \$24 million to the social sciences between 1951 and 1957.⁵²⁸ This completely changed the landscape of American social science. As two political scientists reflected in the 1960s, ‘Whereas a \$10,000 grant was a major event in the 1930’s or even 1940’s, so modest an amount barely occasioned mention by the late 1950’s.’⁵²⁹ Or, as political scientist Heinz Eulau opined somewhat more prosaically, ‘until now, no foundation with means comparable to those of the Ford Foundation has ventured so far as to lay all of its golden eggs into the shapeless basket of social science.’⁵³⁰ These golden eggs were indeed quite extraordinary. One example of Ford’s benevolence was a donation of \$3,500,000, to be metered out over a six-year period from 1954 to 1960, for a Center for the Advanced Study of the Behavioral Sciences. This would host ‘approximately fifty scholars and scientists of the first rank’ and provide a setting in which they could learn new methods in a collegiate and interdisciplinary setting.⁵³¹

The combination of wartime methodological advancements, new research bureaus, increasing philanthropic interest in the social sciences and the distinctive Cold War ideological climate resulted in the greater use of social scientific expertise in government-funded programmes in the years following the war. This sort of work very often also represented a type of intellectual approach that was more technical and narrowly focused than that of much social scientific scholarship in earlier decades. Such an approach is most clearly evident in the discipline of Economics as demonstrated by a number of scholars at the Cowles Foundation (at Chicago and from 1955 in Yale University). Growing out of the uncertainty prompted by the Great Depression, investment counsellor Alfred

⁵²⁷ See; David Jardini, ‘Out of the Blue Yonder: The RAND Corporation’s Diversification into Social Welfare Research, 1946 – 1968’, (Carnegie-Mellon Univ., PhD thesis, 1996) [UMI Microform 9701878]. Also see; Bruce L. R. Smith, *The RAND Corporation: a case study of a non-profit advisory corporation* (Harvard University Press, 1966); David Hounshell, ‘The Cold War, RAND, and the generation of knowledge, 1946 – 1962’, *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences*, 27 (1997), pp.237 – 67.

⁵²⁸ Emily Hauptmann ‘The Constitution of Behavioralism: the Influence of the Ford Foundation’s Behavioral Sciences Program on Political Science’. Paper prepared for delivery at the 6th Annual Spring Workshop on History of Economics as History of Science, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan, 19 June 2009, p.1. Also see; Hauptmann, ‘The Ford Foundation and the Rise of Behavioralism in Political Science’ *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp.154 – 173.

⁵²⁹ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p.167.

⁵³⁰ Eulau, quoted in Hauptmann ‘The Constitution of Behavioralism’, p.1.

⁵³¹Memorandum, ‘Release from the Information Office. Ford Foundation.’ June 15 1953. Stanford University, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Records. [Series 1: Administration. SC1055. BOX 1. Folder 1.] DSCUA, SUL. Stanford, California.

Cowles set up the center in Colorado Springs in 1932 with the hope of increasing understanding about the economy. Among other innovations, post-war Cowles economists have been credited with establishing in the post-war period the field of ‘econometrics’ and consolidating the fields of ‘general equilibrium’ theory.⁵³² Scholars in this field attempted to understand the circumstances in which ‘general equilibrium’ of supply and demand will emerge. Although members of the Commission aspired to produce insight into improving the performance of the economy, the form of much of their actual work was rooted in abstract a priori deductive logic, with statements in the form of ‘if A then B’.⁵³³

Key texts of this sort included Oskar Lange’s 1944 monograph, *Price Flexibility and Employment* and Jacob Mosak’s volume of the same year, *General Equilibrium Theory in International Trade*.⁵³⁴ Both of these texts set out formal models for economic behaviour. In 1954 Kenneth Arrow and Gerard Debreu contributed an important article in the new journal, *Econometrica* which provided an important step in outlining a model of general equilibrium.⁵³⁵ This sort of work also defines the second half of the Paul Samuelson’s exceedingly influential 1948 textbook, (under the heading ‘microeconomics’), as well as his 1958 article ‘An Exact Consumption-Loan Model of Interest with or without the social Contrivance of Money’.⁵³⁶ As the title of this article suggests, the article focused on model-building, abstracting from ‘reality’ to understand the operation of abstract economic behaviour.

This deductive approach was also gaining strength in American Sociology. As George Steinmetz has argued, those scholars such as C. Wright Mills and Talcott Parsons who were engaging with real concerns about American politics were outliers in a discipline that was verging towards a different set of concerns; a 1954 survey of the field stated that post-war American sociologists were

⁵³² See; Robert M. Solow, ‘Cowles and the Tradition of Macroeconomics’ Presented at The Cowles Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration, June 3, 1983 [Accessed; <http://cowles.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/conf/50th/50th-solow.pdf>].

⁵³³ On the use of ‘models’ in post-war American Economics see; Mary Morgan, ‘Economics’, in Porter and Ross (ed) ‘The Modern Social Sciences’ *The Cambridge History of Science*, Vol. 7, pp.295 – 298; Morgan and Malcolm Rutherford, ‘American Economics: The Character of the Transformation,’ in *From Interwar Pluralism*, ed. Morgan and Rutherford, pp 1 – 26; Robert M. Solow, ‘How did Economics get that way and what way did it get?’ *Daedalus*, Vol. 126, No. 1, (Winter, 1997), pp.39 – 58. Also see; K. Gunnar Myrdal, *The Political Elements in the Development of Economic Theory* (Simon and Schuster, 1963); Philip Mirowski, *Machine dreams: economics becomes a cyborg science*, (Cambridge Univ. Press; 2002).

⁵³⁴ Oskar Lange, *Price Flexibility and Employment*, (Principia Press, 1944); Jacob Mosak, *General Equilibrium Theory in International Trade* (Principia Press, 1944).

⁵³⁵ Kenneth Arrow and Gerard Debreu, ‘Existence of an equilibrium for a competitive economy’, *Econometrica*, Vol. 22 (3): pp.265- 290.

⁵³⁶ Paul A. Samuelson, *Economics: An introductory Analysis* (Mc-Graw Hill, 1948); Samuelson, ‘An Exact Consumption-Loan Model of Interest with or without the social Contrivance of Money’ *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vo. 66. No. 6 (Dec., 1958) pp.467- 482. For an interesting history of Samuelson’s textbook see; Samuelson, ‘Credo of a Lucky Textbook Author’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 11, No. 2, (Spring 1997), pp.153-60.

increasingly concerned with a quest to discover ‘laws of behaviour’.⁵³⁷ The Columbia department was a particular hotspot for this sort of research, this department was responsible for products such as Paul Lazarsfeld’s *Language of Social Research* and Hans Zetterberg’s *On Theory and Verification in Sociology*, both of which supported the activity of deductive theorising.⁵³⁸ In Michigan a similar approach held sway and in 1956 one member of the department produced a revised version of the textbook *Principles of Sociology* which defined the field as the study of ‘human groups... subject to study by the same methods as other natural phenomena’ and the intention of which was to ‘discover systematic... observable relationships between... phenomena’.⁵³⁹ As with economists in the Cowles Commission, the work of these sociologists, although aiming loosely at a ‘real world problem’, was rather more focused on the construction of abstract laws.

This new form of abstract, deductive scholarship has received much attention among historians of ‘Cold War Social Science’.⁵⁴⁰ Nevertheless, it did not overshadow the existing trend that had defined the discipline of Political Science and other American social science scholarship in the past: a concern not with narrowly technical studies, but broad, big-minded studies of the American polity. Although the techniques were more advanced, the data richer and research more lavishly funded than in previous eras, the basic desire to conduct granular empirical research to illuminate larger trends was one that had permeated social scientific scholarship ever since the late nineteenth century. Even Economics – the discipline that had spawned econometric modelling and rational choice – was not entirely lost to the construction of abstract models. Post-war American Economics also saw the rise of work that drew on real data to describe actual events in the economy. Two 1950 monographs are of particular note, firstly *Statistical Inference in Dynamic Economic Models*, which outlined the technique of ‘statistical inference’ and secondly, Lawrence Klein’s *Economic Fluctuations in the United States, 1921 – 1941* which set out a model of the United States economy which correctly predicted economic upturn after the Second World War.⁵⁴¹ Although these works were empirical and technical, they were also premised on the task of understanding and describing real-world data, not abstractions of ‘economic man’.

This sort of approach was equally evident in Psychology, which experienced a boost of survey research in the 1940s and 50s. Officially founded in 1944, the Bureau of Applied Social Research at the University of Columbia, under the direction of Paul Lazarfeld, conducted studies on the effects of

⁵³⁷Quoted in Steinmetz, ‘American Sociology before and after World War II’, in Craig Calhoun (ed) *Sociology in America: A History* (Chicago Univ. Press; 2007), p.366.

⁵³⁸ Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *The Language of social research: a reader in the methodology of social research* (Glencoe; 1955); Hans Lennart Zetterberg, *On theory and verification in sociology* (Tressler Press; 1954)

⁵³⁹ Quoted in, Steinmetz, ‘American Sociology before and after World War II’, pp.347 – 8. Ronald Freedman (ed) *Principles of sociology: a text with readings* (Holt, 1956).

⁵⁴⁰ For a good historiographical overview of this literature see; Joel Isaac, ‘The Human Sciences in Cold War America’, *The Historical Journal* Vol. 50, No. 3, (Sep., 2007), pp.725- 746.

⁵⁴¹ Tjalling Koopmans, *Statistical inference in dynamic economic models*, (John Wiley & Sons; 1950); Lawrence Klein, *Economic fluctuations in the United States, 1921- 1941* (John Wiley & Sons; 1950).

communication media on voting patterns, attitude formation and consumer behaviour. The Columbia center was followed by the establishment of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan which developed new understanding of electoral behaviour, income dynamics and industrial workers. Although accelerated by methodological advancements which embraced the use of technological capabilities, work at Michigan was dedicated towards understanding the actual operation of social life, not deducing abstract laws.⁵⁴²

As we shall see in this chapter, it was this second type of intellectual approach which continued to dominate the discipline of Political Science in the post-war decade and a half. Preoccupied with major new questions relating to the current state and health of American democracy, men like John Gaus, V.O. Key and David Truman would remain firmly rooted in the quest to engage in empirical, granular research on actual problems with the view of commenting with authority and rigour on important and complicated questions pertaining to the nature of the American government and politics.

The myth of the 'behavioural revolution'

Perhaps no era in the history of American Political Science has been so widely and deeply misinterpreted as the post-war decade and a half. Rather than remembering these years for a heightened interest in understanding and explaining the new and complex challenges facing American politics and democracy in the post-war era, political scientists and historians have remembered this period rather narrowly and selectively for an attempt 'to convert the study of politics into a more rigorously scientific discipline modelled on the methodology of the natural sciences.'⁵⁴³ Marking this misapprehension, this period has gained the epithet of the 'behavioral revolution' a term that was first stated in 1968 when David Easton wrote an entry for 'Political Science' for the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* and stated that, 'the behavioral movement in Political Science came into full bloom after WWII'.⁵⁴⁴

After Easton's 1968 article, American political scientists employed the term 'behavioral revolution' frequently, understanding it to refer to a self-conscious movement defined by an attempt

⁵⁴² See; Susan Herbst, 'Polling in Politics and Industry' in Ross and Porter (eds) *Modern Social Science*; Jean Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence, 1890 – 1960* (Univ. of California Press; 1987); Herbert Blumer, 'Public Opinion and Public Opinion Polling,' *American Sociological Review*, 13 (1948), pp.242-9.

⁵⁴³ David Easton, 'The New Revolution in Political Science', *APSR* LXIII (December, 1969), p.1061.

⁵⁴⁴ Quoted in Joshua R. Berkenpas, 'The Behavioural Revolution in Contemporary Political Science: Narrative, Identity, Practice (PhD dissertation, Western Michigan University. April 2016) p.2 [Access at, <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations>].

to make the study of politics ‘increasingly scientific: that is, behavioral, quantitative, empirically oriented, experimental’.⁵⁴⁵ As a recent PhD dissertation has argued, the idea of a ‘behavioural revolution’ has been at the center of disciplinary identity, a central feature upon which scholars explain the progress or challenges facing the discipline.⁵⁴⁶ Some historians of Political Science of the past few decades have attempted ‘to better understand what happened, and who was involved’, but, the fact of its existence and significance is widely ‘taken for granted’.⁵⁴⁷ In a still oft-quoted essay of 1995, James Farr has described the three main tenets of behavioralism as ‘(1) a research focus on political behaviour, (2) a methodological plea for science, and (3) a political message about liberal pluralism.’⁵⁴⁸ With this combination of focus on methods, natural science and uncritical support of democracy, Farr’s description represents what we might take to be the leading established view of the period.

Many of the aspects latterly described under the rubric of the ‘behavioral revolution’ did surface in the discipline in the 1960s, with new survey techniques and other such technologies offering better, more ‘scientific’, methods, and leading scholars providing new insights oriented to the subject of political ‘behaviour’. As president of APSA in 1961 Robert Dahl famously announced in his presidential address that a new ‘mood’ had descended upon the discipline, ‘a mood of scepticism about the current intellectual attainments of Political Science, a mood of sympathy toward ‘scientific’ modes of investigation and analysis, a mood of optimism about the possibilities of improving the study of politics.’⁵⁴⁹ Nevertheless, as this chapter will demonstrate, this ‘mood’ did not suffocate the discipline. There was no equivalent in Political Science of the prominent trend towards abstract, rational choice theory in economics. Instead, much of the leading scholarship remained rooted in describing and explaining politics. A less well-remembered line of Dahl’s speech stated, ‘The scientific outlook in Political Science can easily produce a dangerous and dysfunctional humility: the humility of the social scientist who may be quite confident of his findings on small matters and dubious that he can have anything at all to say on larger questions.’ In time, scholars would forget Dahl’s warning. But in the 1950s this was still some years off, not until the late 1960s would

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid. For instance, see; Heinz Eulau (ed), *Behavioralism in Political Science* (1969); James Farr, ‘The History of Political Science.’ *AJPS* Vol. 32, No. 4, pp.1175-1195; David Easton, ‘Political Science in the United States: Past and Present’ *Discipline and History* (Michigan; 1991); John Dryzek, ‘Revolutions without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science’ *APSR*, Vol. 100, No. 4, pp.487-92.

⁵⁴⁶ Berkenpas, ‘The Behavioural Revolution in Contemporary Political Science’

⁵⁴⁷ Quote: Ibid, p.21. For instance, see; Hauptmann, ‘The Ford Foundation and the Rise of Behaviouralism in Political Science’; Gunnell, *Imagining the American Polity*; Robert Adcock, ‘Interpreting Behavioralism’ in Adcock et al *Modern Political Science: Anglo-Exchanges since 1880* (PUP; 2007); Adcock and Mark Bevir, ‘The History of Political Science’, *Political Studies Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp.1-16.

⁵⁴⁸ James Farr, ‘Remembering the Revolution’, in Farr et al, *Political Science History: Research programs and political traditions* (CUP; 1995), p.202.

⁵⁴⁹ Robert Dahl, ‘The behavioural approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a monument to a successful protest’ *APSR*, Vol. 55, No. 4. (Dec., 1961), p.766.

scholarship really turn to what we might describe as narrowly concerned with abstract laws of ‘behaviour’.

In contrast to much of the existing literature, this chapter reframes the period as scholars themselves perceived it – a debate not primarily about methods, but about the nature of American politics, government and democracy. It situates the discipline within the broader context of post-war United States, drawing a distinction between the broad and concrete concerns of American Political Science, and the more recondite interests that emanated from within neighbouring disciplines. There are three sections to this chapter. The first traces a growing concern within the field of public administration to understand the recent growth of the administrative state. The second traces a concern among scholars of American parties and electoral politics to understand the increasingly pluralistic nature of American politics. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of a number of direct attempts to *resist* the advance of scholarship that might be termed as ‘true’ behavioural scholarship, studies produced by economists and psychologists which offered a narrower, more abstract approach to the study of individual behaviour.

Section One: New directions in the study of public administration, 1945 – 1950

Towards a new science of public administration

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the war experience had led political scientists to view the field of public administration in a new light, not merely a separate administrative branch concerned with the proper implementation of policy, but as a central part of the political process inseparable from the tug and pull of the political process in which values and interests are pursued and decisions made.⁵⁵⁰ Summarising the new perspective in a 1945 APSA Committee on Research in Public Administration, Harvard scholar John Gaus defined the field as ‘the study of government in action, government doing work and rendering public services... not something set apart from but an integral part of the whole system of popular government and democratic ideals.’⁵⁵¹ As the war ended many

⁵⁵⁰See; Dwight Waldo ‘Developments in Public Administration’ *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1972). Also see, Herbert J. Storing, ‘Leonard D. White and the Study of Public Administration’ *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Issue (Mar., 1965), pp.38-51; Dwight Waldo, ‘Public administration in a time of revolutions’ *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (July – August, 1968).

⁵⁵¹ John Gaus, ‘Report to the Committee’ in William Anderson and John Gaus (eds) *Research in Public administration: Part I*. (Published for the Committee on public administration of the Social Science Research Council by the public administration service; Chicago 1945). Also see, Joseph E. McLean (ed.), *The Public Service and University Education* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1949), p.742.

political scientists who had worked in the field of public administration before the war returned to the academy newly invigorated, prepared to revise and update their field in light of their direct, first-hand experience of government in war.

American public administration had grown massively by 1945. In the 1946 midterm elections Republicans like Robert Taft pledged to reduce deficit spending and cut taxes, associating both with the inefficiencies of the Democratic Party and with socialism. But these statements were in large part a reaction to a much stronger trend in the opposite direction: the sheer growth of government bureaucracy and its wide acceptance. The end of the war had shifted the focus of politics from mobilization to reconversion; millions of workers in war industry lost their jobs, and \$64 billion of war contracts had been settled.⁵⁵² And yet, even such efforts paled against the sheer size of government, total military spending never fell below \$11 billion, a third of all federal expenditures, and twice the proportion of federal spending of 1940.⁵⁵³ It was hardly surprising in these circumstances, after a decade and a half of relentless growth, the slogan that proved popular in taking back control of Congress for the first time since 1932, was the simple quip, ‘Had enough?’ But despite the rhetoric of Taft, his words were rather empty.

In the immediate aftermath of the war at least three different approaches to analysing the new ‘administrative state’ had emerged. The first and perhaps the best remembered was a scathing critique best symbolised in James Burnham’s famous 1940 text which landed a punchy critique of the developing bureaucracy. Burnham, a trained philosopher and a committed ideological Marxist, described the emergent managerial class as a ‘new elite’ and a crucial threat to American democracy. He also succeeded in attracting a broad public audience with this work. As a review in the *American Economic Review* noted, Burnham’s work ‘is probably the most widely read essay in social theory and the philosophy of history to appear in recent years.’⁵⁵⁴

In contrast to Burnham’s critical attack, a second, and wholly different, approach to studying the administrative state emerged from within the mainstream ranks of Political Science in 1945. This work sought to consolidate the new insights that had emerged in war regarding the nature of public administration, and, more broadly, to reckon with the meaning of this development. The public administration scholar and former New Deal Under Secretary of Agriculture Paul Appleby published a book entitled *Big Democracy*. Dedicated to ‘John Citizen and Bill Bureaucrat’ Appleby wrote, ‘[t]hrough twelve years in government my respect and affection for both of them has grown steadily’. Published by Alfred Knopf, Appleby’s book was intended for a public audience, and viewed from a later perspective the intention of the book is almost endearingly optimistic; Appleby hoped that by

⁵⁵² Sparrow, *Warfare State*, p.251.

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ Lincoln Gordon, ‘Review: The Managerial Revolution’, *AER*, Vol. 32, No.3, Part 1 (Sept., 1942), p.626.

describing the operation and work of honest men in government and the genuine challenges they face, he might encourage his reader to share his enthusiasm for bureaucrats.⁵⁵⁵ Explaining the dilemma as he saw it, in his introduction Appleby emphasized the lack of knowledge about the actual nature and operation of Administration among citizens, stating that '[e]ven among the best-informed citizens there is little understanding of modern government.'⁵⁵⁶ As he further wrote, 'One may know one's community, one's state, one may read much and travel widely through the country, and still feel humble about one's grasp of what makes this nation what it is.'⁵⁵⁷ If American citizens could understand the 'immense complexity' of organised government, Appleby hoped, even sceptics of the state might just come to appreciate its glory.

This new book on *Big Democracy* revised the classic understanding of government composed of politicians and administrators, and introduced Americans to a new character: the modern administrator who was responsible for implementing as well as creating policy. Just like in the wartime radio debate in which Charles Merriam had duelled with Hayek, Appleby propounded the benefits of a big government against a new intellectual conservatism. However, there was a subtle but important difference in perspective between Merriam and Appleby. Both men argued that a large state bureaucracy was compatible with a democratic system, and both shared a common enemy in antistatism. However, for Merriam, politics and administration were still separable – he explicitly defended a science of 'planning' that was different from the central process of 'politics'. Appleby, in contrast, represented a new theme emerging in the academic literature, that 'politics' and 'administration' were not dichotomous. In this respect, Appleby was coming to defend quite a different idea of 'administrative expertise' to that which Merriam had elevated; the former relied not just on narrow technical expertise, but proper skills and decision-making capability.

The book was widely reviewed featuring in *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, *The New Masses*, *The Saturday Review*, *The New Republic* as well as in academic journals including *PSQ* and *APSR*. Partisan papers took sides, as would be expected. But, for an American public who had come to accept the presence of the public administration service, this book was a breath of fresh air. Unlike Burnham's *Managerial Revolution* of a few years earlier, Appleby had not set out to criticise the growth of bureaucracy, but rather to explain and defend it. More importantly, his status as both an insider – which gave him credibility – and a political scientist – which lent authority – worked in his favour. As the reviewer in *The Saturday Review* wrote, 'Political thinking all too frequently consists of juggling extremist ideas, expressed in terms of virtuous and evil generalities' – a not inaccurate description of the state of some popular writing – '...When a book on government is written by such an experienced and sensible citizen as Paul Appleby, however, categorical absolutes fade into broader

⁵⁵⁵ Paul Appleby, *Big Democracy* (Alfred Knopf; 1945).

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. iv .

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

perspectives. An impression of something more real, more like a human social institution emerges. And through it all, along with Appleby's awareness of the detail of a human government, the author does not lose sight of the utility of government in achieving some of our higher aspirations.'⁵⁵⁸ It is hard to think of a review that more clearly captures – and endorses – Appleby's intention with the work.

Appleby also helped to further the new post-war science of administration on an institutional level. In 1947 he took over directorship of The Maxwell School at Syracuse University. In doing so he encouraged a new style of public administration research, one which saw administration as much more a part of the political order and encouraged scholars to push the boundaries of the discipline to incorporate a new, broader perspective. In 1947 the Harvard public administration scholar John Gaus wrote to a Syracuse scholar, Gerry Brown, with the comment: 'I have been building up an interest and warmth of feeling about the Maxwell School in recent years for various reasons... now that Paul is there and is bringing the most extraordinary group of you folks together, I have all the more reason for the feelings which I have developed about the place.'⁵⁵⁹ As Gaus continued, 'Somehow I do feel that you folks are working out more freshly than anywhere else I know of on the educational problems centring in two fields which are of greatest interest to me – public administration generally and the relationship of the Political Science field to the American civilization studies.'⁵⁶⁰

What Gaus meant by 'civilization studies' was demonstrated in his own work in this post-war period. In 1947 Gaus published *Reflections on Public Administration*. This was a series of six essays, taken from lectures, which each contributed to an understanding of the 'ecology' of public administration. This was of much the same ilk as other studies which emerged from Syracuse in this time, such as Dwight Waldo's *The Administrative State* which sought to 'assist students of administration to view their subject in historical perspective and to appraise the theoretical content of their literature.'⁵⁶¹ By pre-war standards such books were radically new, addressing the 'theoretical' contributions and concepts of a group of scholars who, as Waldo noted, 'until recently have been indifferent or hostile to 'theory.'⁵⁶² The training of younger scholars at Syracuse also followed this trend. Waldo refused to use any existing public administration textbook. As Gaus explained in a letter to a friend, 'he is not satisfied with any of the current texts. According to him, they don't teach the right things'.⁵⁶³ Instead, Waldo would draw upon a variety of unorthodox sources, including passages

⁵⁵⁸ Alfred McClung Lee, 'Detail and Utility of Government: review of *Big Democracy* by Paul H. Appleby', *The Saturday Review* (June 30, 1945), p.34.

⁵⁵⁹ 'Letter to Gerry Brown (Syracuse)', (April 12 1948) *John M Gaus Papers*, [Box 1, Folder A, 1947 – 48. Correspondence HUG 4417.505] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶¹ Dwight Waldo, *The Administrative State: A study of the political theory of American public administration* (The Ronald Press Company, NY; 1948), p. v.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*

⁵⁶³ Letter from John Gaus to Bernard Kronick (Sacramento State College), June 1948, John M. Gaus Correspondence HUG 4417.505 [Box 1, Folder K] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

from Lytton Strachey's essay in *Eminent Victorians*, which traced the work of a progressive social worker Florence Witingale. Such works, Waldo hoped, could help demonstrate to students the sort of opportunities and challenges facing individuals who are formally 'public administrators'.⁵⁶⁴

By far the most important contribution to the public administration profession made by political scientists in the post-war years was a new textbook published in 1946 and entitled *Elements of Public Administration*. Edited by Fritz Morstein Marx this collection contained contributions from fourteen leading scholars who had trained in the discipline during the 1930s and served in government bureaus during war.⁵⁶⁵ What they offered was in many important respects a classic statement of the new directions and self-confidence of the field. The introduction offered a familiar definition of administration as 'determined action taken in pursuit of conscious purpose. It is the systematic ordering of affairs and the calculated use of resources, aimed at making those things happen which we want to happen and simultaneously preventing developments that fail to square with our intentions.'⁵⁶⁶ However, marking a break from previous studies it further stated that, 'administrative research does not seek its goal in the formulation of mechanical rules or equations, into which human behavior must be moulded. Rather, it looks toward the systematic ordering of functions and human relationships so that organizational decisions can and will be based upon the certainty that each step taken will actually serve the purpose of the organization as a whole distinct viewpoint'.⁵⁶⁷

This definition placed 'public administration' as the whole field of government activity, including not merely the implementation of policy goals, but also in a number of important respects big decisions relating to the proper allocation of national resources. As the volume further stated, 'In a sense, therefore, this is a broadly political rather than merely technical study.'⁵⁶⁸ The various chapters offered case studies which placed administrative systems in relation to their political context; roughly one third of the book was fashioned in this way. It was a clear break from the idea that administration was a neutral administrative science applied to public institutions. After the Marx volume, it would become standard practice to begin or end textbooks on American public administration in relation to history and context. As Dwight Waldo has noted, textbooks thereafter 'usually sought to put the more technical materials in the context of politics and policy, history, society and even indeed, contemporary civilization.'⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁵ Fritz Morstein Marx (ed), *Elements of Public Administration* (Prentice-Hall-Inc; NY: 1946). Contributors: James W. Fesler; George A. Graham; V.O. Key Jr; Avery Leiserson; Milton M. Mandell; Harvey C. Mansfield; John D. Millett; Don K. Price; Henry Reining, Jr; Wallace S. Sayre; Donald C. Stone; John A. Vieg. Emmette Redford has described this group as, 'almost the call of the roll of the forty- to forty-five-year-old scholars in the area', in 'Emmette S. Redford', in Michale A. Baer et al, (eds), *Political Science in America: Oral Histories of a Discipline* (University Press of Kentucky: 1991), p.60.

⁵⁶⁶ Marx, *Elements of Public Administration*, pg. 3.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Dwight Waldo, 'Public Administration', *The Journal of Politics* Vol. 30, No. 2, (May, 1968), p.458.

The volume shared the same haughty tone as had Merriam in his radio debate with Hayek, as it reminded Americans of the essential soundness of the system of administration that had been built up over the previous decades. As author of the first chapter, Marx described the growth of public administration in the United States. Beginning with the formation in 1894 of the National Municipal League he went on to trace the impulse given to better municipal management from 1905 to 1915; the growth of council-manager plan of city government in the wake of agitation for the commission plan; and the formation over the past three or four decades of national professional associations of all major groups of local administrative officials. The survey culminated with the establishment in 1931 of the Public Administration Clearing House, 'which at 1313 East 60th Street in Chicago has become an unofficial capitol for state and local administration throughout the country.'⁵⁷⁰ In listing these developments Marx noted with an air of satisfaction, '[s]uch things had simply been outside the range of what we had considered probable or even possible in our field fifteen years ago.' As the textbook stated, 'research in public management has struggled free from the notions of public business as routine, as primarily negative and restrictive upon personal or private initiative, and as an unnatural but necessary evil.'⁵⁷¹ Concluding defiantly, 'America in the middle twentieth century will not and cannot return to the old order, be it that of 1929 or 1939. No nation can safely go back; ours does not want to go back.'⁵⁷² As one review perceptively stated, with this book students would 'leave the discourse with a clearer insight into a society run by public administrator'.⁵⁷³

Herbert Simon and the study of decision making

A third reaction to the new administrative state emerged from the outskirts of the discipline of Political Science and developed in contrast to those attempts seeking to place 'politics' and 'administration' together. Influenced by trends towards narrow, technocratic social science that was surfacing in other disciplines, such as at the Cowles Foundation, the Chicago-trained scholar Herbert Simon came to argue that the study of bureaucracies ought to pay more attention to the question of how decisions are made. Simon's approach argued that 'public' administration was no different to 'business administration', and, as such, the field of 'administrative organisation' might be approached by a rather rational and technocratic study of behaviour within large groups. 'Politics' and the political context mattered little to Simon, instead he applied to the field of public administration the concept of rationality, borrowed from mathematics and wedded to the model of economic decision

⁵⁷⁰ Marx, *Elements of Public Administration*, p.17.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.48.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, p.26.

⁵⁷³ Geddes W. Rutherford, 'Review: Elements of Public Administration by Fritz Morstein Marx', *APSR* Vol. 41, No. 2 (Apr., 1947), p.353.

making. In 1947 he published the book of his doctoral thesis *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes and Administrative Organization*, and he continued this line of work with a series of articles throughout the next decade.⁵⁷⁴ With such work, we might classify Simon's approach as a truly 'behaviouralist' study of politics.

Simon's work attracted a warm reception in the national press. A reviewer for the *Nation* praised the work, recognising that although the style was firmly academic, 'that is no reason why the book should not become a best-seller in this age of widespread college education.'⁵⁷⁵ Expanding on this point, the reviewer praised Simon's approach to understanding decision-making in bureaucracies. As he stated, there were 'elements of administration common to business, government, and volunteer organizations.'⁵⁷⁶ Simon's vision of the future of American politics in which decisions had become professionalised as part of a bureaucratic regime and analysis of policy was an attractive one for many Americans in this period of rising faith in science and expertise.

However, Simon's work received a rather muted reception among political scientists in the immediate post-war period. In a polite yet restrained review of the work in the *APSR* Minnesota scholar Lloyd M. Short, accepted that although the book had not led to 'any definitive administrative principles', it had nonetheless expressed a 'framework for the analysis and description of administrative situations'.⁵⁷⁷ But behind closed doors, scholars expressed considerable restraint in weighing up the talents of this young pretender to the field. In receiving a reference request from Horace Gray at the University of Illinois, Merriam wrote, 'Personally he is pleasant, industrious, and intelligent. As to the range of his intellectual ability, there is wide difference of opinion. Personally, I would withhold judgement until he has developed further the ideas in which he is interested.'⁵⁷⁸ To which he received the reply, 'I find among others a similar tendency to refrain from premature judgments with respect to some of the pioneering aspects of his research.'⁵⁷⁹

The distance between Simon's concerns and those of his fellow political scientists widened in the following years. In 1948 Simon argued in the *Public Administration Review* that public administration research did not belong within the field of Political Science. Stating this position clearly he wrote; 'Administration is itself an important area of human and social behavior, and research in administration *is* research in psychology and sociology, quite as capable of contributing as

⁵⁷⁴ See especially, "A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 69 (1955), pp.99 – 188.

⁵⁷⁵ Bjarne Braatov, 'The Machinery of Society', *Nation* (Nov 1, 1947), p.478.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁷ Lloyd M. Short, 'Administrative Behavior by Herbert A. Simon', *APSR*, Vol. 41, No. 6 (Dec, 1947), p.1216

⁵⁷⁸ 'Letter to Horace M. Gray', (April 12, 1948), *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 63, Folder 9] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁷⁹ 'Letter from Horace M. Gray' (March 31, 1948) *Charles E. Merriam Papers* [Box 63, Folder 9] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

it is of accepting new knowledge in these fields.⁵⁸⁰ The piece had been prompted by a recent article by Robert Dahl which had echoed dominant trends in the discipline, arguing that the persistent attempt among his predecessors to make public administration a science in the ilk of the natural sciences had been misguided. As he stated, somewhat provocatively, ‘We are a long way from a science of public administration’.⁴⁹ Instead, Dahl argued that the field needed to open up and take account of more normative concerns; develop a better understanding certain aspects of human behaviour; and bring more light to explaining the broader ‘social setting’ in which public administrators operate. Only by doing so could scholars grasp the real scope of public administration in the modern day. In contrast, Simon outlined a much different work, one which would ignore the social setting: he argued that the principles useful for ‘public’ administration were no different to those of business administration.

Simon’s article was an interesting and fiery statement, but it was not influential on the discipline. As the years went on Simon would gravitate towards the company of economists and critique the field of Political Science further, frustrated at the reluctance of his colleagues to follow him towards a technical study of human behaviour at the expense of interest in context. In 1950 he was invited to an interdisciplinary meeting marking the founding of the Center for the Advancement for the Study of the Behavioral Sciences, sponsored by the Ford Foundation. In this meeting Simon explained to other scholars that the discipline of Political Science had a role among the social sciences, ‘as the study of government institutions, of the phenomena of government and politics’, and could bring ‘a lot of descriptive knowledge of an area of human behaviour phenomena, which can contribute to the testing of behavioural science propositions’. But, sharpening his claws, he further argued,

The level of technique in the field... is extremely low. You can get better philosophy from philosophers proper than from ‘political theorists’ who generally have not kept up with the development of philosophy. You can get better knowledge of law from specialists in that field. The main technique of the political scientist is historical, but the historians can probably do this better. There seems to be a very low aspiration level in general, a lack of seriousness of purpose. Political scientists don’t look at each other and themselves as seriously as do economists, sociologists. The field needs uplift in both concepts and techniques. It has a lot to get, and not so much to give.⁵⁸¹

In this litany of criticisms Simon demonstrated how far removed were his preoccupations to those of most of the discipline. Clearly bemused by the lack of interest among political scientists with what he

⁵⁸⁰ Herbert A. Simon, ‘A Comment on “The Science of Public Administration”’ *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 7, No.3 (Summer 1947), pp.200-203.

⁵⁸¹ ‘Informal Planning Group. Dec 20, 1952’, folder 2. CASBS archive, Berkeley California.

termed the more ‘fundamental’ style of research, he had interpreted a ‘low aspiration’. Scholars like Dahl and Gaus had, of course, very high aspirations indeed – they intended to absorb and learn the new techniques and methods for analysing and describing groups and behaviour that had achieved such prominent growth in recent years. But lacking their concern for the ‘public’ side of ‘public administration’, Simon failed to see this ambition as anything more than confused aspirations.

By the end of the 1940s Simon’s approach had failed to gain much traction in the discipline. By 1951, that year’s president of APSA, James Pollock, would summarise the state of the field with the statement, ‘public administration is the study of politics also’.⁵⁸² Like many others in the profession, Pollock had served in Washington during the war, and had experienced the developing substance of American bureaucracy first hand. In his speech he reflected on how impressed he had been as a member of the Budget Bureau when faced with the sheer size and complexity of American government and the role played by its administrative class; ‘I have not yet recovered, in fact I am not sure that I ever will, from the shock I received when I recently observed and scrutinized from an unequalled vantage point the whole vast, sprawling edifice of the federal government.’⁵⁸³ In light of this challenge, Pollock quoted John Gaus, declaring, ‘We need a theory of government functions and one of the classification, recruitment and education of the personnel to administer them that are reflective of the conditions of *big democracy*.’⁵⁸⁴ No clearer statement is possible of the concerns that had developed in the field in the immediate post-war years.

New opportunities: American public administration meets the world

During the 1950s, the field of public administration received an unexpected boost as forces pushed the discipline towards an increasingly prominent global role. The developing Cold War compelled American political scientists to consider not only national administration – but international administrative structures as well. In 1950 and 1952 the Ford Foundation offered generous grants to develop a vast international program dedicated to the ‘improvement of Public Administration in other nations and in international organizations’.⁵⁸⁵ An important step, symbolically at least, came in 1950 with the creation of an UNESCO-sponsored International Political Science Association. This was perceived by political scientists working at the Chicago Public Administration Clearing House as providing ‘a special chance for men to work out, with professional colleagues in the countries of the

⁵⁸² Pollock, ‘The Primacy of Politics’, p.1.

⁵⁸³ Ibid, p.7 .

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Pierre-Yves Saunier, ‘Ulysses of Chicago: American Foundations and Public Administration 1900 – 1960’, HAL archives-ouvertes, [<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00002838>], p.15.

free world, ways of promoting greater political literacy and gaining support for the ideology of freedom.⁵⁸⁶ Scholars including Charles Ascher, Herbert Emmerich, Louis Brownlow and Donald Stone used the newly available funds to develop such institutions as UNRRA, UNO and UNESCO. This sort of work extended the message that administrators were a central part of the process of government beyond the domestic field, and fuelled a growing sense of possibility and importance of the field of public administration not only to the nation, but democracies worldwide.

According to one scholar in 1950, ‘the role of world leadership within the profession that has fallen to us, and the worldwide consequences of failure to move vigorously forward in building stronger foundations for democratic society through adequate Political Science teaching.’⁵⁸⁷ In earlier decades many American public administrators and scholars had crossed the Atlantic hoping to learn administrative insights from the old world. But by 1950 the emphasis had begun to change amidst the growing role that America was to play in forming a new world order, as well as the vastly expanded regulatory state that had emerged during this time. For the first time in the field’s history, public administration expertise had become a product ready for international export. Public administration scholars began to contribute to the design of new administrative devices with which they intended ‘to operate the new world order’.⁵⁸⁸

During the 1950s political scientists came to research the new edifice of government bureaucracy which had expanded during the New Deal and the war. Despite the complexity and vastness of the subject matter, scholars had made substantial progress in both making sense of the changes and in explaining these changes to a broader audience made up of both the general public and government practitioners. In large part these advancements were due to the legacy of wartime innovations which had pushed the field outwards, invigorating a new perspective. In this context, new hubs like the Maxwell school produced a blossoming literature authored by men like Paul Appleby, John Gaus and Fritz Morstein Marx, which fostered and widely disseminated the message that public administration was essentially political. Not only did many educated Americans pick up these ideas through works such as Appleby’s *Big Democracy*, these ideas also infused centres of public administration, whose classrooms and textbooks had not yet been colonised by mathematical policy science that would arrive over the following few decades. The changing international environment further helped to

⁵⁸⁶ Walter H.C. Laves, ‘Goals for Political Science, a discussion’ *The APSR*, p.1017.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, For the UNESCO volume: *Contemporary Political Science* (New York, 1950).

⁵⁸⁸ Pierre-Yves Saunier, ‘Ulysses of Chicago: American Foundations and Public Administration 1900 – 1960’, p.15.

expand the remit of the new science, encouraging scholars to grapple with the nature of ‘democratic’ administration with increasing fervour. More practically, the concerns of philanthropists after the war allowed scholars to extend their purview past domestic problems to international ones.

Section Two: Making sense of pluralistic politics

One of the leading authorities in the field of American parties, E.E. Schattschneider, argued in 1942 that until recently political scientists had no actual democratic government to observe in action, and could not therefore be expected to comprehend the difficulties involved in keeping governmental action responsive to the popular will in the conditions of largescale mass democracy; ‘The enemies of democracy assumed, as unquestionably as did its friends, that popular sovereignty would be effective automatically.’⁵⁸⁹ Upon entering a new post-war era in American life and politics, a number of leading scholars shared Schattschneider’s concern. Politics had become increasingly pluralistic over the previous decade and a half, and looking at the shifting patterns in American politics, scholars grew highly interested in what role for electoral politics, traditionally so central to American democracy, in this new world. A world, moreover, where America’s relationship with the Soviet Union was hardening, and where the nature and resilience of American democracy was far from an abstract question.

As we shall see below, there were a few different reactions to this new general concern. In the first instance, members of a new APSA Committee focused on the challenges of ‘weak’ parties. More interestingly, beyond the APSA report, men like V.O. Key Jnr and David Truman launched an ambitious attempt to describe the operation of this new world of American politics. Branching over a number of fields: parties, elections and public opinion, they attempted to come to grips with how American political institutions had adapted to the new demands of the day.

Already during the war a number of political scientists had come to consider what might be the outlines of a new realignment in electoral politics. Until the Great Depression, American voters could be relied upon to vote for Republican candidates. This had been the case ever since the 1890s, with the exception only of times of crisis such as the Wilson years. The American system was, as scholars such as Arthur Holcombe argued at the time, ‘normally Republican’.⁵⁹⁰ But scholars such as Louise Overacker in her work on campaign funds had revealed shifting electoral patterns during the

⁵⁸⁹ E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (1942) also see, Austin Ranney, *Responsible Party Government* (1954), pg. 3.

⁵⁹⁰ Arthur Holcombe, *The Political Parties of Today* (Harpers, 1924).

New Deal.⁵⁹¹ By 1942, V.O. Key would further this line of investigation with his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*.⁵⁹² In what became the outstanding textbook of the era, Key argued that a new Democratic majority had (at least for the time being) arrived in the United States, and according to Theodore Rosenof an earlier version of this argument was critical to encourage FDR to run for a third term.⁵⁹³

Key's 1942 book on parties also offered a classification of modern American political parties that was far more nuanced than the existing, and comparatively narrow, descriptions of a party in terms of 'formal membership'. Key described parties in three different ways, (still familiar in textbooks today): firstly in terms of party identification in the electorate; secondly as the professional political workers, such as members of state and national committees; and thirdly elected officials within government.⁵⁹⁴ This insightful yet simple tripartite description would come to exert a great influence on the discipline in the post-war years. In later years Harold Gosnell, a contemporary of Key at graduate school and a keen amateur artist, would draw a cartoon of the Texan scholar as a cowboy; checked shirt, holster, necktie, firing shots in the air at books, with the caption 'V.O.'s effect on the party literature'.⁵⁹⁵

'Responsible Parties', 1947 - 1950

In 1947 the executive officers of the American Political Science Association appointed a committee to investigate what was becoming, for some political scientists at least, an increasingly worrisome concern: the apparent 'weakness' of American political parties. American parties were experiencing a moment of fracture and incoherence represented most notably by the three-way split within the Democratic Party. Occupying the middle ground, Harry Truman was shouldered on the left by the New Dealer Henry Wallace and on the right by the southern 'dixiecrat' Strom Thurmond. Published under the title 'Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System' the report explained that the two main political parties were very loosely constituted with 'very little national machinery and very little national cohesion.'⁵⁹⁶ This rendered them unable to devise, implement and maintain 'effective' and

⁵⁹¹ See; Louise Overaker, 'Campaign Finance in the Presidential Election of 1940' *APSR*, August 1941, pp.701 - 726.

⁵⁹² V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups* (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1942).

⁵⁹³ Theodore Rosenof, *Realignment the theory that changed the way we think about American politics* (Rowman & Littlefield; 2003).

⁵⁹⁴ Key, *Politics Parties and Pressure Groups*, pp.165. And see, Byron Shafer, 'The Master, The Acolytes and the Study of American Politics' in Angie Maxwell and Todd G. Shields (eds), *Unlocking V.O. Key Jr: 'Southern Politics' for the Twenty-First Century*, pp. vii- xix.

⁵⁹⁵ 'Sketches, undated.' *Harold F. Gosnell Papers 1886 - 1997, Series I* [Box 7, Folder 8] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁵⁹⁶ Schattsneider et al, "Toward A More Responsible Two-Party System" *A Report of the Committee on Political Parties American Political Science Association* (New York: 1950), p. v.

‘coherent’ policies. The report stated that either of the major parties ‘when in power, is ill-equipped to organize its members in the legislative and the executive branches into a government held together and guided by the party program.’⁵⁹⁷ Moreover, as it further stated, by the middle of the 1940s American government had become unable to respond with sufficient coordination to ‘the momentous problems of the times’, a comment that conjured up the increasingly worrying international context.⁵⁹⁸

The essential message and thinking that underlay the report harked back to Woodrow Wilson’s admiration for British parliamentary practice; it stated that parties ought to be ‘responsible’ to ideological groupings. This argument was, as we have seen in earlier chapters, a popular one in previous generations, but in the 1940s it was most closely associated with the chair of the committee, E.E. Schattschneider, who argued in his 1942 volume *Party Government* that modern ‘democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties’ and that, ‘The condition of the parties is the best possible evidence of the nature of any regime’.⁵⁹⁹ Not all committee members agreed with some of the core contentions in the Chairman’s writings, (the role of parties had after all long been a sticking point for the discipline, ever since Ford and Wilson disagreed on the issue in the early 1900s). Paul David, a member of the committee, in a useful record of the committee’s work, has recalled that the committee was ‘internally divided, heterogeneous, and inconsistent in its various views.’⁶⁰⁰ As a result, the eventual temper of the document is in fact more restrained than that of the chairman’s own writings on the subject of ‘party responsibility’. As David recalls, the concept of ‘a responsible party government’ was ‘deliberately abandoned’ by the committee ‘on the grounds that this wording implied more than most members of the committee were willing to endorse.’⁶⁰¹

Before long, new generations of political scientists would come up with a new diagnosis for explaining the challenges facing policy makers in an American context; further scholars would depart from ‘parties’ and look towards the structure of government itself, in the separation of powers.⁶⁰² But upon release, the report gained a wide reading in popular and national scholarly press and the APSA committee extended its production to a further 2,500 copies.⁶⁰³ As one scholar later reflected, ‘The Report is probably the most publicized document ever published by a committee of the

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid, p. vii.

⁵⁹⁹ E.E. Schattschneider *Party Government* Quoted in John Kenneth White, ‘E. E. Schattschneider and the Responsible Party Model’, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Jun., 1992), pp.167-171 (‘A leading political scientist’: He was to become President of APSA in 1956.).

⁶⁰⁰ See; Paul David, ‘The APSA Committee on Political Parties: Some Reconsiderations of Its Work and Significance’ *Perspectives on Political Science*, Spring 1992; 21, 2, pp.70 -79.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid, p.71.

⁶⁰² See, Byron Shafer, *The American Political Pattern: stability and change, 1932-2016*, (University Press of Kansas; 2016), pp.195-200.

⁶⁰³ ‘Meeting Minutes, APSA committee meeting’ (1951) *V.O. Key Jr, Papers* [Box 2] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Association.⁶⁰⁴ Although this report was atypical in its programmatic stance, its wide dissemination captures something of the timeliness of its concerns. The question of whether parties were responsible was not an ‘academic’ one in the popular sense of that term. Rather, it had everything to do with whether ‘democracy’ was surviving, and phrases stating as much peppered the report. Pre-empting the work of James McGregor Burns in the next decade, these scholars sought to fix parties, and thereby fix the major challenge facing American democracy.⁶⁰⁵

V.O. Key and Southern Politics, 1947 - 1949

Not only did the APSA committee set out to produce a programmatic statement on the ‘health’ of American democracy at mid-century, but within academic scholarship political scientists turned to the question. One work that was under preparation in this period and would make a large impact on the discipline by the turn of the decade was V.O. Key’s *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Focused on the operation of politics within the one-party South, Key’s book would provide a close analysis of what was one of the most interesting and unpredictable facets of the newly emerging American political system: the arcanelly undemocratic and economically troubled American South.

In an unlikely genesis story, Key was somewhat cajoled into writing this work by his former teacher at the University of Alabama, Roscoe Martin. Originating as a study of the poll tax, in part inspired by a conversation with Key, Martin had secured generous funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. Nevertheless, Key was reluctant to leave his current position, and to give up his interesting work at the Bureau of the Budget (as we have seen, public administration was far from a dull area of research at this time, and in fact presented something of a cutting edge for Political Science research). As Key wrote to a friend, ‘Roscoe Martin is after me again on the proposed study of Southern electoral practices (poll tax, et cetera) which I think I mentioned to you once before. He proposes a couple of years at \$7500 to \$8000. The cash appeals to me but the job doesn’t. I’m trying to figure out a diplomatic way to tell him no.’⁶⁰⁶ And he found reason to refuse, protesting to Martin that he felt ‘obliged’ to return to a position that Johns Hopkins had been keeping open for him during the war.⁶⁰⁷ Unwilling to accept Key’s demurral, Martin approached the president of Hopkins and

⁶⁰⁴ Evron Kirkpatrick, ‘Toward A More Responsible Two-Party System’: Political Science, Policy Science, or Pseudo-Science?’ *APSR*, Vol. 65, No.4 (Dec, 1971), p.965.

⁶⁰⁵ See; James McGregor Burns, *The Deadlock of Democracy: Four-party politics in America* (Prentice-Hall; 1963). For a summary of Burns in relation to this point see, Shafer, *The American Political Pattern*, pp.196-8.

⁶⁰⁶ Letter from V.O. Key Jr to Carl B. Swisher, V.O. Key Jr Papers, HUG 4480 [Box 2, Folder S].

⁶⁰⁷ On Key’s acceptance of the Southern Politics project see; Shafer, ‘The Master, The Acolytes and the Study of American Politics’ p. xxi; and, interview with David Truman, in *Oral histories of a discipline*, p.246.

solicited his agreement to let Key go on the premise that this study was of critical national importance.

Key was soon approached by the Bureau of the Budget, for a special project. At such a critical moment for the Bureau, in the midst of post-war demobilization, the young scholar assumed he had found a legitimate reason for declining Martin's project. But a few days later he was presented with a letter from President Truman, urging Key to serve his country with this important study. After which Key wrote to Martin, 'Who will write next, the Pope?' In the end it wasn't the head of the Catholic Church, but a long conversation and a bottle of whiskey that finally persuaded the Texan to accept the challenge and begin research for *Southern Politics*. In this important moment a man who would become a leading political scientist of his generation turned his attention to what would be a seminal contribution to the discipline.

Overcoming his initial reluctance to take up the project, Key was soon swept up with excitement at what was at stake in studying such a unique and unprecedented project. Within months Key held a great intellectual ambition for what he might achieve with the study. Although first and foremost a descriptive study describing the peculiarities of the South, it would also provide an interpretation of American politics. On the one hand as Key saw it, the South was among the number one problem for American democracy, a peculiarly pernicious example of a failure of political structures. On the other hand, this study would also help to illuminate the problem at the heart of American life – the pluralistic nature of American politics. Describing the project early on he pondered about his developing thoughts, beginning with the statement that the problem of the south was not merely 'poor whites', as commonly held by Americans as early as the 1910s, and repeated by Roosevelt's famous statement that the region was the 'number one economic problem'. This had also been the impression given by Howard Odum, the sociologist in an earlier work on the region.⁶⁰⁸ However, as Key reflected, the problems were a lot more complex and, broadly construed, these were 'political' problems:

I'm persuaded that the Odum boys have been on the wrong foot a lot of the time (maybe for good tactical reasons) because I'm about persuaded that the South is bound to remain poor until it solves its political problems. The utilization of the resources of the South rests fundamentally on political action. E.g. a simple thing like education; you can't even make a good farmhand, and more particularly a good independent farmer, out of a white or a black until he knows (a) how to read, (b) how to make a little sense out of what he reads. And southern backwardness in education comes not entirely from poverty; the party

⁶⁰⁸ Howard Odum, 'The regional approach to national social planning : with special reference to a more abundant South and its continuing reintegration in the national economy' (University of North Carolina Press; 1935).

system makes it impossible to lick the corporations that don't want to pay any more taxes than they can get away with. And so on, and so on in other fields.⁶⁰⁹

What Key argued instead was that the South was not just to have more money, but to sort out a complicated governing structure that was in place there and which was largely responsible for many of the problems the region faced. With his first outline in process Key wrote, 'If I should try to rationalise the approach it would be something like this: Practically nothing is known of the nature of the political 'process' or 'conflict' under the one-party system and hence, the first element in a program is to collect the data.'⁶¹⁰

This statement was enough to raise the hairs of those within the discipline who were searching for an understanding of American politics after the war. As one colleague wrote to Key, referring to a conversation had with Pendleton Herring, 'after listening to Pen's almost lyrical description of the Alabama study, I shall be looking forward to its publication with the deepest interest'.⁶¹¹ Key too shared this enthusiasm, as he noted, 'The thing is simply an extensive excursion to get the 'general picture', such general ideas as turn up will have to be creviced in here and there; and, with the schedule, god knows whether anybody will ever have a chance to do any thinking.. but it will be more or less monumental.'⁶¹²

When *Southern Politics* was released it did, as predicted, launch a monumental and ground-breaking argument. As Key explained, the South suffered a serious problem in terms of white dominance. Even in primarily black areas, southern whites exerted an iron grip on the region, perpetuating its many deep and severe social problems. The central message of the book went to explaining the reason for this central problem of inequality and backwardness. Manipulating FDR's earlier claim about economics, Key argued that it was 'Politics' which was 'the South's number one problem'.⁶¹³ To furnish this argument, Key explained how the political system devised in the eleven southern states failed to provide the leadership and organisation necessary to come with its problems. According to Key, political disorganization imprisoned its populace. Attention would be wasted that focused merely on social problems, economic woes or entrenched racism: rather, the South would solve its problems only when it solved the longstanding political disorder.

Key's book comported in many ways with what historians and later generations of scholars have come to expect of 'behavioralism': it was scientific, interested in understanding voter behaviour

⁶⁰⁹ 'Letter from V.O. Key Jr' (1948), *John M Gaus Papers* [Box 1, Folder K. HUG 4417.505] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹¹ 'Letter from Merle Fainsod', *Vladimir O. Key, Jr Papers* [Box 1, Folder F; HUG 4480.5] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶¹² 'Letter from V.O. Key Jr.' (1948) *John M Gaus Papers* [Box 1, Folder K] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶¹³ V.O. Key Jr, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (Vintage Books; 1949).

and contained plenty of scatter graphs and data. But, it was also quite unlike the deductive, abstract theory that was emanating out of other disciplines. Focused on describing the South *tout court* at the same time Key dealt very directly with large and important questions. This engagement was again evidenced in the great reception afforded to the book when it was released, which welcomed not only the large amount of empirical material, but also the sheer originality of the scholarship. As one reviewer noted, '[f]or many years we have lacked a scientific analysis of the political phenomena of our Southern states... As a result, we have lacked an adequate understanding of the political system of almost one quarter of our states, a section which has been almost uniformly successful in exerting a disproportionately large influence in national affairs by reason of its solid front.'⁶¹⁴ Key epitomised a familiar approach of American political scientists: a close-up approach to the reality of American politics capable of speaking to large trends. And it was a sort of approach that proved enormously effective at appealing to American interests more broadly.

Changes in 'public opinion' research, 1950 – 1960

In a series of letters written in 1946 between Charles Merriam and Harold Lasswell, the two political scientists reflected upon earlier years when they had worked together in Chicago. As Lasswell recalled to his former teacher, 'A number of years ago Dr Judson objected to a course on 'public opinion'; likewise to a course on 'Political Parties.' 'What could one put into such a course?' he inquired of me.'⁶¹⁵ To which Merriam replied, 'your remark about Dr Judson reminds me of the time that Ernst Freund stopped me on the stairway and in great seriousness asked me how I proposed to spend an entire quarter on the subject of public opinion.'⁶¹⁶ Judson and Freund were towering figures of their day, but coming of intellectual age in the late nineteenth century they had found little interest in explaining the work of parties or public opinion. In the intervening years much had changed. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, changes in the socio-political climate drew the attention of men like Lasswell and Merriam to the study of public opinion and parties. In an age of mass-marketing and largescale democracy, they had grappled to understand the difficulties of coercion, propaganda and mass advertising upon American democracy.

Nevertheless, despite the interest of men like Lasswell and Merriam in the subject, the study of 'public opinion' in the 1920s and 30s had positioned political scientists on something of a back-

⁶¹⁴ Thomas J. Wood, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. By V. O. Key, Jr. with Alexander Heard. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1949) [Available at: <http://repository.law.miami.edu/umlr/vol4/iss2/23>].

⁶¹⁵ 'Letter from Charles Merriam', (March 4, 1946), *Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers. MS 1042; Series I* [Box 64; Folder 859] MA, YUL. New Haven.

⁶¹⁶ 'Letter to Charles Merriam', (March 7, 1946) *Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers. MS 1042; Series I* [Box 64; Folder 859] MA, YUL. New Haven.

foot to sociologists and psychologists who, armed with their new techniques of survey research, had dominated the field. However, the increasingly pluralistic nature of American politics by the mid-1940s went a long way to redressing this situation, and reinvigorating the study of ‘public opinion’ within the discipline of Political Science. American political scientists came to argue that American political parties were rather different to the British ones men like Wilson had studied, and rather than ideological factions, scholars such as V.O. Key Jr and David Truman came to see American parties as loose coalitions of groups, embodying a version of the pluralism that pre-war scholars had associated primarily with interest-group formation. In this respect, ‘public opinion’ was enshrined not, as had been presumed, in the individual psyche of each American, but rather in organised groups. For Key public opinion was enshrined within the organised intermediaries of politics (such as his three types of ‘party’), whilst for Truman it was social groups which were the real vessels of public opinion.⁶¹⁷

If the APSA report had been able to garner some degree of acceptance on the need for ‘responsible parties’ in 1950, this soon collapsed. Key’s tripartite definition of ‘parties’ (as a faction of the electorate; as the work of professionals in politics; and as groups of elected officials) came to dominate understandings of the ‘real’ operation of parties, rather than the Wilsonian conception of ‘ideological’ groups. An important moment for this transformation occurred in surprise surrounding the results of the 1948 election. Pollsters had been confidently predicting a victory for Truman’s opponent Thomas E. Dewey, and so were political scientists such as Harold Gosnell, whose cyclical theory of American political voting pointed towards a new Republican president. However, in a surprise result, Truman was returned to office. Overshadowing pollsters and political scientists at this time was a far more successful attempt at forecasting that been made by a non-political scientist – Louis Bean. With the title *How to Predict Elections*, Bean had produced for popular audience a work which arrived at the conclusion that Truman would, against the odds, succeed at the polls. Russian by birth, Bean was a government worker holding a post as an aide to the Secretary of Agriculture. His work on predictions (his ‘Bean poll’, as it was later called), had been something that he put together in his spare time in weekends and evenings. And, as a reviewer from Yale noted, it posed some uncomfortable questions to the discipline,

Bean makes it clear that one need not have a large staff of interviewers and statisticians in order to understand and predict shifts in public opinion and to forecast the subsequent change in congressional and administrative control. As a matter of fact this book raises the question of why political scientists have not used many of the same facts which are also available to them for the study of American voting habits.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁷ For this distinction see; Shafer, ‘The Master, The Acolytes, and American Democracy’, pp. 10- 11.

⁶¹⁸ Howard Penniman, “Review of: *How to Predict Elections*, Louis Bean,” *The Journal of Politics*, (Vol. 11, Issue 01; Feb. 1949), pp. 265-267.

The image of Louis Bean sitting on his arm chair, quietly out-smarting the experts was not a comfortable one for political scientists who, like Schattschneider, had hoped for responsible ideological factions. What was coming into view instead was the centrality of coalitions to American parties. Bewildered but fascinated by what had happened, political scientists were drawn to take a closer look at the operation and activity of American party and electoral politics.

1952 marked the arrival of another important contribution by V.O. Key, in the form of an article in *Virginia Quarterly* in which he explained that the 1936 election had ‘represented something new’ in the form of the creation of a new Democratic majority in American politics.⁶¹⁹ For Key the upset of the 1948 election had prompted some new ideas about how voter realignment occurred and, as Theodore Rosenof has argued in his insightful work on the development of ‘critical election’ theory, by the beginning of the 1950s Key came to reject the cyclical understanding of elections represented by earlier scholars and most recently and publicly by Louis Bean. As Rosenof has described, in 1954 Key circulated among colleagues the first draft of an important new theory that described the particular importance of certain ‘critical elections’. This new article, published in 1955, offered a theory that would cast big waves and refine how elections were studied, with certain elections such as the 1928 election held as a moment of special significance. In formulating this article, Key had worked out the original ideas with the simple suggestion that ‘there are elections and elections’.⁶²⁰ However, by the time he worked it up to the 1955 piece, it had become a much thought-through version which incorporated the insights of his 1952 *Virginia Quarterly Review* piece.

Although this work emerged in the pages of professional Political Science journals, it also actively contributed to a broader debate that was currently being played out in a public arena that was populated by historians and political theorists. In 1949 the Harvard historian Arthur Schlesinger wrote about the vitality of the ‘center’ in American politics. Influenced by the developing Cold War and optimistic of the ability of this center to ‘hold’, Schlesinger argued that the New Deal had come into permanent existence.⁶²¹ Although Key’s work could be seen to suggest that this was a new situation, by pointing to a new democratic ‘majority’, Key’s work in fact lacked the permanence that Schlesinger or other historians projected upon this moment. In this respect, it was the journalist, Samuel Lubell, who bore most in common with Key. Lubell was less celebratory of this apparent ‘middle’ and his work involved interpreting the various political factions at large within American society. Key was deeply interested in this approach, and upon reviewing *The Future of American Politics* in 1952 he wrote to Lubell to tell him ‘you have done such a remarkably good job, that I am

⁶¹⁹ V. O. Key, Jr., ‘The Future of the Democratic Party,’ *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 28, (Spring 1952), pp.161 – 175.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ See; Arthur Schlesinger, *The vital center: the politics of freedom* (Houghton Mifflin; 1949).

moved to write to you and say so.’ And thickly lathering on praise, he stated, ‘It’s the sort of book that I should have liked to do myself. You would be justified in taking an almost unseemly pride in it.’⁶²²

Key’s work on realignment was significant in a second important respect – it attempted to inform not just the general public, but academic psychologists. Key had a close relationship with many psychologists – they were part of a common front who were attempting to gather new data on American society. As chair of a Social Science Research Council committee on Political Behaviour, Key was one of the front-runners in the demand to develop better methods in the discipline for analysing data, and therefore improving description of the actual on-the-ground happenings of American politics. He also held respect for new survey techniques, particularly those at Michigan. However, Key’s interest in these methods was to apply them to political structures. As he wrote in his letter to his friend Oliver Garceau, ‘the real reason’ he put together the whole business’ was as ‘a sort of continuation of my argument with the electoral behaviour boys that the stuff they do has to be tied into matters of ‘political relevance’ one way or another if it is to amount to anything more than an interesting exercise.’⁶²³ In what is now an extinct opinion among political scientists, but was popular at the time, Key felt that ‘popular opinion’ was not some amorphous collection of beliefs independent from social and political groups, but rather it existed only in the activity and operation of these groups.⁶²⁴

Another scholar to make an important contribution to this aspect of the Political Science literature during the 1950s was David Truman. Truman had been one the ‘young turks’ described in the previous chapter. Immersed in the war bureaus these men had been keen to develop a greater contextualised understanding of American government during the war. In 1947 Truman had written a letter to John Gaus which contained the sentiment, ‘I have had a feeling all this year that while the present undergraduates are perhaps more serious than they were in my day, they still want the kinds of things which we wanted – a synthesis of problems and ideas, the challenge of fruitful insights into present and past efforts to deal with the problems of a complex society, and a sense of continuity and meaning in the efforts which they hope to make.’⁶²⁵

Four years later Truman would come to offer just this sort of contribution in a new book with the title *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion*. Truman has largely been remembered as a contributor to what has come to be known as ‘pluralist’ theory. In a similar manner to Herring and Odegard in earlier generations, Truman analysed American politics through the

⁶²² Quoted in, Andrew M. Lucker, *V.O. Key, Jr: The Quintessential Political Scientist* (Major concepts in politics and political theory; vol. 19) (Peter Lang Publishing, Inc; 2001), p.242.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ See; *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (Knopf, 1961). On the legacy of Key’s approach, see; Shafer, ‘The Master, The Acolytes, and American Democracy’, pp. vii – xix.

⁶²⁵ ‘Letter from David Truman to V.O. Key Jr’, (June 2, 1947), *John M Gaus Papers*, [Box 1, Folder T] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

workings of interest groups. But Truman's work was also significant as a reintroduction of the field of 'Public Opinion' into Political Science research. As we have seen, the subject first really surfaced in Lowell's 1914 text, which focused on the problem of translating 'public opinion' into 'action'. Since then, the field had verged, under the influence of men like Lasswell and latterly of survey researchers, out of the remit of the discipline and into the grasp of psychologists and sociologists better capable of understanding individual behaviour and thought. However, in sync with Key, Truman argued that 'public opinion' was nothing aside from political structures. He made this argument explicitly in an *Items* article in which he argued that 'political behaviour' was much more than 'voting'.⁶²⁶ In an exchange between with the prominent survey researcher Angus Campbell, V.O. Key used this article to chastise the psychologist for careless use of terminology;

One important point; at bottom of p.5, we see the phrase 'political behaviour.' It is used throughout. When you work up the document, would you consider the substitution of 'electoral behaviour?' Dave Truman in his *Items* article attempts to set a usage for 'political behaviour' to cover a much broader territory. As a matter of strategy in the Political Science profession, I believe that we should avoid conveying the impression that maybe the study of voting or electoral behaviour is the totality of political behaviour.⁶²⁷

As this extract suggests, far from simply absorbing new theories and techniques, political scientists were actively seeking to push back other social scientists who were claiming to define 'public opinion' but, according to Key and Truman, were in fact describing electoral behaviour. As *The Governmental Process* explained, true 'public opinion' was much more than electoral behaviour: it was those bodies of opinions operationalised in the tug and pull of the 'political' process. Key read drafts of the book as Truman wrote it, and correctly predicted half way through, '[i]f you keep it up this way you've got a minor classic.'⁶²⁸

There has been a tendency to associate increased attention to the pluralistic base of American democracy with a 'behavioral revolution', political scientists are portrayed as trotting along behind survey researchers and sociologists and attempting to revise established theories in light of new methods and insights in human behaviour.⁶²⁹ In fact, this image fails to reflect the real concerns and motivations of the new Political Science scholarship. Men like Key certainly hoped to advance methods that would allow greater collection and interpretation of data concerning American politics. But balanced between the rigour of science and the demand for intelligibility, this new scholarship

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

⁶²⁷ Letter from V.O. Key Jr to Angus Campbell, V.O. Key Jnr Papers, HUG 4480.5 [Box 2, Folder C].

⁶²⁸ Quoted by Truman, in 'David Truman, *Political Science in America: Oral Histories of a Discipline*, p.144

⁶²⁹ See; Marvin Surkin and Alan Wolfe, *An End to Political Science* (Basic Books, 1970).

was far from narrowly concerned with methods, and it dealt with behaviour only in terms of its political basis.

Section three: Resisting ‘behavioralism’; 1950 - 1960

In the closing months of 1949 the outgoing president of the APSA, Quincy Wright, invited Harold Lasswell to fill a vacant position in the association, as head of a Committee on Research. Tongue in cheek he noted, ‘it suddenly occurred to me that perhaps you might be interested in inserting a little dynamite into the APSA.’⁶³⁰ As Wright well knew, few scholars could be guaranteed to take up this task with such enthusiasm as the former Chicago prodigy, and as he wrote to Lasswell, ‘it occurred to me that maybe you would like to write a report about research in Political Science which would be a gadfly in the ear of this organization’.⁶³¹ By 1950, a new mood of introspection had descended upon the discipline. A number of public statements were made in this time which articulated to political scientists the pressing importance of absorbing new insights from the neighbouring social sciences. In 1950 Oliver Garceau, published in the *APSR* what has been described as a ‘behavioral manifesto’.⁶³² This detailed a range of methods which would be appropriate to the scholar of politics. A year earlier, an APSA committee had released *Goals for Political Science* which again emphasized the recent advances in other disciplines and coaxed political scientists to emulate and incorporate these advances as quickly as possible.⁶³³

Despite the passion of such statements, the ‘behavioural manifesto’ represented a trend whose roots were very shallow. ‘Behavioralism’ as a direct attack upon the discipline was, at best, a minor insurgency conducted in the pages of scholarly journals. Many of those who have been associated with the movement – men like V.O. Key and David Truman – were, as we have seen, very broad in their concerns. More important than surface debates about ‘behavioral methods’ was a much stronger uniting force among scholars concerning the ultimate purpose and ambitions of the discipline. As this section will describe, this common purpose was found in a very familiar understanding of the discipline to speak to large problems and provide scholars and citizens alike with a better appreciation for the main challenges of their times.

⁶³⁰ ‘Letter from Quincy Wright’ (March 9, 1949) *Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers*. [Box 6, Folder 64. Group No 1043. Series i] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*

⁶³² Dryzek, ‘Revolutions without Enemies’, p.490.

⁶³³ American Political Science Association Committee for the Advancement of Teaching, *Goals for Political Science: report of the Committee for the Advancement of Teaching* (Sloane, 1951).

Defining the science of politics in 1950

Even as some scholars, such as Lasswell and Garceau, urged their colleagues to perform some disciplinary housekeeping, to retrain in new methods, the vast majority of scholars rejected the idea that their discipline had more to learn from other disciplines than they had to offer. In a letter to James Pollock, the APSA president of 1950, public administration scholar Herbert Emmerich stated, 'The sociologists and psychologists and anthropologists talk about bureaucracy, power and other fascinating concepts, but there is a strange note of unreality in their words.' Stressing the point he wrote, 'The other social sciences can help us but, I believe, only under our auspices.'⁶³⁴ In receiving this letter, Pollock not only agreed with the sentiment, but he was to repeat the phrase in a speech given to the association in 1951; 'No doubt the other social sciences can help us. But the almost overwhelming problems of the modern world can be solved only by our most mature minds, and Political Science is the integrating and synthesizing discipline. *The pulling together must be under our auspices.*'⁶³⁵

Pollock's statement was one of a number of public demonstrations of confidence in the discipline offered in the early 1950s by scholars who agreed that a special, but difficult to define, quality was shared by the fraternity of scholars in the discipline of Political Science. Many calls emerged to improve the methods, but few envisaged a future in which disciplinary boundaries would come tumbling down and political scientists would retrain as sociologists, psychologists or economists. Even Harold Lasswell retained a loyalty to his discipline; in spite of his many covetous looks towards some of the techniques developed in other disciplines, the Chicago-trained scholar viewed the role of the political scientist first and foremost as an aggregator of insights from other sciences useful for the combination of granular analysis with large theoretical statements. In a revealing incident, as head of the APSA Committee on Research in 1950 Lasswell had written to Herbert Simon to state 'I know that you have plenty of ideas, but I would like to propose one which I believe is of great strategic importance to the brotherhood. Why not discuss the possible use of mathematical models in political research?'⁶³⁶ The irony, of course, was that Simon felt little of Lasswell's affection to the 'brotherhood': the two scholars had very different understandings of the role of Political Science.

⁶³⁴ 'Letter from Herbert Emmerich to James Pollock', (3 March 1950), *Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers*.. [Box 6, Folder 68. Group No. 1043, Series I] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶³⁵ Pollock, "The Primacy of Politics", p.15.

⁶³⁶ 'Letter f to Herbert Simon', (Jan 25, 1950), *Harold D. Lasswell Papers*. [Box 6, Folder 68. Group No. 1043, Series I.] HUA, PL. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In 1950 Paul Appleby published an article in the 'Notes and Memoranda' section of the *APSR* which bore the title 'Political Science, the Next Twenty-Five Years'.⁶³⁷ In this he elegantly expressed a number of the key concerns which were circulating the discipline in this period. Most intriguingly, Appleby also attempted to describe what it was that gave political scientists their special significance. Many practitioners had assumed that the discipline did indeed contain some special knowledge which experts in other fields did not, but few attempted to define this particular quality or where it came from. In contrast, Appleby noted that, 'Political scientists know a good deal more than they have revealed, and some of them have understanding far more significant than they have begun to communicate effectively. Some of their understanding is communicable only to other political scientists who read between the lines. Some of it has not been tangibly formulated at all.'⁶³⁸ Where this came from, he hinted, was the close distance to politics at which the discipline had been positioned for so long. He expressed this point by a comparison with Economics, in pushing against a recent article by the economist Joseph Spengler which had argued for Political Science to go the direction of Economics, and become a more specialised and systematic science. Instead, Appleby argued that the 'very flexibility of Political Science at this stage is its great hope.' As he further argued, the degree to which political scientists had been accused of lagging behind other sciences reflected instead a natural and desirable closeness to politics. 'A Political Science that abandoned politics in any such degree as political economy has abandoned politics would be the more quickly recognized as absurd.'⁶³⁹

Appleby also emphasised the importance of the times, and the specific post-war context which had lurched the discipline into a position of heightened responsibility. He defined the present era not as the 'atomic age', but as an 'age of politics', and stated that the role of the discipline in the future would be 'larger and more general than has been the usual expectation'.⁶⁴⁰ Finally, he also commented on the shifting nature of the role of political scientists over the coming years. In doing so he lay a heavy emphasis not merely on technical expertise, but on 'worldly' wisdom. He stated that political scientists might develop expertise over a broad remit of areas in which the discipline was to comment, and the sort of approach and questions with which it was to deal, was not precisely defined. At the highest level, a 'few of the more mature political scientists, some younger men of peculiar quality, and some who are not political scientists at all will dare to deal with our times as the authors of *The Federalist* dealt with theirs.'⁶⁴¹ More generally, political scientists should be expected to speak

⁶³⁷ Paul Appleby, 'Political Science the Next Twenty Five Years' *APSR* Vol. 44, Issue 4 (Dec 1950), pp.924 – 932.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid*, p.932.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid*.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.925.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.929.

to students, politicians, civil servants, the general public and other social sciences on a range of matters, all in some way connected to the important matter of the recently engrossed state.

Appleby's comments were interesting and revealing, pointing to the force of disciplinary loyalty and a continuous respect for non-technical expertise, wisdom or hunches, that members of the discipline felt themselves to have accrued after a decade and a half of close contact with the political world. Viewed in this way, the major challenge of the day in the decade that followed was not the mere incorporation of neighbouring methods. On the contrary: it was the challenge of coaxing out, formulating and formalizing the knowledge that already existed, in raw and unpolished form, in the minds and observations of political scientists. New methods and techniques were likely to be of great use in achieving these gains, but they were by no means the only, or even the most important, factor of the revolution that was brewing.

Resisting public choice theory

Besides writing about the state of the discipline in introspective articles, political scientists also ignored, or actively resisted, true 'behavioral' science. In 1951 the economist Kenneth Arrow published *Social Choice and Individual Values* which began as an exploration of the problem of allocating resources for the public welfare.⁶⁴² Arrow's work had major implications for the understanding and operation of democracies. He provided an argument that began with voting systems: arguing that no voting system worked to produce a result that would satisfactorily fulfil the basic requirements of voting which social scientists, and Americans generally, considered to be fundamental. Moreover, not only would majority-voting rules prove unsatisfactory; so, too, would other non-voting systems for making social choices fail if those choices were based on the preferences of the individuals making up society.⁶⁴³

This work helped to initiate a cascade of scholarship in the field that came to be known as 'public choice' or 'welfare economics'. New important contributions came in the mid-decade from Anthony Downs. Arrow had argued, essentially, that no rational method of maximizing social welfare can be found unless strong restrictions are placed on the 'preference orderings' of individuals in societies, and Downs studied the difficulties of social welfare from another perspective. Rather than focusing on the meaning of welfare and its ability to maximise, he argued that even 'if social welfare

⁶⁴² Kenneth Arrow, *Social Choice and Individual Values* (John Wiley, 1951).

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

could be defined, and methods of maximizing it could be agreed upon, what reason is there to believe that the men who run the government would be motivated to maximize it?’⁶⁴⁴

Drawing on recent work of the socialist economist, Joseph Schumpeter, Downs noted that most attempts by economists to deal with government do not treat the government in the same way, failing to recognise that ‘governments are concrete institutions run by men’. Seeking to buck this trend Downs published in 1957, *An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy* which offered a model of the conditions under which economic theory could be applied to political decision-making. As Downs explained in a pre-emptory article, ‘In spite of the tremendous importance of government decisions in every phase of economic life, economic theorists have never successfully integrated government with private decision-makers in a single general equilibrium theory. Instead they have treated government action as an exogenous variable, determined by political considerations that lie outside the purview of economics’.⁶⁴⁵

In future decades, in different circumstances, the work of economists would assume a central place in the discipline. But during the 1950s the work of economists was of little interest to most political scientists. In a retrospective article, a later rational choice theorist has complained of the indifference among political scientists in the 1950s to the field of public choice, noting that ‘political scientists were not shocked by these striking analytic forays of economists into their discipline’.⁶⁴⁶ A reason often given, retrospectively, to the lack of attention to the developing Public Choice field among American political scientists during the 1950s concerns the practical issue of training.⁶⁴⁷

Nevertheless, methodological deficiency does not account for the most fundamental reason that public choice failed to make significant inroads within Political Science during the 1950s. The aversion to the work of economists was primarily rooted in resistance to the idea that the category of ‘economic interest’ was one which could be truly understood as ‘rational’. V.O. Key Jnr believed quite stridently that voters are both self-interested and rational, but as a former student reported, Key ‘never accepted Anthony Downs’ deductive theory as a productive means for studying politics. He felt quite strongly that deductive analysis added little or nothing to Political Science and was, in fact, ‘overkill,’ i.e., the marginal costs exceeded the marginal benefits.’⁶⁴⁸ What scholars needed to understand was more complex and hidden than a universal science of human behaviour could reveal.

⁶⁴⁴ Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy* *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 65, No. 2 (Apr., 1957), pp.135-150.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ William Mitchell, ‘Political Science and public choice: 1950 – 70’ *Public Choice*, 98: 237 – 249, (1999) ppg 237 – 249, pg 247.

⁶⁴⁷ Richard R. Fagan, ‘Bibliographical Essays: Some contributions of mathematical reasoning to the study of politics’ *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Dec., 1961), pp.888- 900, p.88.

⁶⁴⁸ William C. Mitchell, ‘Political Science and public choice’, *Public Choice*, (Vol. 98, 1999), p. 239.

Others took active steps to weaken the influence of public choice theorists. Robert Dahl's second work in the 1950s, *A Preface of Democratic Theory* was in no respect mathematical, but he nevertheless attempted to engage with the Welfare Economics literature.⁶⁴⁹ One retrospective did pick upon this in 1961, noting, 'Probably neither the critics nor the defenders of Dahl's *A Preface to Democratic Theory* would claim that his argument is mathematical. [And yet,] Dahl leans heavily on the work of economists, including Arrow's *Social Choice*.'⁶⁵⁰ However, in leaning on the literature, Dahl presented a very different perspective, pushing back, as had Key, against the deductive application of economic reasoning to speak to the problem of politics. Instead, Dahl drew on social conditions of American democracy to argue against the threatening ideas of Arrow that democracy could never work. Perhaps for an abstract economic man this was the case but, according to Dahl, in the context of the United States most citizens shared a consensus on important values, also shared by their representatives. In this context, 'the disputes over policy alternatives are nearly always disputes over a set of alternatives that have already been winnowed down to those within the broad area of basic agreement.'⁶⁵¹

Dahl was in many important respects an intermediary between the two disciplines in this period. He had made another important attempt to fuse economic and political theory in the early 1950s alongside Charles 'Ed' Lindblom. Recognising that each were teaching similar courses to graduate students, but under different disciplinary hats, the political scientist Dahl and the economist Lindblom produced over a couple of years the large and detailed publication *Democracy, Economics and Welfare*. This book focused on the requirements and the limitations of rational economic planning in a democracy and marketed itself as 'a systematic attack on the idea of all-embracing ideological solutions to complex economic problems.'⁶⁵² Underlying this book was, as with Dahl's other work, (including by the end of the decade his famous *Who Governs?*), a concern with maximising the possible achievements of society, even as it accepted that 'even free societies will inevitably fall short' of achieving the goals of freedom, efficiency, political equality, security and progress. As members of the same generation who had born witness to the same events, these men were much more united by their experience than any residual feeling of separate training as 'political scientists' or 'economists'. Moreover, within their separate disciplines, both Lindblom and Dahl saw the primacy of understanding 'political man' in context over 'economic man' in abstract form.⁶⁵³

⁶⁴⁹ Robert Dahl, *Preface to Democratic Theory* (University of Chicago Press; 1956), p.1.

⁶⁵⁰ Mitchell, 'Political Science and public choice', p.240.

⁶⁵¹ Dahl, *Preface to democratic theory*, p.132.

⁶⁵² Robert A. Dahl and Charles E. Lindblom, *Politics, economics and welfare: planning and politico-economic systems resolved into basic social processes* (Harper, 1953).

⁶⁵³ In this respect, it is interesting to note that Lindblom always fell somewhat on the intersection between Political Science and Economics.

Despite their best efforts, what Dahl and Lindblom anticipated to be a looming courtship between Economics and Political Science would, by the end of the decade remain unconsummated. *Democracy and Welfare* would attain ‘the status of a minor classic in Political Science’, whilst remaining ‘largely unknown and unheeded by economists interested in public choice.’⁶⁵⁴ Nevertheless, for political scientists Dahl’s work led a defence against the most damning of the criticism of the public choice literature, arguing (against Arrow) that rational decision making was indeed possible. Of course, Dahl did not succeed in convincing those public choice theorists who had initiated this new research programme, and the question that had animated both the public choice theorists and Dahl namely, the relationship between voting and rationality, would remain without a single official answer, and stretched out between two different disciplines of American social science.

Conclusion

A new intellectual approach emerged in American social science after the war, led by economists and psychologists, this trend pointed towards an increasingly abstract and technical study of social life. To a striking extent the discipline of Political Science resisted this trend, and its leading lights remained concerned to illuminate recent and important changes in American politics. In the field of public administration scholars like Paul Appleby and John Gaus studied the newly-formed administrative state and grappled with important questions concerning the fate of accountability within this system. This provided an important counterweight to the emergence of new scholarship that ignored the issue entirely, such as Herbert Simon’s. In the field of electoral politics, scholars like V.O. Key and David Truman sought to make sense of the increasingly pluralistic nature of the American political process. Their work provided thoughtful contributions to public and scholarly debate. To this extent the discipline continued to function in this period much as it had in the past, concerned with making sense of American politics.

An important factor conditioning the relative success of the discipline in this period was the legacy of the war. As the previous two chapters have described, American political scientists had been stimulated by the experience of the New Deal and the Second World War. Going into the post-war period these scholars confidently assumed that their expertise had become a highly valued commodity – a science uniquely prepared to enlighten citizens and policy makers in new age of big government. Going into the 1950s political scientists squared up to these new challenges, propounding the merits of a science of ‘politics’ as an alternative to abstract social and economic theory. This confidence also helps to explain the ongoing belief among political scientists that their discipline had at least as much

⁶⁵⁴ Mitchell ‘Political Science and public choice’, p.242.

to offer other disciplines – in terms of its insights and theories about politics – than it had to gain in methodological techniques that could shine new light on behaviour. Although scholars were certainly interested in the latter, there was no particular preoccupation with being ‘scientific’ at the expense of being useful. Political scientists in the 1950s were, as they had been in the decades previously, on the front line in the important and pressing task of describing in granular detail those aspects of American democracy that could best speak to contemporary challenges and concerns.

The decade of the 1960s would bring a turbulent series of social and political changes and a raft of highly animated protests would be directed at the academic community writ large. In this new context scholars such as Dahl and Truman would find themselves curiously adrift from the major animating concerns of American life. However, buoyed by the developing confidence and sense of purpose that had grown in the discipline during the 1950s, the mainstream of the discipline would also prove strikingly resilient when confronted by new critics. Even as a new generation of political scientists emerged who would take the discipline in a new direction, those scholars who had reached professional maturity in the 1950s were well-placed to weather the challenging period ahead.

CHAPTER VI

Growth and fragmentation: American Political Science in the 1960s

Introduction

In a speech entitled 'The State of the Discipline' delivered in 1958, V.O. Key Jr stated, 'briefly and bluntly', to an audience at the American Political Science Association's annual conference in St Louis; 'the demands upon our profession have grown more rapidly than has the content of our discipline. We are, in a sense, the victims of our own success.'⁶⁵⁵ In this speech, Key remarked that his colleagues in the profession had come to play an increasingly important role in American life. Student numbers had been steadily increasing since the end of the war and by 1958 American political scientists were teaching 6,000 undergraduate majors a year, and thousands more students took a Political Science course while holding a major in another subject.⁶⁵⁶ Whereas the APSA held 4,000 members in 1945, two decades later this figure was 14,000.⁶⁵⁷ Not only was the profession larger, it was also more integrated in national life than at any previous point in time in its history: over half of the profession's M.A. students were employed by government agencies, recruited to staff roles by congressional committees and state legislatures, or entered into public administration. Others were recruited to related fields in private research agencies.⁶⁵⁸ Never had the 'demands' upon the discipline been so great.

The international context added to the demands on the profession. As one newspaper review of the 1957 APSA conference reported, '[s]peaking to a group of mostly Political Science teachers, Senator Symington [a Democratic senator from Missouri] said, 'time is growing short for Political

⁶⁵⁵ V.O. Key, Jr. 'The State of the Discipline', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Dec., 1958), p. 961.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 962.

⁶⁵⁷ Somit and Tanenhaus, *Burgess to Behavioralism*, p. 145.

⁶⁵⁸ Key, 'The State of the Discipline', p. 962.

Science to do its job because the last time we looked over our shoulders, the Soviet Union was gaining steadily.⁶⁵⁹ Tensions heightened further in October 1957, as Americans watched as the world's first satellite was launched into space by the Soviet military. This small but unprecedented piece of technology orbited the world at 18,000 miles per hour and for countless onlookers it embodied the looming threat of Russian military advance.⁶⁶⁰

Shortly after Key's speech, the dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard, McGeorge Bundy, wrote to congratulate Key, with the note, 'I thought you struck exactly the right balance between emphasis on the distance we have come and the distance we have to go'.⁶⁶¹ Like Key, Bundy believed that the professional development of Political Science had been in the right direction, but these advancements needed to be accelerated. Contrary to such hopes, over the next decade events were afoot to drive a wedge between the discipline and the society it served. Key was to die only a few years later, tragically young, in 1963. However, as he struggled with ill-health in his final years he bore witness to a stark change in American politics that would beckon a new era in American Political Science, and the wilting of a long tradition of scholarship in which he had been an important figure. This chapter describes that process.

The 1960s were a turbulent decade for American scholarship writ large. In the first instance, Lyndon Johnson's famous Great Society programmes launched American academics into the upper echelons of American politics in greater numbers and to greater effect than ever before experienced in the United States – and without precedent elsewhere. However, no sooner had government circles become saturated with academics than the ivory tower came under intense, prolonged and often riotous attack. As Peter Novick has described in the case of the American historical profession, 'established' academic disciplines were subjected to new criticisms. There were two strands of this critique: on the one hand, an argument that scholars were insufficiently engaged in the deep and suddenly viscerally apparent social crises of the day. Novick has described how the 'boisterous, flamboyant, and at least so far as the academic world was concerned, ephemeral' world of the new counterculture critiques sought to attack academic professions in the 1960s.⁶⁶² On the other hand, a more intellectualised reaction emerged which highlighted the 'bias' of academic disciplines; for historians this was the 'objectivity' question, and for social scientists this emerged as a challenge to the fundamental aspiration to be 'scientific'. According to Novick, the most devastating critics of established disciplines emerged from within the academy, in the world of 'culturally very 'straight' scholars' men like Thomas Kuhn, Clifford Geertz, and intellectual historians who peeled back

⁶⁵⁹ 'APSA Conference Review', *APSA Records* [Box 243: Late 50s], SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

⁶⁶⁰ James Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945 - 1974*, (Oxford University Press, 1996) p. 418.

⁶⁶¹ Quoted in Luker, *V.O. Key Jr, The Quintessential Political Scientist*, p. 203.

⁶⁶² Novick, *The Objectivity Question*, p. 522.

previously unquestioned assumptions for the profession's objectivity. Their works descended upon the American academy 'like a fresh breeze for some, like acid rain for others.'⁶⁶³

This was a decade that although disruptive, was very regenerative of kindred disciplines. Out of the ashes of the 'objectivity crisis', New Left Historiography brought with it excitement concerning the critical perspectives that historians could contribute to human knowledge. If History survived, spirited and fighting, many of the social sciences were even more galvanized. After two decades of perpetual crisis, guild sociologists were becoming public figures, firing out ideas about how to think about politics to broad public audiences. Leading the pack, Daniel Bell provided timely syntheses of ideas in a number of his best-selling books including, *The End of Ideology* and *The Coming of a Post Industrial Society*.⁶⁶⁴ Joining him were the David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, Seymour Martin Lipset.⁶⁶⁵ The division of scholars who, as a group, profited the most from the chaos of the decade were the economists. In this decade they came to claim unprecedented control over the modern industrial economy. Their rise to new heights convinced the Nobel Prize committee to authorize a new category for the discipline in the early 1970s.⁶⁶⁶

If other kindred disciplines were in some sense transformed and invigorated by the drama and tumult of the Sixties, the case of American Political Science was rather different. This chapter explores why within Political Science so *little* seemingly changed within the discipline during this decade. Other disciplines experienced a messy but ultimately productive and significant transformation, but the case of Political Science was different. Certainly, the discipline experienced intense disruption, as a new cadre of, often younger, scholars attacked the intellectual and political motivations of earlier generations. Nevertheless, even as these attacks became rather heated, they did not, ultimately, disrupt the discipline or put it on entirely new set of tracks. Indeed, for much of the decade scholars produced work which committed to the original goal: close empirical study illuminating broad themes in American politics.

It is not easy to distinguish what exactly accounts for the rather humdrum experience of the discipline in this decade. However, we can discern at least three reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, the criticism which the new cadre of scholars loaded against the social sciences – that they were narrowly abstract, uncritically state-serving, in search of 'behavioralistic' theories – did not hit home with a generation of scholars who for the past decade had attempted a quite different task: to

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (Harvard University Press; 1962), Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (Basic Books; 1976).

⁶⁶⁵ See, David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd: a study of the changing American character* (Yale University Press; 1961); Nathan Glazer, *The limits of social policy* (Harvard University Press; 1988); Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: the social bases of politics*(Heinemann; 1960).

⁶⁶⁶ See; Avner Offer, *The Nobel factor: the prize in economics, social democracy and the market turn* (Princeton University Press, 2016).

wed empirical work with *big questions*. Secondly, during this decade the leading works of Political Science came from the more established scholars who were relatively insulated from concerns and tumult of the day, rather than a younger and more dissenting cohort. And thirdly, new calls for political scientists to engage with the new social crises fell rather flat within a discipline that had traditionally defined its concerns separate from ‘society’, and in the realm of political structures and institutions.

Nevertheless, as this chapter further demonstrates, even as the discipline withstood the new challenges, changes were afoot in American politics that would change the outlook of the discipline quite dramatically in future years. Even as the discipline was not shaken by the protests directed against academic disciplines in the 1960s, the decade did not prove to be as regenerative for Political Science as it had been for these other divisions of knowledge. A dissonance and lack of purpose descended over the profession as its scholars criticised the preoccupations and orientating purpose of their predecessors whilst appearing either unwilling or unable to develop a new integrating idea about what the discipline of Political Science should study, who it should inform and how it should accomplish its goals.

By focusing on the lack of change in the discipline during the 1960s, this chapter is charting a new course in the existing literature which focuses on this period as the source of considerable intellectual change. Novick’s important work on the history of the American historical profession focuses on the idea of intellectual and professional tumult that affected all disciplines.⁶⁶⁷ Scholars have made similar arguments from the perspective of Political Science. David Easton has termed the phrase ‘post-behavioralism’, to describe the transformation of the discipline away from ‘behavioural’ concerns to a broader array of interests.⁶⁶⁸ This term is problematic for numerous reasons, the most obvious being that the post-1960s period to which it refers is the time in which the discipline actually became *increasingly* behavioural in the true sense of the term: work that focuses on behaviour at the expense of grand theory. Moreover, the term has not been well-defined. Even those scholars who employ it admit that it is rather indistinct, referring, as Theodore Lowi has argued, and many have agreed, that ‘there is not one Political Science but several’.⁶⁶⁹

In contrast to the existing literature, this chapter will argue that the factors which most affected American Political Science during the 1960s did not emerge in the form of various ‘political’ or ‘cognitive’ attacks directed at its professional claims – to objectivity, or to science, in the face of which the discipline remained highly resilient. Instead, the most affecting features of this decade were less visible, in the changes in American government. The social-political tumult of the day provided a

⁶⁶⁷ Novick, *That Noble Dream*.

⁶⁶⁸ See; David Easton, ‘The New Revolution in Political Science’, *American Political Science Review* LXIII (December, 1969), p. 1051- 61.

⁶⁶⁹ See contributions to ‘Part 4: Departures, 1970- 1992’, in *Discipline in History*, pp. 285- 383.

vibrant and often heated show at conferences and in journals – but it was a second, broader, set of changes which really affected the future status and scope of Political Science in the United States.

To make this argument, this chapter will describe how political scientists fared in relation to three distinct contexts that fell in this decade: the new public policy priorities of the Great Society era; policy failures that wracked American government in the middle of the decade; and a heightened period of protest within the Academy and professional academic associations at the end of the decade. Throughout these three periods the discipline largely withstood a variety of new critiques. But even as they did, a new era in American life was dawning, and a new generation of political scientists would emerge who held quite a different outlook to their teachers.

Section One: Political Science and the ‘Action Intellectuals’, 1957 - 1963

The rise of the ‘Action Intellectuals’

A new breed of ‘action-intellectual’ descended on Washington in the early 1960s – Theodore White described how they ‘stalk[ed] the corridors of American power’, transforming the ivory tower into ‘a forward observation post on the urgent front of the future’.⁶⁷⁰ This emergent ‘action-intellectual’ was a more socially-engaged figure than normally came out of American universities. Eisenhower’s *Goals for America*, Franklin Roosevelt’s Committee on Social Trends, and commissions under Hoover were all attempts to co-opt academic advice to the highest level of government. But under Kennedy and particularly in the subsequent Johnson administration, academics and experts flooded into the White House in unprecedented numbers. In quick succession, policies were announced to combat racial prejudice, culturally embedded poverty and ‘urban crises’. No sooner had Johnson set foot in the Oval Office than he penned a letter to his economic advisor Walter Heller which read ‘Work-think-work-think hard... I depend on you.’⁶⁷¹ Heller was not alone. In the first thirty months, Johnson appointed 374 men and women who held 781 degrees from colleges in all fifty states, including 370 advanced degrees and 67 doctorates.⁶⁷²

⁶⁷⁰ Theodore White, ‘Action Intellectuals’, *Life Magazine* (9th June 1967), p. 43.

⁶⁷¹ James Cochrane, *The Johnson Administration: Guidepost Success Collides with Fiscal Failure* (Washington, Brookings Institution, 1974).

⁶⁷² Robert Coldwell Wood, *Whatever Possessed the President? : Academic Experts and Presidential Policy, 1960 – 1988* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1993) p. 67.

Many historians have argued that the rising role of the ‘action intellectual’ originated with a small group of political liberals who ‘gained access to high government positions with the election of President John F. Kennedy in 1960.’⁶⁷³ Constrained by Kennedy’s priorities, these men and women were largely held back during this first term, only to rise in the Johnson era, with a ‘blizzard of ill-conceived social programs’ that guilelessly threw money at intractable social problems.⁶⁷⁴ To a certain extent, this interpretation holds true. However, as David Jardini has convincingly argued, this welter of factors was of secondary importance to the larger context of the Cold War.⁶⁷⁵ No sooner had the nation gawped at the beach-ball sized enemy satellite, than the gears of American politics began to shift, giving rise to a new socio-political unrest that had been building during the 1950s, but burst forth at the beginning of the 1960s. By 1963, violent suppression of peaceful protests in Birmingham, Alabama demonstrated in brutal detail a new milieu of political life. Such scenes were deeply disturbing at the best of time, but shadowed by an expanding Soviet power these images suggested a stark challenge to the nation’s future. In this context, the government department for Health Education and Welfare (HEW) became responsible for implementing a raft of new policy propositions that were designed to alleviate varieties of suffering which, it was becoming increasingly clear, plagued American society. The impulse for doing so was not merely the visions of a group of politically committed liberals, but a powerful urgency to prevent democratic collapse in the United States at a time of heightened international tensions.

In was in this context that Johnson entered the White House in 1963 and immediately increased the focus given to academic research by the Executive Office. Shortly before the 1964 presidential election he established fifteen taskforces, and following the election he added twenty-seven more. The emphasis was on quality as well as quantity. Out of 411 taskforce members, 167 were academics from elite schools, with a staggering 27 per cent hailing from a small perimeter of Massachusetts: Harvard and MIT, and the rest from top ivies.⁶⁷⁶ In the process, Johnson significantly deepened the growing nexus between government and academia, which had started with the military-industrial complex and with health and agricultural research, and now – reflecting the growing scope of government – increasingly affected the world of academic research more broadly.⁶⁷⁷ Economists determined the macroeconomic tools for employment; psychologists’ studies revealed the links between homelessness and mental health; even the famous War on Poverty originated in studies of juvenile delinquency carried out by New York sociologists. As Samuel Beer, Harvard political

⁶⁷³ See Henry J. Aaron, *Politics and the Professors: The Great Society in Perspective* (The Brookings Institution, 1978).

⁶⁷⁴ David Jardini, ‘Out of the Blue Yonder: The RAND Corporation’s diversification into Social Welfare Research, 1946 – 1968, PhD dissertation, Carnegie Mellon University. p. 310.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ Robert Coldwell Wood, *Whatever Possessed the President? : Academic Experts and Presidential Policy, 1960 – 1988* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), p. 68.

⁶⁷⁷ See; Hugh Davis Graham and Nancy Diamond, *The Rise of American Research Universities: Elites and Challengers in the Postwar Era*, (Johns Hopkins UP, 1997).

scientist and Democratic Party activist, has recalled; ‘none of these new policies came from the people who suffered. They came from people who had special knowledge.’⁶⁷⁸

Another important feature of the policy context was the transfer to a domestic context of tools and techniques developed in national defence programmes. By 1965 policy officials crafted a major transformation in the field of social welfare programmes as the approach of Planning, Programming and Budgeting System, known as PPBS, was taken from military training and introduced to the field of social welfare. Beginning in June 1965 the economist Charles L. Shultze was appointed Director of the Bureau of the Budget and began working to transfer the PPB system from the Pentagon to social welfare agencies. Community Action Programmes were replaced by systems analysis techniques, which brought the programmes into much more centralised control, bringing program analysis and policy planning under the purview of central systems analysis offices.⁶⁷⁹

Beardsley Ruml, the economist, philanthropist and businessman as well as early advocate for social science research, described the fate facing American social science in the early 1960s, ‘Whether the social scientist wishes it or not, he is being asked by the world – and will continue to be asked – to contribute to better social understanding. More and more bodies, public and private, are contributing to important enterprises in social science, with more and more public understanding of the disinterested scientific character of their attempts to achieve the solution of problems fundamental to our social well-being, both at home and abroad.’⁶⁸⁰ Many social scientists welcomed the challenge. But, as Ruml sensed, whether or not social scientists welcomed this new responsibility, greatness was being forced upon them by the Federal government which was actively soliciting social scientific expertise.

Political Science and the rise of the Action Intellectuals

In the early 1960s a small cadre of political scientists were ushered into the Kennedy White House. Among the most famous was Richard Neustadt, confidant of the Kennedys and recent author of the provocative *Presidential Power*, widely cited as a ‘manual’ to guide presidents in their use of the expanded executive office of the mid-twentieth century.⁶⁸¹ Other political scientists also took on public roles. Harvard’s Samuel Beer was actively involved in the organisation of the Democratic

⁶⁷⁸ Samuel H. Beer, Recorded interview by Vicki Daitch. November 7, 2002. *John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program*.

⁶⁷⁹ See; Jardini, ‘Out of the Clear Blue Yonder’, pp. 331 – 344.

⁶⁸⁰ Beardsley Ruml, ‘Essay Four. The Position of the Social Sciences.’ Beardsley Ruml Papers, [Box 14, Folder 13] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

⁶⁸¹ For further detail on Neustadt’s role, including a selection of his memos see; Charles O. Jones, *Preparing to Be President: The Memos of Richard E. Neustadt* (American Enterprise Institute; 2000).

Party, Stanford's Cornelius Cotter was called upon to staff the Civil Rights Commission in 1961, and Evron Kirkpatrick, the executive director the American Political Science Association, regularly trod the boundary between the discipline and government, via CIA organisations, the State Department and task forces. Meanwhile, Harvard's McGeorge Bundy would take up a role as National Security Advisor to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, working until 1966 as one of the chief architects of the escalation in the Vietnam War.

Only a few practicing political scientists could aspire to the sort of senior advisor role that Richard Neustadt enjoyed, but many more junior political scientists were encouraged to think of their role as directly affecting American life. In 1963, Clark Kerr, as president of the University of California, described the emergence of the new institution as a 'multiversity', a much more socially engaged institution, if also a fragmented and diverse one, which has 'no peers in all history among institutions of higher learning in serving so many of the segments of an advancing civilization.'⁶⁸² In this context, new research institutions emerged that were dedicated to producing public servants trained in the social sciences, including Political Science. Kerr's own university boasted three such schools at all of its new campuses: Irvine, Riverside and Davis. Meanwhile a new graduate school of public affairs was established at the University of Washington and a new school of community service and public affairs emerged at the University of Oregon, alongside existing institutions in Chicago, Syracuse and Detroit. In 1962, an organization known as the National Institute of Public Affairs (NIPA) was re-established with support from the Ford Foundation for the purpose of inaugurating a program of university education for public officials who showed particular promise of administrative leadership.⁶⁸³ From 1962 onwards the NIPA sent between fifty and sixty officials, mostly Federal, to selected universities for a year of graduate education.

The most famous new development was Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School. When it was opened in 1966, President Lyndon Johnson summarised the perspective of many social scientists with the statement, 'Our concept of public service is changing to meet the demands of our time. A new public servant has emerged. He may be the scholar who leaves his study for the crucible of power in his State or national capital. Or he may be the young man or woman who chooses public service but does not abandon at its doorstep the techniques of scholarship and the search for knowledge.'⁶⁸⁴ This was a stark transformation from the 1920s when, as we have seen, the boundaries between the state and the academy were closely defended. This also marked a significant transformation from the post-

⁶⁸² Quoted in Steven V. Roberts, 'Kerr Says 'Multiversity' Head Must be 'Mediator,' Not Giant', *The Harvard Crimson* April 24, 1963 [accessed; <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1963/4/24/kerr-says-multiversity-head-must-be/>] Also see; Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Harvard University Press; 2001, 5th Ed)

⁶⁸³ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁴ Quoted in; 'Memorandum: From members of Political Science Department to Chancellor Roger W Heynes of Berkeley', (Nov. 2, 1966) *University of California President Permanent files 1958 – 1975, CU-5 Series 8* [Box 85]. BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

war period, when these boundaries had begun to come down, but the relationship between the social sciences and the federal government was as yet nothing like the 1960s.

In 1958 Key had worried about the ability of a band of professional political scientists to adapt to a new role in the United States, but in the already strikingly different context of the early 1960s many of his colleagues grew increasingly ambitious about the purpose of their discipline. In the 1950s the preeminent Yale political scientist Harold Dwight Lasswell had proposed that the American Political Science Association sponsor an annual ‘Pre-Congress’ in which ‘political scientists and other knowledgeable persons would help the American people analyse some of their toughest problems and evaluate alternative ways of dealing with those problems.’⁶⁸⁵ At the time, the ‘pre-Congress’ was widely considered to be a far-fetched idea. But by the early 1960s, in the wake of the broad expansion of social science expertise within American society, this position was reconsidered. In 1961 the incoming president of APSA in 1961, Charles S. Hynemann, resurrected Lasswell’s proposal, circulating a copy to members of the APSA committee, and suggesting that it ‘become an annual fixture on the calendar of American citizens’, an event ‘looked forward to as an important experience in the making of a judgement on weighty matters’.⁶⁸⁶

Not only would the pre-congress help citizens at election time, but the proposal further stated that APSA could institute some sort of permanent feature in Washington D.C.; ‘[a]t APSA headquarters such a chartroom could furnish the setting for press briefings and meetings with incoming delegations to the Congress, and selected visitors to the Nation’s capital. Eventually this would be the nucleus of a series of rooms in which would be depicted the major trends in the history of the nation, and critical estimates of the probable and possible courses of future development.’⁶⁸⁷ This remained a noticeably ambitious goal in the 1960s – but it was also an increasingly important one. In 1950 Lasswell had noted, ‘this is a task for which political scientists are especially well fortified and for which they can become better qualified by taking greater responsibility’.⁶⁸⁸ Ten years later Hynemann seemed to agree, he noted in his letter to the APSA board, ‘The success of this undertaking will turn on the enthusiasm which leading political scientists bring to its administration’.⁶⁸⁹

Hynemann’s attempt to ensure a greater role for political scientist in elections ultimately did not come to pass, but it did receive a warm reception from other scholars who sensed its timeliness. Peter Odegard of UC Berkeley wrote in response, ‘It seems to me that Political Science in recent

⁶⁸⁵Harold D. Laswell, ‘Proposal for APSA Pre-Congress’. *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 5. BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁸ Lasswell, ‘Proposal for APSA Pre-Congress’.

⁶⁸⁹‘Letter: from Charles Hynemann’ (Aug 21 1961) *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 5. BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

years has moved too far away from considerations of public policy in its preoccupation with method and organization structure and behavior.⁶⁹⁰ This was partly true, as political scientists had attempted to understand the new state of American society after the New Deal. As Odegard continued, 'I would like to see something that would bring us back at least part way to a consideration of some of the great policy matters that must somehow be decided. If we withhold the best we can give, then it seems to me we are not discharging the obligation that as scholars and scientists we have.'⁶⁹¹ He voiced a concern to reassert the primacy of the discipline at the heart of American life, 'This doesn't mean that I think any group of political scientists will find definitive answers to problems that have been with us since Aristotle and Plato. It does seem to me that we ought to put in our two cents worth in an orderly fashion, if this is possible.'⁶⁹²

In 1962, Odegard offered his own 'two cents worth' to the American public by starring in a television series called 'Continental Classroom'. In each episode, Odegard provided university-standard lessons on American government which would be broadcast to college students as well as to a general audience. This series was the fourth in a sequence of educational courses, with earlier programmes focusing on 'Atomic Age Physics,' 'Modern Chemistry' and 'Contemporary Mathematics'. Each of the previous programmes had attracted 1,200,000 listeners and over 300 educational institutions offered the courses for college credit. Odegard's Political Science series was slated to be on the same scale, when broadcast it was streamed by approximately 170 stations across 'all parts of the United States'.⁶⁹³ These programmes attracted approving words from APSA officials, including executive director Evron Kirkpatrick and a wide array of admiring scholars including Harold F. Gosnell and Vanderbilt's Avery Lieserson. Many of these dignified correspondents shared Lieserson's sentiment when he wrote, 'The course is far more than just American government; it is... civic education at a really adult level and it makes me feel better again about our professional contribution to American life'.⁶⁹⁴

Another way in which American political scientists responded to the new policy context of the early 1960s was through an attempt to remarket the Political Science profession as a valuable and intellectually sophisticated profession. In large part this attempt emerged out of a desire to ensure the sort of financial support available to support Political Science research that was becoming increasingly lavished upon research in the 'natural' sciences. In 1961 only three political scientists received National Science Foundation grants, with a total of \$75,000 compared with a total of more

⁶⁹⁰ 'Letter: to Charles Hynemann' (Sep. 11, 1961) *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 5. BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

⁶⁹² Ibid.

⁶⁹³ 'Letter explaining continental classroom'. *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 5. BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

⁶⁹⁴ 'Letter from Avery Lieserson' (4 oct 1961) *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 5. BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

than \$3 million metered out in 140 grants to other divisions.⁶⁹⁵ This inequality was a result, as Mark Solovey has argued, of ‘general anxieties within the agency that identified politics, the subject matter of Political Science, as too hot to handle – sex, race, and religion were the other three forbidden topics’.⁶⁹⁶

Already during the 1950s APSA’s executive director Evron Kirkpatrick had set about revamping the format of annual meetings and obtaining sizeable grants from foundations to fund projects such as the Ford-backed Congressional Fellowship Programme.⁶⁹⁷ Despite such advancements, the status of the discipline versus other social sciences continued to trouble Kirkpatrick in the early 1960s. In 1963 Kirkpatrick wrote to the APSA’s board of senior political scientists with the message, ‘I think that it is time for the Political Science Association and for individual political scientists to take greater action to secure a change in the NSF policy’.⁶⁹⁸ Although political scientists were not explicitly forbidden from receiving grants, there was no specific program for political scientists as compared with other social scientists. As Kirkpatrick explained, this put his discipline at a serious disadvantage. As one Board member wrote to Peter Odegard in 1960, ‘I have been a member of the Board of the NSF since its establishment, and I have been very much disturbed over the difficulty some of us have had to develop some support for the respective areas in the field of social science.’⁶⁹⁹

However, the problem of convincing funders that the Political Science profession was both mature and important would take more than a few letters. The director of the NSF, Harry Riecken, responded to Kirkpatrick and explained that the Foundation was disposed to sponsor purely ‘scientific’ research and that ‘applied, normative or policy-oriented’ scholarship was outside of its remit. Riecken suggested that Political Science scholarship was primarily the policy-oriented, or applied (without substantiating this rather dubious claim). However, behind the closed doors of the NSF it was clear that what was really preventing NSF officials from sponsoring work in his discipline was the fear that political scientists would publish work on controversial matters; as one set of minutes stated, ‘when the subject matter of the research becomes border-line and possible questions of sensitivity arise,’ the NSF should be reluctant to cross the border.’⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁵ Mark Solovey, *Shaky Foundations: The Politics-Patronage-Social Science Nexus in the Cold War* (Rutgers University Press; 2013), p. 180.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁶⁹⁷ Austin Ranney, ‘In Memorandum, Evron M. Kirkpatrick’. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Sep, 1995), pp. 534.

⁶⁹⁸ ‘Letter: Evron Kirkpatrick to APSA Board.’ *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 198, Folder: 13] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

⁶⁹⁹ ‘Letter from F. A. Middlebush’ *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966*, [Box 6, Folder 3; BANC MSS 73/31] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

⁷⁰⁰ Solovey, *Shaky Foundations*, p. 184.

Failing to convince National Science Foundation executives with his letters, by 1963 Kirkpatrick turned his attention to attacking the problem from another avenue. In a letter sent out to the APSA membership, Kirkpatrick urged the members of his discipline – all 11,000 – to write to the Director of the NSF as well as Representatives and Senators. NSF officials continued to hold the discipline at arms-length, for risk of attracting unwanted controversy. Nevertheless, it was Congress that held the purse-strings to the foundation, and Kirkpatrick hoped that the nation’s elected representatives might prove much more amenable to his complaints. By the early 1960s the legislators had already encouraged the NSF to establish a broader policy towards the social sciences and, most significantly, Kirkpatrick assembled the help of his former student the Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey, who, with fighting talk promised to ‘pound some sense into the collective minds at the NSF’.⁷⁰¹ With this, Kirkpatrick unleashed an important force that would make the case for Political Science as an important source of information for and about American government.

Amidst the expanding role of government in American life, and the deepening connection between federal government and the academy in the early 1960s, political scientists came to view their role not only as a source of structural insights as to the stability of the political system, but increasingly in terms of the direct contribution that they could make to public policy and the ends of government. This reorientation was evident not only in an increase of policy advisors, but also in the emergence of ambitious new plans to expand the discipline’s role in civic education; the growth of Political Science in new schools of public service; and the attempts to place Political Science alongside other social sciences as a recipient of NSF funding. In this new age of government activity, political scientists were enthused by a sense of the important role they had to play in American life.

Section Two : Policy failure and challenges to Political Science, 1963 - 1967

By the middle of the 1960s the American economy was experiencing an unprecedented boom. And yet, a report issued by the Department of Labor in 1966 indicated that, despite the recent and high profile ‘War on Poverty’, inhabitants of American urban slums were living under Depression conditions. And despite a raft of civil rights measures, and the Johnson

⁷⁰¹ ‘Letter Hubert Humphrey to Evron Kirkpatrick’ *American Political Science Association Records*. [Box 198, Folder: 13] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

Administration's pledge to equalise life chances for African Americans, these slum-dwellers were disproportionately black—and were engaging in sometimes large-scale civil unrest in the form of the Long Hot Summers of 1964-1967. These indices of socio-political failure gave resonance to the statement that, 'The American system doesn't seem to work anymore.'⁷⁰² In 1968 a well-known socialist public intellectual described the Department of Labor report as 'typical of the Sixties. For the Government of the United States has carefully counted, classified and computer-taped all of the outrages which it does so little about'.⁷⁰³

Everywhere Americans looked there were signs of yet more failure – a huge contrast to the context that defined American government in the 1940s and 50s, as detailed in the previous two chapters. Two particularly thorny reports haunted the Johnson administration in the late 1960s. The first was the 1967 Kerner report, which presented an America shredded by inequalities and divided by race. The second was a report on housing chaired by Senator Paul Douglas which argued 'government action has destroyed far more housing units for the poor than it has built'.⁷⁰⁴ Outside of government, the Ford Foundation was also increasingly finding its programs to have been swept upon the doldrums, from lofty promises of bringing equality to black Americans, the decade had witnessed bussing crises and a general failure of the concept of assimilation.⁷⁰⁵ Then there was Vietnam. By the late 1960s this intractable war in South East Asia became the statement par excellence of large policy commitments gone wrong.

Political Science, so confident of its new relevance at mid-decade, soon faced a new set of problems, some of them vastly complicated. The discipline was beset by critics from both the left and the right of American politics. On the one hand, critics from the left sought to expose the stance of the discipline as at best removed and out of touch and at worst part of an oppressive power structure that was working to perpetuate racism, inequality and social unrest in the cities. On the other hand, another group of critics emerged from the right which criticised the understanding of the capacity of government to achieve social good that had for so long animated American policy makers and Political Science scholarship.

In the face of these criticisms from the left, as we shall see, political scientists were highly resilient. Dodging attacks that labelled the discipline as either excessively 'narrow' or state-serving, leading scholars remained largely insulated from the chorus of critiques. However, although critics from the right – led by scholars like James Q. Wilson and Edward Banfield – highlighted trends and spoke to public policy issues in a way which many established scholars were not ready to accept, they

⁷⁰² Micheal Harrington, *The Other America* (Macmillan, 1962) p. 1

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ Robert Coldwell Wood, *Whatever Possessed the President?* p. 69-

⁷⁰⁵ See; Karen Ferguson, *Top Down: The Ford Foundation, Black Power, and the Reinvention of Racial Liberalism* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013)

were also describing a world that would become increasingly familiar, and which would leave an important imprint upon the profession. The right identified the growing complexity and unmanageability of American government and the increasing difficulty of stating its workings simply. In the face of these criticisms, scholars at mid-decade remained sceptical, but they could also not brush these criticisms off so lightly.

'New Left' challenge

In 1966, a young and ambitious political scientist, Theodore Lowi, wrote to Robert Dahl as that year's president of the American Political Science Association with the demand that 'the Association alter its regulations or reinterpret them in some way to allow itself to undertake a serious and comprehensive consideration of the state of democracy and democratic institutions in the United States in the 1960s.'⁷⁰⁶ At thirty five, Lowi was still three years away from publishing the work that would make him famous, *The End of Liberalism*. When released, Lowi's first major work would focus on the unrelenting expansion of government at the whim of private interests. This would be a bleak picture compared with the pluralistic approach of his correspondent Robert Dahl in the decade before, but it was also a perspective on American government which resonated with many others in his generation. Lowi, barely five years out of graduate school by 1966, held a set of views typical of a 'New Left', suspicious of government and other forms of bureaucratic rigidity and authority. In this way, Lowi and many others of his generation sensed that the most important potential contribution of the discipline of Political Science was to account for the real failures of modern American government.

Besides Lowi, another leader of this cohort was Christian Bay, a scholar from the University of Alberta, Canada. Since his time as a doctoral student at the University of Oslo in the 1950s, Bay had gravitated toward exploring how social science could be used to directly affect social problems – a timely concern for a specialist in American politics. By the mid-1960s Bay had become increasingly concerned about the lack of engagement from most political scientists concerning the challenges involved in using government to solve the most important social problems of the day. In the middle of the 1960s he published an article entitled 'The Cheerful Science of Dismal Politics', (a reference to Keynes's description of economics as the 'dismal science'), in which he argued that Political Science in the United States was too complacent; 'Those who wish this nation well must sadly observe that its present leadership seems permanently incapacitated from comprehending the realities of human

⁷⁰⁶ 'Letter: Theodore Lowi to Robert A. Dahl' (Nov 15, 1966) *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 80] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

aspirations and desperations in our modern world. It is surely time for our social scientists to stop cheering.⁷⁰⁷

Bay's argument became more widely read in his later *American Political Science Review* article 'Politics and Pseudopolitics' (a reference to the historian Daniel Boorstin's essay on 'events and pseudo-events') in which he wrote that 'the political impact of this supposedly neutral literature is generally conservative and in a special sense anti-political.'⁷⁰⁸ This argument was also visible in the introduction to a 1965 version of his theoretical text, *The Structure of Freedom* in which he argued that the purpose of Political Science should not be to identify the functional needs of social systems, focusing as political scientists had on the 'political system', but instead to identify the needs of persons and individuals.⁷⁰⁹

Under the guidance of men like Bay and Lowi, a new critical literature challenged the stalwarts of the discipline. Rather forgetting the very recent nature of many contemporary American policy preoccupations, such as racial injustice and poverty, these young pretenders spoke out in outrage at the conservative tone of their predecessors in the discipline. Criticisms poured out like a scattergun across the 'establishment' of the discipline, but the young turks retained a particular vehemence for the recent pluralist theories of the 1950s: men like Robert Dahl, David Truman and their students, Nelson Polsby and Arnold Rose who, the critics howled, had been engaged in defending the American political system. Spluttering with indignation the philosopher Robert Paul Wolff wrote of the willingness of political scientists to state 'in forthright terms that political apathy is a Good Thing!'⁷¹⁰ Another important critical work was the edited collection entitled *Apolitical Politics: A Critique of Behavioralism*. The introduction stated that it 'is not sufficient that as individuals the behavioralists support the civil rights movement and are concerned about American foreign policy; what is needed is for them to accept their professional responsibility and bring their dispassionate judgment to bear on an objective academic analysis of the great issues which are of such vital importance to both students and the general public.'⁷¹¹ This urgent plea to the so-called 'behavioralists' typified the new critique.

⁷⁰⁷ Theodore Rozak (ed), *The Dissenting Academy* (Pantheon, New York; 1968), p. 229.

⁷⁰⁸ Christian Bay, "Politics and Pseudopolitics: A Critical Evaluation of Some Behavioral Literature," *American Political Science Review*, 54:1 (March 1965), p. 39; Quoted in Clyde Barrow, "Intellectual Origins of New Political Science" *New Political Science* (30: 2). See; Daniel Boorstin, 'The Image: A guide to pseudo-events in America.' *New York, Athenum* (1961).

⁷⁰⁹ Christian Bay, *The Structure of Freedom* (Stanford UP; 1965 2nd Edition).

⁷¹⁰ Robert Paul Wolff (ed) *Political Man and Social Man* (Random House, 1966), p. 10; quoted in Clyde barrow, p. 221, footnote 28.

⁷¹¹ Charles Allan McCoy and John Playford (eds), *Apolitical Politics: A Critique of Behavioralism* (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1967), p. 9.

Reaction to the New Left challenge

Despite the new production of highly animated scholarship, the actual impact of this new grouping on Political Science scholarship was rather minimal. ‘Establishment’ figures, who had matured as scholars in an era of the Great Depression, Second World War and the Cold War, continued to believe in the neutrality of their profession – believing that one could contribute to public policy questions without becoming a political actor. And they continued to have the status and seniority to dominate their departments and the APSA. Much work thus continued in the same vein as it had in the previous few decades. Among the notable successes of the older approach in the middle of the 1960s was the career of Ralph Huitt, who published in the *APSR* a series of ‘participant observation’ pieces early in the decade and was brought in by Lyndon Johnson in the mid-1960s to run congressional liaison at HEW, a task that grew naturally from his research. In the second part of the decade, Huitt became stationed in the headquarters of the Department for Health Education and Welfare. On the fifth floor of the building, ‘a few quick strides from the Secretary’s desk’, he was in the middle of the action, as animatedly described in an internal publication, ‘here amid the jangle of telephones, the press of visitors, the constant circuit of conferences, political theories are kneaded into legislative programs and put to the fire of public test.’⁷¹²

Whilst Huitt used participant observation to study the personal exercise of power and influence in the Senate, other scholars were also advancing on work in a recognisable tradition of earlier decades. Writing through this period was the young scholar Richard Fenno Jr, whose *The Power of the Purse: Appropriations Politics in Congress* studied House and Senate appropriations committees between 1947 and 1965.⁷¹³ An example of investigative and analytic work, it warned that although appropriations committees appeared stable, they are the place of the greatest tension and instability.

Not only did such ‘traditional’ work carry on, it also attracted new support. In the middle of the decade the lobbying efforts of Humphrey, Kirkpatrick and a few other allies in Congress finally paid off and in 1965 the NSF agreed to add Political Science to the list of authorised social sciences, opening an important injection of funds for the profession. Federal funding for the social sciences increased dramatically during this decade, rising from less than \$73 million in 1960 to more than \$380 million in 1967.⁷¹⁴ With a position secured as one of the beneficiaries, Political Science was well-

⁷¹² Magazine Profile, ‘Student of Politics’. *American Political Science Association Records*. [Box 198, Correspondence with Government agencies 1960s. Folder, 13.5] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

⁷¹³ Richard Fenno, *The Power of the Purse: Appropriations Politics in Congress* (Little, Brown & Company, 1968).

⁷¹⁴ Terrance Ball, ‘American Political Science in its Postwar Political Context’ in James Farr and Raymond Seidelman (Eds), *Discipline and History: Political Science in the United States*, (University of Michigan, 1993) p. 215.

placed to receive a new source of fellowships, but it also provided a source of capital for research. By late 1966 the NSF had donated more than \$600,000 to the establishment of the new Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. The function of the institution was to sponsor summer programs and conferences through which to train faculty and students in research methods, to function as a clearing house for information about research and data processing developments, and to provide technical assistance in handling 'difficult or unusual methodological problems'.⁷¹⁵

The intellectual criticisms that attempted to force the discipline to focus on the major 'problems' of the day also faced severe resistance and failed to make proper inroads into the professional organisation and leading journals, which were heavily defended by those of the old guard. Austin Ranney was editor of the leading journal, *The American Political Science Review*, Evron Kirkpatrick was Executive Director of the national association, and Pendleton Herring was stationed at the Social Science Research Council. These influential scholars all continued to support the neutrality of the association in political affairs. In arranging the 1965 meeting, the program organisers took care to invite 'both the Democratic and Republican National Committee'. They also took care to distance themselves from the conclusions of a panel on foreign policy problems, with a statement on meetings held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting reading, 'The Association's constitution specifically precludes commitment of its members on questions of public policy'.⁷¹⁶ As a result, there was a tendency for scholars who were disaffected by the role of Political Science in the developing policy crisis, to be forced to the side-lines, and to publish their critical arguments in philosophical journals such as *Ethics*, rather than in the mainstream scientific journals such as Ranney's *APSR*. One dissenting scholar confided in 1966, 'I've found it easier to publish in journals of this kind than in the professional Political Science sheets.' To a certain extent, these scholars complied with their annexation in the periphery of the discipline. As the scholar further reflected, 'I don't really mind being considered a 'philosopher' – indeed, I wish I was bright enough to be one.'⁷¹⁷

The experience of Political Science strikingly contrasts with the experience of History. In the early to mid-sixties American historians like Stephan Thernstrom, Eugene Genovese and Herbert Gutman provided a powerful voice that railed against the mindlessness of politics in the 1950s, the emergence of McCarthyism, and a foreign policy context defined by a Communist party in turmoil and the emergent nuclear arms race.⁷¹⁸ Many of these scholars had prior involvement with the Communist Party, or groups on its periphery. As Novick has described these scholars, and others

⁷¹⁵ Somit and Tanenhaus, *From Burgess to Behavioralism*, p. 171.

⁷¹⁶ 'Statement of the APSA on Meetings Held in Conjunction with the Annual Meeting' *American Political Science Associations Records*. [Box 209: Folder: 'Annual Meeting – Miscellaneous 1965']. SCRC, GWU. Washington.

⁷¹⁷ 'Letter: anon.' *Peter H. Odegard Papers: additions, 1928-1966, BANC MSS 73/31 c.* [Box 6] BSC, BL. Berkeley, California.

⁷¹⁸ Novick, *The Objectivity Question*, pp. 418 – 420.

including younger scholars such as Staughton Lynd and Howard Zinn, who, like Herbert Gutman, admitted to having ‘flirted briefly but intensely with the Communist movement’ – as Novick further notes, this is perhaps an understatement.⁷¹⁹ In contrast to political scientists who sought ‘neutrality’ these historians pursued a clear message rooted, as one reviewer noted, in ‘conviction of America’s total depravity’.⁷²⁰ A similar story was true in the case of Sociology, whose leading lights had, as Doug McAdam has noted, been long attuned to ‘real world issues’ in their work. But what was perhaps more notable than a leftwards shift within the discipline which was already leaning that way, was a sharp spike in membership of the ASA, which jumped from 6,000 to 13,484 members within the decade.⁷²¹

‘Neo-Conservatives’ and the challenge from the right

Young scholars such as Christian Bay and Theodore Lowi might have believed that they were the only political scientists committed to adapting the discipline to deal with the policy failures of mid-decade, but in fact they were only the loudest and most vocal. A group of older, more seasoned political scientists were also coming to look upon the problems of American politics with new eyes. Unlike the young grouping, these scholars addressed the new policy context with social scientific tools and they were influenced by a broader body of social scientific scholarship interested in the subject of policy failure. As the Senator and public intellectual Daniel Patrick Moynihan would later reflect, ‘in the course of the 1960s a series of empirical studies all but demolished the expectations that significant social change of the kind the United States was seeking to bring about *could* be brought about through the means then in vogue, and, to some extent, still in vogue.’⁷²²

These studies began with the appearance in 1964 of Andrew Greeley’s and Peter Rossi’s *The Education of Catholic Americans* in which the authors set out to determine the effect of parochial education on religious practice, and found hardly any.⁷²³ This was followed by the publication of a report by Martin Anderson which showed that urban renewal reduces the housing supply rather than increasing it, as had been assumed by a generation of housing experts.⁷²⁴ A year later, came two important reports published in a collection entitled *Perspectives on Poverty* (edited by Moynihan) and

⁷¹⁹ Ibid, p. 419.

⁷²⁰ Ibid. p. 418.

⁷²¹ Figure II.I in Doug McAdam, ‘The impact of the sixties on public sociology’, in Calhoun (ed), *Sociology in America: A History*, pp.411- 427.

⁷²² ‘Daniel Patrick Moynihan: Report to Nixon’. *Daniel Patrick Moynihan Papers*. Library of Congress. Washington D.C.

⁷²³ Andrew Greeley and Peter Rossi, *The Education of Catholic Americans* (Aldine Publishing Co.; 1966).

⁷²⁴ Martin Anderson, *The Federal Bulldozer: A Critical Analysis of Urban Renewal, 1949-1962* (MIT; 1964).

On Fighting Poverty (edited by James Sundquist) exploring the causes and nature of poverty.⁷²⁵ Finally, there was the ‘Coleman report’ – formally titled, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* which found virtually no correlation between educational effort and educational results.⁷²⁶ This was as striking as it was controversial, and the report generated much national interest as well an important book of essays edited by Moynihan and Mosteller that included critiques and evaluations of Coleman’s report, and various articles in the new journals *Public Interest* and *Commentary*.⁷²⁷

A growing concern with the failures of social scientific advice seeped into the discipline of Political Science during the 1960s and its scholars began to consider the growing distance between the aims and achievements of recent public policy. This intellectual development had begun in tentative form before the policy failures of mid-decade, when during the 1950s two young scholars Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson had grown interested in the subject of ‘urban planning’, and persuaded of the limits of government intervention in this policy field. Both had been staunch New Deal Democrats and as graduate students in the Chicago Political Science department were surrounded by leading scholars concerned with public administration. Banfield had in fact been recruited from his work in the Farm Security Agency by Tugwell, a prominent figure in the public administration scene, and one of Franklin Roosevelt’s brain-trusters. However, during the post-war decade and a half, Banfield and Wilson both developed some scepticism as to the full capacity of New Deal style planning and began to reflect on the shortcomings of previous policy approaches. Despite his ability to impress top New Dealers, Banfield ‘was later to say that its policies hurt the very people – tenant farmers – that it was trying to help’.⁷²⁸

An important factor that had driven Banfield in this direction during the 1950s had been an intellectual interest in what was an increasingly fashionable area of study: comparative Political Science. Beginning in the 1950s American political scientists had already begun to note that much more weight could be placed on asking questions about political development of the United States in relation to other nations. A group of sociologically minded political scientists and politically minded sociologists, including Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba and Seymour Martin Lipset, began refiguring many of the fundamental questions in Political Science and applying them to historical and comparative contexts with a focus on the ‘cultural’ aspects. In 1958, Banfield published *Moral Basis for a Backward Society* which argued that cultural, rather than economic or physical factors were

⁷²⁵ Daniel P. Moynihan and James L. Sundquist, *Perspectives on Poverty* (American Academy of Arts and Sciences; 1968).

⁷²⁶ James Coleman, *Equality of educational opportunity* (US Dept. of H.E.W.; 1966).

⁷²⁷ Daniel P. Moynihan and Frederick Mosteller (eds), *On equality of educational opportunity* (Random House; 1972).

⁷²⁸ James Q. Wilson, ‘A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court: A Biography’, in *Edward C. Banfield: An Appreciation* (Henry Salvatori Center Monograph; New Series, No. 3. April 2002), p. 40. Also see; Kevin Kosar, ‘Edward C. Banfield’s Government Project’, *Public Administration Review*, (Sept/Oct 2009) pp. 993 – 998.

responsible for the poverty that troubled a small community in Italy. When Banfield's book emerged in 1958, it received little attention and was rarely reviewed. The reason for this, as Wilson has remembered, was that 'Scholars were not yet ready to accept 'culture' as an answer to any practical question'.⁷²⁹ Political Science scholarship in the 1920s and 30s had been influenced by the scholarship of John Dewey, who had noted the importance of civil society, and particularly education, in fostering proper democratic systems. But, the concept of culture was rarely imposed upon the mainstream of Political Science work as a central focus in and of itself.

By 1963 Sidney Verba and Gabriel Almond published the important work, *Civic Culture: Democratic Attitudes in Five Countries*. This breakthrough work introduced into mainstream social science for the first time many important ideas about the base functioning of political systems. As one reviewer noted, this was an important contribution at a time in which '[w]orld attention to the dilemmas posed by national development and modernization has fortified our interest in the stability of political process as nation-states struggle toward industrial maturity.'⁷³⁰ Nevertheless, even as scholars were increasingly willing to use the idea of culture to explain the instability of other nations, it was not applied at home. As Martha Derthick, a student of Key and Banfield, was to write about the period, 'American political scientists, 'confronted with the miracle of a stable society,' were wont 'to take the phenomenon of governance for granted.'⁷³¹

However, the early 1960s marked an important shift in public policy circles, as policies to combat social ills such as poverty and homelessness had drawn attention to cultural forces in American society. As Samuel Beer has reflected on the early 1960s, the use of the word poverty in politics 'really inaugurated a whole new mental set'. As Beer explained, public discourse had 'talked about unemployment and how do you get people fully employed? ... But I never heard people talk about poverty.... It had a different kind of basis. It was the poverty which had a cultural base'.⁷³² In this setting, it was becoming increasingly possible to use the concept of 'culture' not only in the comparative context, but as applied domestically within the United States. Banfield and Wilson together began a book titled *City Government*. For the authors, 'what was crucial in understanding politics was to grasp the importance of rival political views, including, of course, that between the rich and the poor, whites and blacks, and suburbanites and city dwellers, but also the deeper cultural conflict between those who want to do good for the city 'as a whole' and those who want the city to help them as individuals.'⁷³³ Moreover, it was this competition between two cultural groups that the

⁷²⁹ Ibid. p. 56.

⁷³⁰ Philip E. Converse, 'Review: The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations. by Gabriel Almond; Sidney Verba', *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 79, No. 4, (Dec., 1964), pp. 591 – 593.

⁷³¹ Quoted in Gareth Davies, 'On Martha Derthick', *The Forum*, Vol. 13, Issue 1 (April 2015).

⁷³² Samuel H. Beer, recorded interview by Vicki Daitch. November 7, 2002. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program. p. 15.

⁷³³ Wilson, "A Connecticut Yankee", p. 60.

authors argued was ‘the most profound force shaping city life and could be used to understand why some cities had ‘embraced a ‘reform’ style of government and others had resisted it’.⁷³⁴

This work was revolutionary in a literature that had largely shunned the concept of ‘culture’ in relation to American politics, considering it only useful as a tool with which to distinguish between the United States and the ‘developing world’. The book on *City Government* garnered notably more attention than had Banfield’s earlier work, and despite its atypical focus on the limits rather than the aims of government activity it was nonetheless rather well received by established scholars within the discipline. Writing in the *American Political Science Review* the public administration scholar Herbert Kaufmann wrote ‘To admire and applaud this book, as I certainly do, is not necessarily to agree with its main thesis, with which in fact I quarrel.’⁷³⁵ Unlike the caucus scholars who had launched an intellectual attack on the preoccupations and values of the discipline, Banfield and Wilson assumed the objective stance of scientific scholarship. Scholars still disagreed with their findings, but, like Kaufmann, they raised an interested eyebrow at their approach.

However, any early bridges that Banfield and Wilson had fostered with the rest of the discipline were sharply cut at mid-decade, when they began to advance from pure scholastic and theoretical studies and began to interpret recent events in light of the arguments they had made in *City Politics*. As they did, they began to foster an intense and confrontational debate about public policy in American cities. A major focus was the roots of the much-publicised ‘urban crises’ currently wracking American society. Samuel Beer, (a colleague to Wilson and Banfield at Harvard where the pair had moved after Chicago), has reflected, ‘I remember Ed Banfield said to me, “With all this talk about urban this and urban that, it’s really about black people in cities. That’s where the problem is.”⁷³⁶ Banfield made this point explicit in 1967 when he issued a highly controversial response to the Kerner Report on civil disorders. The report had documented the ‘shock, fear and bewilderment’ that arose in a two week period in July 1967 when riots broke out first in Newark and then in Detroit, and argued that ‘Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal.’⁷³⁷ Banfield and Wilson forthrightly criticised the report on the premise that ‘sloppy research leads the Commission to base its Report on many questionable assumptions.’ Banfield’s main contention was that the report simply assumed that black people had rioted for the fact that they are being mistreated, rather than ‘for other reasons’.

Established scholars found the rather direct commentary upon recent events offensive. Many academics had applauded the findings of the Kerner Commission. As Adam Yarmolinsky, Law

⁷³⁴ Ibid. also see; Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1963).

⁷³⁵ Herbert Kaufmann, ‘American Government and Politics’, *APSR* (June 1964), p. 422.

⁷³⁶ Samuel H. Beer, Recorded interview by Vicki Daitch, p. 15.

⁷³⁷ “Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders”, Microfilm. (Available from the Nation Institute of Justice Reference Service, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/8073NCJRS.pdf>).

Professor and former advisor to Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, reported, ‘if they had more time they would only have found more racism’.⁷³⁸ In contrast, Banfield argued that the report could be encouraging violence, as ‘such incessant protestations of guilt are going to reinforce feelings among Negroes that they are helpless against the overwhelming prejudice that exists among whites’. Indeed, Banfield warned that ‘Lending such assumptions the prestigious stamp of a Presidential Committee may in fact make violence more probable’.⁷³⁹ Stoking the fire, Wilson argued that the report could have the effect of encouraging ‘whites to take the law in their own hands in order to protect themselves’, (this was based on the claim that the report failed to make it clear that the government does not condone violence).⁷⁴⁰

Other matters of public policy that Banfield and Wilson spoke out on in the mid-1960s included President Johnson’s proposed solutions for city housing problems. Commenting on the proposal to give rent subsidies to moderate income families, Banfield noted that ‘inadequate income does not necessarily indicate an inability to spend more money wisely’. On assisting the building industry, he spoke more forcefully, ‘The building industry can damn well help itself’.⁷⁴¹ Until the 1960s the discipline of Political Science had generally supported the establishment of public administrators. But Aaron Wildavsky was to further this sort of work in 1964 with his book *Politics of the Budgetary Process*, a highly influential work in the field of public administration.⁷⁴² Also in the field of urban renewal, Scott Greer wrote *Urban Renewal and the American Cities*, which concluded that the ‘renewal program on the local level was heavily biased politically toward those who control political power and community approval, and economically toward those who control credit and building.’⁷⁴³

Never in its history had the discipline of Political Science engendered from within its own ranks quite so chilling a critique of American government, not even in the 1920s and 30s amidst concerns about the collapse of democratic systems worldwide. Unsurprisingly it was a difficult conclusion for most scholars – and Americans in general – to digest, as was demonstrated by visceral responses to the work. Moreover, for this reason Banfield and Wilson found themselves somewhat jettisoned from the discipline – Wilson found himself surrounded by ‘criminologists’ and Banfield by ‘urbanologists’. Nevertheless, the new policy sceptics in many respects shook the discipline much more than did the younger critical cohort. Even as they courted criticism, both Banfield and Wilson were positioned in senior roles in Harvard, and were able to exert a deep influence on a strong nucleus

⁷³⁸ Kerry Gruson, ‘Harvard Urbanologists Debate Riot Report’, *The Harvard Crimson*. (April 20, 1968).

⁷³⁹ Kerry Gruson, ‘Experts Score Report’s Assumptions’, *The Harvard Crimson*. (April 22, 1968).

⁷⁴⁰ Gruson, ‘Harvard Urbanologists Debate Riot Report’.

⁷⁴¹ Mary L. Wissler, “Experts Question LBJ’s Renewal Plan”, *The Harvard Crimson* (March 5, 1965).

⁷⁴² Aaron Wildavsky, *Politics of the Budgetary Process*, (Little, Brown & Co; 1964).

⁷⁴³ Scott Greer, *Urban renewal and American cities: the dilemma of democratic intervention* (Bobbs-Merrill; 1965).

of younger scholars coming up through the system. Among Banfield's circle of students and admirers were Aaron Wildavsky and Martha Derthick as well as some more established figures, including Samuel Huntington, all of whom would become established figures in the second half of the twentieth century.

In the second place, and more importantly, the policy-sceptics were engaged in actual research rather than theoretical and philosophical statements. Although this work did by no means engender approval it could not be dismissed or ignored as overly-abstract or wrongfully misguided philosophising, as could the writings of the younger cohort. For all the novelty of their arguments, the scholarship of these policy sceptics also presented colleagues in the discipline with a haunting familiarity, especially coming as it did in the context of the middle of the decade where it was easy to find bountiful striking examples of government policy gone awry. Established scholars might have found it difficult to believe that programmes designed to improve the lives of the poor were making them worse, or that urban renewal was destroying communities, but it would take a rare faith to continue to deny this when presented with mounting scientific evidence to the contrary.

Section Three: Political Science and Civil Rights

If any single issue could have the power to reorient the discipline of Political Science around a new set of concerns from the Left – as was happening in History and other social sciences – it would be the topic of civil rights. No issue formed a more important focal point upon which to form opinions about American politics or American democratic institutions than the topic of Civil Rights.

Conservatives like Barry Goldwater voted against the Civil Rights Act, and pushed back at the involvement of big government in the private business of individuals. But for the Left and for a growing segment of pro-civil rights Republicans and libertarians, the promise and the health of American democracy hung on the ability of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society to correct a series of outrageous and legally enforced discriminations against black Americans and to ensure in the future an equitable share of opportunities for all citizens, regardless of skin colour. However, despite the sheer magnitude of this issue, it did not significantly reorient the discipline in the 1960s. Instead, the issue of civil rights added a new, but separate, strand of research to the set of concerns, but did not result in significant transformation at the heart of the discipline.

In 1964 APSA invited the leading civil rights activist Martin Luther King to speak to its membership at the annual conference. Employing the assistance of Hubert Humphrey, King was told ‘I’m sure you will find it an interesting and rewarding experience to meet with political scientists who certainly share our goals.’⁷⁴⁴ However, even as political scientists supported the civil rights movement, the discipline was not oriented around the subject of race. Not only were political scientists quite ethnically homogenous, but their scholarship lacked attention to the topic of race. V.O. Key was a partial exception, but in practice the topic had been studied seriously only once by an American political scientist, by a young Harold Gosnell in 1935. However, Gosnell was something of an exception to the norm. He was part of a body of social scientists at Chicago whose distinctive faculty operated with a heavily interdisciplinary aura and whose contact with sociologists encouraged him to depart from the sort of intellectual concerns common to the discipline. American political scientists largely ignored the subject of ‘race’. Exemplifying this stance was an early article by Martha Derthick, a former student of Key, who wrote about African Americans in Washington DC machine politics, but race barely featured as a subject.⁷⁴⁵

The lack of focus on race had once been the result of ‘explicit disciplinary racism’ in the work of scholars such as John Burgess or Woodrow Wilson.⁷⁴⁶ In later years racial theorising had become delegitimised as an intellectual approach but the tendency of scholarship to overlook the category of race persisted. In neighbouring disciplines the topic was considered at length, but in Political Science the ‘phenomenon’ of black politics was not a major focus nor were black political scientists a major component of the association’s membership. Ralph Bunche, one of a handful of black political scientists working in the early twentieth century, commented in 1941 ‘Anthropologists deal with the Negro as a respectable topic... In respect to my own field... there isn’t a very cordial reception for dealing with the Negro.’⁷⁴⁷

This lack of interest, striking as it was on its own terms, was part of a far broader phenomenon by which the discipline rather discounted a ‘cultural’ or ‘sociological’ approach to political analysis. As we have seen in the previous section, and in previous chapters, it was not until the 1960s that ‘culture’ was taken seriously as a category for analysing domestic instability. As Rogers Smith has argued, before the 1960s political scientists ‘tended to think of racial identities as

⁷⁴⁴ Letter, Hubert Humphrey to Martin Luther King. American Political Science Association Records. BOX 209. Folder 24 – 25, Annual Meeting Correspondence: 1964-5. Special Collections, George Washington University.

⁷⁴⁵ Martha Derthick, ‘Politics in Voteless Washington’, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Feb., 1963), pp. 93 -106.

⁷⁴⁶ Rogers Smith, ‘The Puzzling Place of Race in American Political Science’, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Jan., 2004), p. 41.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp 42-3.

things generated at root by biological and/or economics and/or culture and/or history and/or often unconscious or at least informal social psychological processes and social activities'.⁷⁴⁸ American political scientists could accept the existence of racial division and conflict, but they considered the category of 'race' as the topic of other social sciences, and outside the remit of the political system with which they were concerned.

Race and Political Science in the 1960s

'Race' did emerge as a category of interest in the 1960s, but only by way of institutional developments which created a new school populated by black scholars. For most of the twentieth century Political Science courses in black colleges were few and far between, and those that existed would be taught primarily by instructors trained in history or sociology and would use textbooks and materials that were received as second-hand donations from white colleges, often heavily noted in the margins and even for whole pages to be removed.⁷⁴⁹ The 1960s provided new opportunities for black scholars, including Samuel DuBois Cook who one of the first black political scientists, after Ralph Bunche, to rise to a senior level in the primarily white profession and as the very first black scholar to teach Political Science at a primarily white college.

Cook was a specialist in political theory, and since his graduate days he had regularly attended the primarily white Southern Political Science Association. As he later noted, 'I developed a great deal of respect for those white brothers and sisters who met there every year, and so that they could meet on an integrated basis... I fully participated.'⁷⁵⁰ Moreover, it was at meeting of the SPSA that one of the most decisive moments in his career occurred; in a spare moment between panels of the 1966 meeting he was approached by the Duke political scientist, John Hallowell. Working in the same field as Cook, Hallowell was known for his theoretical writings on American democracy and he had been impressed by a piece delivered by Cook on the status of black politicians. In an unprecedented move, Hallowell invited Cook to teach at Duke. No white elite Southern University had employed a black professor, and Cook has reported disbelieving the invitation to be genuine. When it emerged that Hallowell was sincere, Cook took up the position and according to his own reflection soon found himself to be 'a phenomenon' at Duke. As Cook recalled, '99 percent of the

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ 'Charles Hynemann: Interview by Austin Ranney' in, Michael A. Baer, Malcolm E. Jewell and Lee Siegleman (eds), *Political Science in America: Oral Histories of a Discipline* (University Press of Kentucky; 1991), p. 17.

⁷⁵⁰ Interview with Samuel D. Cook, June 8, 1990. (73 minutes.) Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

students had never seen a black professor, so they would come and visit my class or they would bring their parents to my class.’⁷⁵¹

In 1966 Cook was appointed to a program committee of the Ford Foundation designed to foster graduate programmes for young black scholars. As Karen Ferguson has argued, leaders at Ford in the late 1960s ‘sought the creation of a black ‘network’ of experts, both within the Foundation and other elite institutions in America. Foundation executives espoused the belief that through this group’s racial experience and technocratic expertise its members would both improve their own status within the American meritocracy and engineer equality for the nation’s black population.’⁷⁵² Cook’s view of assimilation was compatible with the outlook of the Ford Foundation. In 1966 he would publish an article in the *New South* journal in which he argued that the movement was ‘nonsense’; ‘The Negro must form alliances and coalitions with liberal, progressive, and moderate whites’. As he had further explained, African Americans were only 10.5 percent of the population, ‘a clear minority’, and as a result ‘sheer arithmetic is against the success of any isolated program of action.’ Simply put, ‘The Negro, therefore, must have allies and friends.’⁷⁵³

However, if Cook represented the acceptable face of an integrationist political scientist, whose work spoke to racial inequalities but did not offer a radical critique of American society, he nevertheless acted as a bridge to a more radical wing. Specifically Cook joined together on the Ford project with the young, activist scholar Mack Jones. During the early 1960s Jones enrolled as an undergraduate student at Southern University, one of the largest historically black colleges, and was subsequently expelled for taking part in a peaceful Civil Rights protest. Jones maintained a fierce commitment to this cause, and departed to Texas Southern, to complete his degree in Political Science, a field he had chosen as a substitute for journalism. He went on to receive a PhD from the University of Illinois in 1968, at the height of the Black Power Movement.⁷⁵⁴ This interest in popular movements he translated into his studies, against the instruction of his teachers. In later years he recalled, ‘when I was in grad school, I always had my own agenda... I was struggling to try to make sense of conditions of black folk in politics.’⁷⁵⁵

In later years Mack Jones recalled on Cook’s posting with Ford, ‘my own interests and Dr. Cook’s interest came together to allow us to make a convincing... proposal to the Ford Foundation that would allow them, on the one hand, to justify giving the money to black graduate education; at

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² Karen Ferguson, *Top Down*. p.264.

⁷⁵³ Quoted in; Jeffery A. Turner, *Sitting in and Speaking out: student movements in the American South, 1960-70*, (University of Georgia Press; 2010), pg. 190.

⁷⁵⁴ Robert C. Smith, ‘Mack Jones’, *Encyclopedia of African American Politics* (Facts on File; 2003), p. 191.

⁷⁵⁵ Interview with Mack Jones, July 15, 1994. (60 minutes.) Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries. [Available; <http://libraries.uky.edu/nunncenter>].

the same time, it allowed us to do the things we wanted to do'.⁷⁵⁶ Whilst Cook was not a supporter of the Black Power movement he was sufficiently interested in giving money to black graduate education to want to assist Jones. As such, with the help of Cook and the foundation, a large sum of money, \$1.7 million, was channelled into Atlanta University by 1968. This grant allowed black scholars to hire faculty and give grants to graduate students. It also helped these scholars in creating a PhD programme in Atlanta.

This programme was heavily influenced by a philosophy popularized by the Black Power movement that called for the 'development of knowledge relevant to the struggle for liberation from race-based oppression'.⁷⁵⁷ It boasted an 'Afrocentric; curriculum which would offer an alternative to the mainstream white Political Science by being geared toward the 'eradication of racism, white supremacy and the race-based inequalities generated by capitalism'.⁷⁵⁸ To this extent a new nucleus of Political Science scholarship from a 'black perspective' struck out against the animating concerns and preoccupations of the rest of the Political Science field. Scholars at Atlanta also helped to foster an energetic movement-oriented faction of black scholarship. As a result of decades of underrepresentation, this group was smaller and less visible than many other streams of scholarship. Nonetheless, from a new location in Atlanta, the group began developing its own set of priorities.

The experience of Political Science and the Civil Rights movement in this decade contrasted strikingly with the experience of the American historical profession. As in Political Science where 'race' was not a prominent category, 'black history' had not been a feature of the 'mainstream' of the discipline before the 1960s, when it had been written it was the preserve of black scholars. However, unlike in Political Science where the field developed primarily in the preserve of black scholars, in History it became a central area of research crowded upon – and bitterly fought for. As Novick has described, 'Whites were not only writing about blacks, but teaching courses, frequently to overflow crowds, on black history' whilst a 'new generation of black historians aggressively challenged the claims of any whites to speak authoritatively on *their* past.'⁷⁵⁹ A similar path developed in Sociology as well, which had always cared more than History and Political Science about 'neglected' peoples, but this interest intensified in the 1960s, as new debates were initiated as to what terms to use to describe various ethnic groups: as Immanuel Wallerstein has reflected, 'Negroes became first Blacks and then African Americans, and the discussion is still continuing.'⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁷ Robert C. Smith, *Encyclopaedia of African American Politics*, p. 192

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁹ Novick, *The Objectivity question*, p. 475

⁷⁶⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The Impact of 1968 on US sociologists' in Camic (ed) *Sociology in America: a history*, pp.427-38

It is a revealing insight into the intransigence of the Political Science profession to the prominent new concerns of the 1960s that interest in 'race' only emerged in the discipline by way of institutional innovations, directed from outside. This grouping had very different intellectual priorities than did the mainstream of the discipline, whose growing interest in the topic of civil rights was not joined by a coherent effort to study 'race'. This also marks a stark contrast with neighbouring disciplines, whose focus on 'social' rather than 'political' affairs rendered these scholars more open to the new concerns.

Section Four: Political Science and Protest, the High Sixties

Anxieties that had been building in the early part of the decade escalated in the late 1960s. January 30th 1968 marked the beginning of three weeks of the heaviest battles so far fought in Vietnam. Named after the Vietnamese holiday 'Tet', this bloody siege saw roughly 12,500 citizens killed and a million more rendered refugees. Reporting on the damage, CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite cast aside his usual neutrality to declare, 'It seems more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate'.⁷⁶¹ Cronkite was one of a number of media spokespersons to highlight the horrors of the Vietnam War as images were projected to an American public that included the gruesome detail of battles, including, most famously, the execution of an enemy officer on the streets of South Vietnam. Americans recoiled in horror, and President Lyndon Johnson's public approval rating sank from an already low 40 percent to a miniscule 26 percent.⁷⁶²

On April 4th 1968 tragedy struck again. Standing on a motel balcony in Memphis Tennessee, the leader of non-violent support for social justice for blacks was struck in the mouth by a bullet. Shot dead, Martin Luther King's assassination incited rage in the community he had stood for. Rioting broke out in over 130 cities, accompanied by looting which caused property damage of over \$100 million and resulted in the arrest of 20,000 and the deaths of 46.⁷⁶³ Further civil rights movements appeared as the year went on, staged in the 'shanty town' set up by SCLC leader Reverend Ralph Abernathy in Washington DC in June, and the protests staged by black American medal winners standing on the podium of the World Olympics in October.

⁷⁶¹ Quoted in, James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945 – 1974* (Oxford University Press; 1996), p. 680. Also see Stephen Tuck, *We Ain't what we ought to be* ; Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey* ; Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time*.

⁷⁶² Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, p. 681.

⁷⁶³ Ibid, p. 686.

The high 1960s also saw the escalation of campus protests and violence. In April 1968, students in New York's Columbia University protested the involvement of their university with the Vietnam War. Many other colleges followed suit as an increasingly volatile and enraged student body protested the neutrality of their institutions in the face of American foreign policy and of the organizational hierarchies within the academy itself. As Sidney Verba wrote to Gabriel Almond from Chicago, 'The cultural revolution is going on here too. And I sometimes find my veneer of liberality growing thinner. Can we trust anybody under 30?'⁷⁶⁴ In reply, Almond commented, 'I wonder if you share with me my view that we have all become General Westmorelands of the campus, forecasting light at the end of the tunnel.'⁷⁶⁵ Almond's despair proved justified. Although, as he noted, 'Stanford and Chicago have proved lucky', by escaping major campus disruption, nonetheless discontent persisted within the American academy, and proliferated as students criticised 'Ivory tower universities', and cried out, in the words of one young historian, that 'the mere thought of making a career in one of them sometimes prompts suicidal tendencies'.⁷⁶⁶

In this kind of milieu it was very hard for serious scholars to retain their bearings. The intellectual assumptions and guiding philosophy of many academic disciplines in the United States were directly attacked in the late 1960s. The newly founded 'American Sociology Liberation Movement' sponsored meetings at the August 1968 annual meeting of the association. The next year, a variety of other groups disrupted mainstream sessions and set up 'radical events', including a feminist panel that attracted 500 people.⁷⁶⁷ The year 1969 also saw the heightening of tensions among historians, when a stand-off between two competing leftist factions took center stage at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association. In the end, both groups were defeated. As Peter Novick has described, these groups 'seemed to inhabit a realm of fantasy or, at a minimum, to be intoxicated with their own rhetoric'.⁷⁶⁸ Nonetheless, described by one reporter as the 'Death of Inaction', this was a period of professional soul-searching among American academics. As one article stated, 'The protagonists of this new order seem to be saying that we must take a stand, individually and through our professional societies; it is not enough to let the facts speak for themselves.'⁷⁶⁹

Political Science experienced considerable tumult during the late 1960s as it came to re-establish its focus amidst the swirling criticisms that had emerged in the middle of the decade. However, although this was the deepest period of professional strife in the history of the profession,

⁷⁶⁴ 'Letter from Sidney Verba' (March 1969) *Gabriel A. Almond Papers (SC0339)*. ACCN 2003. [Box 8. Folder 13] DSCUA, SUL. Stanford, California.

⁷⁶⁵ 'Letter to Sidney Verba' (March 19 1969) *Gabriel A. Almond Papers (SC0339)*. ACCN 2003. [Box 8. Folder 13] DSCUA, SUL. Stanford, California.

⁷⁶⁶ Quoted in Novick, *That Noble Dream*, p. 428.

⁷⁶⁷ Kathrin Fahlenbrach, *The Establishment Responds: Power, Politics, and Protest Since 1945* p. 62

⁷⁶⁸ Novick, *That Noble Dream*, p. 435.

⁷⁶⁹ 'Clipping: Death of Inaction'. *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 80: President's Correspondence. Folder: "David Easton"] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

this period did not succeed in reorienting (and reinvigorating) the discipline around a new set of concerns about the dispossessed and disadvantaged associated with the ‘New Left’, as it did in History and in Sociology.⁷⁷⁰ Amidst attacks on the scientific methodologies and ‘hidden’ value assumptions of the profession, established scholars continued to resist these attacks, much as they had earlier on in the decade.

December 1967: The Birth of the Caucus for the New Political Science

‘So far, our first year has been a smashing success.’ So wrote a member of the Caucus for a New Political Science in a pamphlet circulated to members of the American Political Science Association in 1968.⁷⁷¹ The year before, a few hundred members of the Association had organised the caucus as a series of panels and meetings at that year’s annual convention. Affected by the spectacle of Vietnam, student protests, urban riots, civil rights movements and a rising intellectual ‘counterculture’, caucus members sought to resuscitate a Political Science that could speak with authority to ‘pressing political and social questions of our time’.⁷⁷² The group voiced their frustration against a perceived immobility on the part of most political scientists in the recent political debates, and hoped to develop in its wake a newly engaged science of politics. As one participant argued, ‘there is increasing consensus in our own and other science fields that something more is called for than what one scientist has dubbed ‘over-professionalized particularisations and academic irrelevancies.’⁷⁷³

In a 1968 edition of *Science* magazine, Christian Bay was quoted as saying that, ‘Many political scientists stay away from APSA meetings because they view APSA as ‘an outfit controlled by an Ivy League establishment politically or apolitically wedded to the status quo.’⁷⁷⁴ Despite Bay’s claims to ‘stay away’, he and likeminded scholars began to channel their energy into staging an attack against the national Association. By December 1967, the annual APSA convention became a scene of protest. Under the leadership of Christian Bay and Mark Roelofs, a young grouping of scholars questioned the intellectual assumptions of the discipline were rooted in falsely ‘objective’ claims to knowledge.

⁷⁷⁰ It is worth noting that Novick prefers the term ‘New History’ rather than ‘New Left’. See especially; Novick, *The Objectivity Question*, pp. 418-20.

⁷⁷¹ ‘Newsletter: Caucus for A New Political Science’, (May 1968) *Richard Neustadt Personal Papers*. [Box 26. Folder: “APSA Meeting 9/5- 6/60] JFKPLM. Boston, Mass.

⁷⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷⁷³ ‘Clipping: Death of Inaction’. *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 80: President’s Correspondence. Folder: “David Easton”] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

⁷⁷⁴ ‘Clipping: Political Scientists: More Concern about Political Involvement’. *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 180] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

The lead up to this disruption of December 1967 began in February 1966 amid revelations that APSA's executive director, Evron Kirkpatrick, and its treasurer, Max Kampelman, were respectively president and vice-president of a CIA funded research organization called Operations and Policy Research Inc. This organisation was responsible for recruiting a number of political scientists into CIA roles, including the political scientist Amos Perlmutter who had been retained by OPR to work for the US Air Force on the question of how to 'improve understanding of the role of foreign military forces in stabilisation of the Middle East'.⁷⁷⁵ Political scientists who were already troubled by the notion of 'value-free' empiricism were horrified to learn that the work of the organisation involved classified research in addition to overt propaganda. These revelations received a heated reaction, described by one concerned observer as, '[p]erhaps the most dramatic example of the connection between the intelligence community and the academy'.⁷⁷⁶

In the immediate aftermath of these revelations a group of dissenting scholars circulated a petition demanding the resignation of Kirkpatrick and Kampelman. And the protest did not stop there. By the time of the 1967 Annual Convention in December, this agitated group presented the meeting 'with probably the ugliest confrontation in the history of the profession'.⁷⁷⁷ On one side were the establishment figures such as Kirkpatrick, and the presiding APSA president, Merle Fainsod. On the other side was a group of scholars, often younger and prone to activist politics, who formed a 'Caucus of the New Political Science'. The Caucus allowed activist political scientists their own platform through which to take part in the broader protests rippling through American society. Occasionally this gave rise to a rather odd spectacle, such as the 'intense young white man from Princeton, wearing steel-rimmed glasses' who 'kept calling out 'May I quote a relevant passage from the Autobiography of Malcolm X?'.⁷⁷⁸ But the energy was impressive, as Roelof noted, the 'Caucus came into existence in less than 36 hours, during which time it held three meetings each double the size of its predecessors'. The final membership list exceeded 225 names.⁷⁷⁹

Behind the veneer of these 'intense' young agitators, the Caucus also had an organised set of priorities, complete with an Executive Committee and bylaws which stated, 'be it resolved that this Caucus promote a new concern in the Association for our great social crises... Be it resolved that one of the primary concerns of the Caucus be to stimulate research in areas of Political Science that are of crucial importance and that have been thus far ignored.'⁷⁸⁰ The CNPS also made plans for a series of panels at the 1968 APSA convention these dealt with issues such as 'race, power, and money; the

⁷⁷⁵ Oren, *Our Enemies and US*, p. 162.

⁷⁷⁶ M. Windmiller, 'The New American Mandarins' in Theodore Roszak (ed), *The Dissenting Academy* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 122.

⁷⁷⁷ Lowi, 'The Politicization of Political Science', p. 45.

⁷⁷⁸ Clipping: Political Scientists: More Concern about Political Involvement'. *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 180] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

⁷⁷⁹ Mark Roelofs, "Communications: To the Editor," *PS: Politics & Society* Vol.1, Issue 1 (Winter 1968), p. 38

⁷⁸⁰ Quoted in Lowi, 'The Politicization of Political Science', p. 47.

creation of “news”; Vietnam and American foreign policy; and new modes of radical political thought and action in the United States’.⁷⁸¹

In this first year the Caucus successfully achieved some of their demands. A committee on professional ethics was established; an amendment to the APSA constitution that permitted more political involvement was passed; and the APSA conference programme was expanded to include of the sort of problems and issues deemed by Caucus members to be appropriate for scholarly attention.⁷⁸² Even Austin Ranney -- former prodigy of Kirkpatrick and editor of the scientific *APSR* -- commented favourably on actions taken in establishing a Standing Committee on Professional Ethics. While not binding on the membership, Ranney observed that these actions had at least moved the association out of the ethical area ‘where we are now, where we have nothing’.⁷⁸³

Even as the CNPS achieved some of their demands, complete reorientation was some way off. Most scholars continued to state the importance of the neutrality and objectivity of their work, and of the professional association. In 1968 the Civil Liberties Fund of Cambridge, Massachusetts, an organisation that set up to help raise money to help defend draft and military law cases in the wake of Vietnam, stated in pamphlet that it had the support of Robert Dahl ‘President of the American Political Science Academy’. Writing to the Executive Director, George Finger, Dahl stated that he was ‘deeply embarrassed and chagrined’ by the episode.⁷⁸⁴ As he angrily pointed out to Finger, ‘I cannot speak in the name of that association on political matters. No one can. The constitution and practice of that association prohibit officers from purporting to represent the association in partisan affairs. I wholly agree with that provision, which is intended to prevent the prestige of the association from being used for political ends, as you have done.’⁷⁸⁵

Dahl’s position was one that had been long-held among political scientists who demurred from taking political positions on issues – something that distinguished them from other scholars, including law professors and historians. Executive director Evron Kirkpatrick agreed, writing to Dahl, ‘I do think your letter to Finger is an excellent one. It certainly expresses my views with respect to such matters. I have refrained from signing anything of a political nature. I agree completely that the association should not be used for political purposes.’⁷⁸⁶ This sense of removed objectivism had defined the early effort to link the discipline up with the ‘action intellectual’, and it was deeply felt by

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Clipping: Political Scientists: More Concern about Political Involvement’. *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 180] SCRC, GWU. Washington D.C.

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ ‘Letter: Robert A. Dahl to Gregory Finger’ (May 7, 1968) *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 80] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ ‘Letter: Evron Kirkpatrick to Robert A. Dahl’ *American Political Science Association Records*. [Box 80] SCRC, GWU. Washington.

many senior figures such as Dahl and Kirkpatrick. One could become involved in public policy questions, they hoped, without becoming a political actor.

1968 – 1970: Towards 'Professional' Reform

In 1968 the Caucus continued its mission with a program for the Annual Meeting which included 'a series of eight panels and a plenary session, all focused on the central theme: 'American democracy in crisis', followed by a business meeting to plan the shape of future development.⁷⁸⁷ But, beneath the surface the focus had definitively shifted. One suggestion of this change of direction was the preference of Caucus members to organise separate panels for Caucus members at APSA conferences rather than an idea raised by intellectual reformers such as Lowi for 'intellectual goon squads', in which Caucus members would 'read each paper with unusual care' and then 'raise all the questions about the purpose and implications of the paper that were implied by the general criticism of the Caucus against the APSA.'⁷⁸⁸ A second indicator was the decision to refuse a sum of \$7,000 offered by a foundation for the purposes of establishing a journal that would have given space for working through the intellectual complaints. Both of these measures would have focused more directly on the intellectual temper of the discipline, rather than the professional structure.⁷⁸⁹

A key target of the Caucus in the late 1960s was the presidency of the APSA. Previously these annual positions were appointed, behind closed doors, to a senior figure in the discipline. However, beginning in 1969 the Caucus ran its own candidates. In some years Caucus candidates almost won the title. The Caucus also succeeded in entering into the programme for the annual convention panels and groups focusing on an array of issues that they considered 'relevant' and important. Study groups were set up to look into the status of blacks in the profession, and the status of women was to follow. By far the most symbolic achievement of the Caucus was when the rather 'establishment' figure of David Easton announced in 1969 a program of constitutional revision for the Association. As he wrote to members,

A very intense experience with our membership this year has led me to view the establishment of the present Committee as an urgent necessity. The last major revision of our Constitution took place in 1953 at a time when the Association was less than half its present size. We continue to increase in numbers at the rate of over 1000 a year. This marked and continuing growth has been accompanied by considerable diversity in points

⁷⁸⁷'Program for the 1968 APSA meeting' *Richard Neustadt Personal Papers*. [Box 26, Folder: 9.5- 6.60 'APSA Meeting'.] JFKL. Boston, Mass.

⁷⁸⁸ Lowi, 'The Politicization of Political Science', p. 47

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

of view and greater concentrations of geographically dispersed members. In addition, the diversity of outlooks within the Association has been accentuated in recent years as social and political cleavages are refracted through our membership.⁷⁹⁰

This statement marked the beginning of increasingly formal and noticeable fragmentation of the American Political Science profession. But it did not amount to a significant reorientation of the discipline around the issues that animated the CNPS.

Legacy of the CNPS

If the history of American Political Science was to stop at the beginning of 1970, just after Easton had declared revision to APSA's constitution, it might seem that members of the Caucus for a New Political Science had at least some limited success in reorienting the discipline to focus on 'social problems' and destroying the faith in empirical observation. Yet, the further past this moment one travels, the dimmer the success of the Caucus and its original goals appear to have been. Caucus members succeeded in dramatically reshaping the professional structure of the discipline: introducing new factions and steering new representation. But they failed to garner real power over the intellectual orientation of the discipline.

In the first place, this failure is evident in the fact that the CNPS failed to establish 'race' as a prominent category. In the late 1960s caucus members had highlighted the intense racial disparities within the profession. However, it also built very few bridges with the developing African American and black power movement within the discipline. As the decade reached an end, the infrastructure provided by Ford and the commitment of scholars such as Jones and Cook, among others, had begun to build a small nucleus of black political scientists committee to studying questions of racial suppression and liberation. In 1969, a conference dedicated to operate from a 'black perspective' was held in Atlanta under Ford sponsorship and shortly after, a new journal was set up that was dedicated to the problem of black Political Science. Giving theoretical substance to this perspective, in 1970 Mack Jones wrote 'A Frame of Reference for Black Politics', in which he provided a sharp critique of the developing white scholarship that sought to treat race as a clinical category.

Nevertheless, this group remained nestled in the corner of the discipline. As we have seen the Atlanta grouping had developed separately from the rest of the discipline, and the frictions of the APSA meetings did little to help bring this new group into the fold of the discipline. According one

⁷⁹⁰ 'Letter: David Easton to APSA membership' (1969) *American Political Science Association Records* [Box 80: President's Correspondence. Folder: David Easton] SCRC, GWU.

account, there had been a comment made at the meeting that ‘black people did not support their own organisations and did not give to their own organizations’, this comment incensed a particularly heated reaction and dug in the heels of many black political scientists who left the conference determined to separate from APSA. As a leading member of the Council has remembered, ‘we did not want to become a black caucus within the American Political Science Association... we did not want to conduct any kind of protest at the meeting or that kind of thing.’⁷⁹¹ Instead, these political scientists opted to focus on the important issues themselves, and to ‘let each African American political scientist decide on their own course of action as far as APSA was concerned’.

If Atlanta gave an institutional center to a ‘black’ perspective to Political Science, this approach received its new professional affiliation in a newly founded National Conference of Black Political Scientists. This developed from an April 1969 meeting of Southern University. Mack Jones became the first President of NCOBPS, which was used for variety of different activities including, intellectual leadership, but also ‘housekeeping functions’ of sharing ideas, organising conferences and teaching, administration and research. As Jones has reflected, ‘everywhere I’ve been, the department has had a strong connection with NCOBPS in terms of other faculty members and students being taken to meetings and so forth.’ In contrast, Jones has also reflected that ‘to be honest about it... the American Political Science Association hasn’t for a long time had really any importance in my own professional life.... I don’t think my profession life... has been diminished in any way if APSA didn’t exist’.⁷⁹² Even the caucus registered very little for Jones, ‘they just miss my boat... I don’t hear anybody with any passion about what they publish’.⁷⁹³

Secondly, not only did the Caucus for a New Political Science fail to introduce the category of ‘race’ into the centre of the discipline, it also began to segment the membership into different camps based on methodology. At the beginning of the decade scholars such as Bay had held a mirror up to the methodological assumptions of ‘scientific’ scholars and accepted their designation at the periphery of the discipline in ‘philosophical’ journals. However, the group of young assistant professors and graduate students who were rising through the ranks of the CNPS had begun to put up thicker boundaries between so called ‘scientific’ and ‘theoretical’ work. As one wrote in a new edited collection, ‘the only option now available to critics and reformers is an end to Political Science. This will entail a negative act but also a positive commitment..... moving toward the creation, along with other radical caucuses, of... a social science that is *political*’.⁷⁹⁴ In this way the CNPS set up a division between ‘science’ and ‘theory’ that would be further defined over subsequent decades.

⁷⁹¹Interview with Mack Jones, July 15, 1994. (79 minutes.) Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

⁷⁹² Ibid, (at 86 minutes).

⁷⁹³ Ibid, (at 89 minutes).

⁷⁹⁴ Marvin Surkin and Alan Wolfe (eds), *An End to Political Science: The Caucus Papers* (New York, Basic Books; 1971), p.7.

The argument that the neo-conservative faction of the discipline were harbouring in the 1960s concerning the ‘ungovernability’ of American politics amidst a crisis of political institutions was bitterly controversial and incited much heated criticism. ‘Government 146’, Banfield’s course on urban problems, was the second largest course in the College in 1966.⁷⁹⁵ But it was also highly controversial and spawned a rival course from student agitators who noted that they would use the course as a ‘starting point and discuss different ways of looking at the problems’. As another said, ‘He’s a good muckraker. The problem is he’s always drawing the wrong conclusions’.⁷⁹⁶ To which Banfield replied, ‘I’m delighted to see students taking the problems of cities seriously’, and added, ‘I begin to think that if I told them the world is round. I’d get opposition. But I will tell them the world is round, if the occasion arises.’⁷⁹⁷ More seriously, Banfield found himself picketed when speaking in public. In 1974 the *Chicago Tribune* reported that ‘individuals represented the Committee Against Racism shouted, chanted, and waved a banner which described Banfield as racist’. Having come to deliver an address at the University of Chicago, Banfield endured an hour and twenty minutes of abuse before he ‘quietly slipped out a side door behind University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman.’ The university vice president closed the event stating ‘[t]his is a disgraceful occasion’.⁷⁹⁸ Nor was this the first time, as the *Tribune* article further recorded, Banfield had previously been escorted from a lecture in the University of Toronto under the protection of twenty Royal Canadian Mounted Police.⁷⁹⁹

Banfield waged the unenviable task of presenting a bleak and sober reflection of the limits of government to students who did not want to listen. Within a discipline ravaged with internecine conflict about what the science of politics was for, he found few allies in the ranks of his own discipline. These policy-sceptics found more common ground with sociologists and some historians in the pages of the new journal *Public Interest* than with fellow Political Scientists. Nevertheless, the world they described would come into focus. The 1970 edition of *The Unheavenly City*, and the 1974 version of, *The Unheavenly City Revisted* became two of the highest selling Political Science books ever published.⁸⁰⁰ Scholarship that emerged in the discipline subsequently bore the mark of the world which these ‘neo conservatives’ had attempted to describe.

⁷⁹⁵ Robert A. Rafsky, ‘Forty Form ‘Counter’ to Gov 146; Banfield Agrees It’s a Great Idea’, *The Harvard Crimson* (Oct 18, 1966).

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ Robert Cassidy, ‘Demonstrators at University of Chicago protest appearance by Edward Banfield’, *Chicago Tribune* March 24, 1974, p. 14.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁰ ‘Colloquium’, in *Edward C. Banfield: An Appreciation*, p. 22.

Conclusion

The most striking aspect of the experience of American Political Science during the 1960s was not how much changed, but how little did. Compared to kindred divisions of American historians and sociologists, the nation's political scientists emerged from the decade relatively unaffected by the deep social tumult of the period. In fact, the body of criticisms that cut the deepest, (although not *that* deep), were those raised by a new cadre of 'policy sceptics', men like Banfield and Wilson and like-minded figures in the *Public Interest* crowd. In part the various social crises of the Sixties had less resonance for the discipline of Political Science than they did for other disciplines which that were more clearly concerned with the fate of the dispossessed and disenfranchised. But more importantly, the sort of criticisms that the Caucus for a New Political Science channelled at the 'establishment' of the discipline misinterpreted the aims and ambitions of the older scholars against whom they were directed. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the idea of a 'behavioral' revolution of the 1950s misrepresented the actual developments of that decade. As such, the accusations that a younger cohort hurled at a 'behavioral' establishment largely missed their mark. In this context, it was rather easy for established scholars to ignore the criticisms, and given that these scholars were in most of the senior positions it was not difficult for the discipline to remain rather unaffected at the top levels, despite the new movements and protests among younger scholars.

Nevertheless, if the discipline was largely able to withstand the intellectual and political protests of the decade, a broader set of changes in American government had silently and slowly started to fracture the discipline's outlook. It was difficult to glimpse these changes from within the decade, but in 1968 President Levi of the University of Chicago wrote to David Easton with the following note; 'I doubt if the world would be much or any different if the American Political Science Review had thirty articles on the urban crisis. Or one hundred on racial conflicts. It might make a difference in how some political scientists feel.'⁸⁰¹ This was a glimmer of a future in which the discipline would lose that strong central animating concern with large questions, addressed through close, empirical research.

The irony of the transformation that emerged after the 1960s was that no sooner had American political scientists come to see the role and purpose of American government as more important than ever before – a change that had set in by the late 1950s and early 1960s – than their sense of professional self-worth shrivelled. This new humility emerged not because of any of the claims of the Caucus critics – but because, following changes in American government and politics

⁸⁰¹ 'Letter: Levi to Easton' (October 6, 1969) *Office of the President. Levi Administration Records* [Box 281, Folder 2] SCRC, RL. Chicago.

after the Great Society, the American democratic system was, in many ways, more complex and less 'governable' than previously presumed. After the 1960s the discipline lost its anchoring focus in the problems of the American state, and the traditional claim of Political Science scholarship to describe and explain American politics would bristle against the fact that its own scholars were busily investigating a narrower, more technical and fragmented and less accessible set of questions.

Conclusion

‘I wish...’ stated David Truman in an interview in 1979, ‘that ... the tools that we have ... could be harnessed to some of the big questions.’⁸⁰² Truman was reflecting on what he took to be an intellectual retreat of American political scientists in the years after the 1960s, as his colleagues in the discipline began to engage narrower, more obscure questions. One of the most notable new directions was the embrace of rational choice theory. Although rejected by the discipline when the approach had first been developed by economists during the 1950s, rational choice gained a prominent place in American Political Science thereafter. Led by William H. Riker, American political scientists drew more deeply into the question of how individuals make decisions.⁸⁰³ Riker’s first book *The Theory of Political Coalitions* applied game theory to political theory, and upon release in 1962 it engendered little fanfare.⁸⁰⁴ However, by the early 2000s the University of Rochester professor had been cited more than 3,700 times by over 2,000 scholars in more than 500 journals.⁸⁰⁵ Measured by ‘share of the *American Political Science Review*’s pages’, one scholar observed, rational choice ‘appeared to constitute the discipline’s most popular research programme.’⁸⁰⁶

Quantitative and maths-heavy approaches were nothing new to the discipline, but earlier examples had been far more accessible, and related to important subjects—with V.O.

⁸⁰² Truman, *Oral Histories of a Discipline*, p. 148.

⁸⁰³ William Riker, ‘Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions,’ *American Political Science Review* 74 (1980), pp. 432–447. See also: Richard McCelvey, ‘Intransitivities in Multidimensional Voting Models and Some Implications for Agenda Control,’ *Journal of Economic Theory* 12 (1976), pp. 472–482; John Ferejohn and Morris Fiorina, ‘Purposive Models of Legislative Behavior,’ *American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings* 65 (1975), pp. 407–415; Oliver Williamson, *Markets and Hierarchies* (New York, Free Press, 1975) and Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism* (New York, Free Press, 1985); Paul Milgrom and John Roberts, *Economics, Organization and Management* (New York, Prentice-Hall, 1992); John W. Pratt and Richard Zeckhauser, *Principals and Agents* (Boston, Harvard Business School Press, 1991); Terry Moe, ‘The New Economics of Organization,’ *American Journal of Political Science* 28 (1984); Barry Weingast and William Marshall, ‘The Industrial Organization of Congress,’ *Journal of Political Economy* 96, 1 (1988), pp. 132–163.

⁸⁰⁴ William H. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (Yale University Press; 1962).

⁸⁰⁵ Kellie Maske and Garey Durden, ‘The contributions and impact of Professor William H. Riker’ *Public Choice*, Vol. 117, No. 1 (Oct, 2003), pp. 191 – 220.

⁸⁰⁶ John S. Dryzek, ‘Revolutions Without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science’, *APSR* (Nov., 2006), p. 491.

Key, David Truman and Robert Dahl being more recent examples of this trend. Another new direction that emerged after the 1960s was a similarly abstruse penchant for abstract philosophizing. A faction of ‘theoretical’ political scientists came in the form of new pockets of ‘critical theory’. Largely a legacy of the founding members of the Caucus for a New Political Science, these scholars continued a debate against what they classified as the ‘positive’ or ‘behavioralist’ scholarship. They argued that ‘the process of knowing cannot be severed from the historical struggle between humans and the world... The theorist cannot remain detached, passively contemplating, reflecting and describing 'society' or 'nature’’.⁸⁰⁷

Not only did these new, more recondite, approaches to studying politics emerge in the discipline, but they contributed to the increasingly atomised and discordant nature of the profession. Gabriel Almond drew a metaphor between scholarly sects and ‘separate tables’ in a high school cafeteria.⁸⁰⁸ What most concerned Almond was the way in which ‘the extremes’ seemed to dominate disciplinary discussion. As he wrote, the more radical views ‘make themselves highly audible and visible – the soft left providing a pervasive flagellant background noise, and the hard right providing virtuoso mathematical and statistical displays appearing in the pages of our learned journals.’⁸⁰⁹ Almond was one of many scholars to comment on the malaise that saturated American Political Science in the decades after the 1960s. He stated, ‘Political science has prospered materially, but it is not a happy profession.’⁸¹⁰ An ‘uneasiness’ now afflicted the profession – ‘not of the body, but of the discipline’s soul.’⁸¹¹ Almost a decade earlier the Stanford professor Heinz Eulau published a piece entitled ‘Drift of a Discipline’.⁸¹² And a few years after that David Ricci, observed that, ‘The last decade may well contain signs indicating the onset of a long-term failure of nerve in the community of political scholars.’⁸¹³

⁸⁰⁷ David Held, quoted in Gabriel Almond, ‘Separate Tables: Schools and Sects in Political Science’, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), p. 830. Also see; David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*. (University of California Press, 1980).

⁸⁰⁸ Almond, ‘Separate Tables: Schools and Sects in Political Science’, p. 828.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.* p. 829.

⁸¹⁰ Almond, p. 829.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 838.

⁸¹² Heinz Eulau, ‘Drift of a Discipline’, *The American Behavioral Scientist*, (Sep/Oct 1977), pp. 5- 10

⁸¹³ David Ricci, *The Tragedy of Political Science*. p. 211.

American Political Science from the Gilded Age to the Great Society

The first one hundred years of the discipline of Political Science in the American academy mark a striking contrast with the malaise that would follow. Establishing a science of politics in the American polity was not straightforward, in an era when John Burgess had to lobby to establish a department of ‘Political Science’ to the trustees of Columbia College who were inclined to regard the subject as unnecessary. Nevertheless, the discipline emerged against a populist, anti-intellectual tradition in American life, to provide a robust, coherent and often highly informative set of insights. Scholars such as Roger Gieger and Hugh Graham Davis and Nancy Diamond have some of the essential story correct when they write that the twentieth century saw the rise of the modern mass research university, and that elites within the university system prospered.⁸¹⁴ But this story does not suffice to account for the rise of American Political Science. Here we see a different story: not simply of federal and philanthropic support bolstering new research institutions, but growing ambitions about the power of research to shine light on the major and complex problems of the day.

American historians have to a peculiar degree addressed themselves to present-day audiences.⁸¹⁵ In many ways, the leading lights of Political Science described in this thesis did the same. They rooted their studies in tangible, largescale concerns about the emergent state and a changing party system – actively seeking a ‘usable present’. This thesis has charted that quest. Although often scholars failed to realise their lofty ambitions, the discipline provided a robust tradition and a set of findings that frequently informed a wider set of debates. Scholars such as Woodrow Wilson and Henry Jones Ford attempted to explain the outlines of a newly developing administrative state and newly developing party system in ways that were to have great influence. So too did the work of John Gaus and other scholars of public administration in the 1930s and 40s present an influential and highly respected body of literature. And the ‘pluralist’ scholarship of Pendleton Herring, Peter Odegard, David Truman and Robert Dahl made important forays into a rapidly changing political world. These are just a few examples of the significant new insights that emerged from American Political Science between the Gilded Age and the Great Society.

⁸¹⁴ Gieger, *To Advance Knowledge*, Graham Davis and Diamond, *The Rise of American Research Universities*.

⁸¹⁵ See; J.R. Pole, ‘The American Past: is it still usable?’ *Journal of American Studies*, Vol.1, Issue 1. (April 1967), pp. 63-78.

If one of the central tenets of this thesis has been to demonstrate the existence of this robust Political Science, the other has been to explain what gave the discipline its vitality in these decades. Even though historians tend to see the absence of effective political authority as having defined the ‘Gilded Age’, by far the most important factor that invigorated the new profession of Political Science was the growth of the American state. The initial signs that American government was maturing in the late nineteenth century inspired the first generation of political scientists to conduct ‘scientific’ studies of the American polity with the hope of illuminating this portentous development. Moreover, elevated by the broader social and political currents of the Progressive Era, these scholars assumed a rather grandiose sense of what was possible, hoping to infiltrate every crevice of American society from civic education to training political practitioners. By the 1920s, and during WWI, the discipline lost some of its early confidence – especially in relation to an understanding of its recent achievements in comparison with neighbouring disciplines. But, although the discipline was certainly frustrated in this decade, the ambitions remained, and political scientists tried against the grain of the decade to draw attention the scientific study of politics.

If the discipline was frustrated in the 1920s, the crisis decades of the 1930s and 40s revived the concern of political scientists to be relevant to the big issues of the day. Especially in the growing subfield of Public Administration political scientists considered themselves to be studying *the* most important issues of the day. The transformation in this period of Charles E. Merriam from a visionary progressive scholar into presidential advisor is one particularly dramatic case in which the dreams of the discipline really did become reality. But even when scholars were not as influential as the well-connected Merriam, this sense of motivation was pervasive. Perhaps no point in the discipline’s history was quite as consequential for the discipline’s development as the Second World War and its aftermath; the further growth of the state combined with the experience of political scientists in war bureaus rendered this a highly energizing period for the discipline.

During the 1950s, the combination of a renewed sense of purpose, the obvious importance of understanding *politics*, and the emergence of changes begun in earlier decades collided in a way to assure political scientists of their continuing significance – even within a decade in which social changes seemed more striking than political vicissitudes. A sense of purpose marked the writing of American Political Science scholarship in the 1950s, even as other disciplines turned to more recondite and aloof theorising, leading political scientists

steadfastly committed to studying the 'big picture' of American politics, to understanding the nature of their times.

We might well have expected the decade of the 1960s to have provided a similarly invigorating experience for political scientists. The expansion of government under Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, the rising role of experts in American life and the heightening interest in 'politics' were all, in theory, potentially revitalising aspects of the decade. Moreover, other disciplines *did* emerge invigorated from this decade. According to Novick, writing of history during the late twentieth century, at 'the level of everyday practice, things had never been better.'⁸¹⁶ Scant mention needs to be offered about the rise of economics at this time, or the elevation of men like Milton Friedman or Joseph Stiglitz to seemingly immortal standing.

Why should the decade have been so curiously enervating for the political scientist? In part, the growing influence of quantitative research derived from mathematics in the 1980s and 90s resulted from the rise of behavioural methodology in the American academy, centred in the economics profession. But more importantly, the environment of the late twentieth century United States also rendered political scientists more receptive to the abstract nature of this work. If the modernization of American government and politics supported the rise of American Political Science, providing a concrete set of problems for scholarship, it was the transformation of American politics in the 1960s that had the greatest impact on its future development. Whereas the distinctive development of American politics and government in the twentieth century seemed to provide a coherent set of empirical problems for scholarly research, the further growth and transformation of American government and politics in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries provided no such coherence.

A discipline that had grown up oriented to study the techniques of a still young public administration service, and the expansive growth of government machinery in times of crisis was interested in the problem of understanding an emerging political system – viewing it as a new system coming into focus and worrying about its vulnerability against a broader array of challenges. Such a desire was evident in the work of Truman and Dahl in the 1950s, just as it was in the work of Ford and Wilson in the 1890s. In contrast, by the late twentieth century the American state continued to grow,

⁸¹⁶ Novick, *The Objectivity Question*, p.537.

but, it was becoming increasingly clear, even to non-professional eyes, that this growth was not the transformative modernization predicted in earlier years, but more akin to constant, incremental flux. It was against this background that the rational choice scholar, William Riker, stated that, although institutions change, ‘lasting generalization is still possible because many institutions (e.g. voting and decisions by forming coalitions) are, when abstractly described, at least as old as history.’⁸¹⁷ In the new and more apparently permanent post-Great Society world, the cold modelling of rational choice mathematics held more appeal.

The introduction of a more philosophical approach to the discipline – the work of the non-empiricists – as well as the widening of the ideological scope of the discipline to include conservatives, radicals and feminists, among other new perspectives, can be accounted for by growing expectations of the role of government in American life. The Great Society programmes created a link between government and its ability to solve largescale social problems that was unthinkable in earlier decades. American political scientists before this period never expected its government to be charged with such tasks as the eradication of poverty and other largescale welfare programmes. As such, the discipline could comfortably refrain from asking questions about the ability of government to achieve social good. This was less obviously the case after the 1960s, thus opening the discipline to a wider array of intellectual concerns.

Rethinking Political Science history

For too long the history of Political Science has been written by political scientists animated by the question of ‘how to study politics’. Balking at the present narrowness of the discipline’s concerns, scholars such as David Ricci, James Farr, John Gunnell and many others have been led to study the history of the discipline by the (not unreasonable) question of, ‘how did we get here?’ However, their approach has been too narrowly focused on internal intellectual traditions, far too devoid of context, and, often, overly biased against the idea of ‘empirical’ research, so that they miss the actual developments that are crucial in answering their central concern. Instead of leaving the history of the discipline to political

⁸¹⁷ Riker, ‘The Two-Party system and Duverger’s Law’, p. 346.

scientists, it should be told by historians, and historians of American government and politics at that.

We should see the history of the discipline for what it is: an adjunct of the modern administrative state. Political Science did not emerge simply as part of the research university, it primarily emerged in reaction to the rapid maturation of the American state in the late nineteenth century. John Gunnell has written copious amounts on the history of American Political Science from the perspective of the development of democratic theory, and in his major work *Imagining the American Polity* he notes, ‘Describing, explaining, and evaluating the United States as a democratic society has, in many respects, been the defining mission of Political Science’.⁸¹⁸ This is a crucial insight in the development of the discipline, which highlights the central fact that the discipline has emerged in tandem with the growth of American government and politics; and yet, in his work Gunnell focuses not on the relationship between scholars and the dynamic subject matter with which they were concerned, but, rather narrowly, on the evolution of certain ideas through the work of political scientists – an approach that he describes as, ‘democratic theory in the context of American political science’.⁸¹⁹ What an approach such as Gunnell’s misses is the true source of vitality in the discipline’s past. The political scientists described in this thesis were not animated by narrow intellectual concerns about political philosophy (as is the focus of Gunnell’s work), nor were they animated, as others such as Ricci and Ross have argued, by ideas about ‘science’. Rather, their concerns and motivations were indelibly rooted in the problems of the new American state that was coming into being.

To view Political Science as an adjunct of modern American government is also to counter an opposite tendency among scholars of American Political Development to view the political and social sciences in terms of their limitations. Stephen Skowronek has argued, and many others in the subfield of American Political Development have agreed, that the ‘agenda for building a new American state was defined by an intellectual vanguard of university-trained professionals.’ But, ‘they were America’s single most valuable state-building resource, yet they never controlled the state-building process. To analyse the construction of the new American state solely in terms of their ideals and aspirations is to dismiss the state-building problems they so clearly perceived.’⁸²⁰ This is so. But if we understand these

⁸¹⁸ Gunnell, *Imagining the nation’s polity*, p. 2

⁸¹⁹ Ibid

⁸²⁰ Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877 - 1920* (CUP, 1982) p. 286

disciplines as part of the new, statist-world, then we can appreciate how such ideas were an important *contrast* to the anti-intellectualism of American society, and the rather weaker sense of purpose that we have in our own time regarding the study and understanding of politics. To judge the significance of political scientists in terms of their role as state-builders is to employ an inappropriate category, the central concern of the discipline was not to closely control the state, but to understand and interpret. Only by viewing Political Science by these standards might we see its rather robust health in the decades leading up to the 1960s.

Furthermore, only by understanding the growth of Political Science in relation to the growth of the American state can we understand the distinctive differences between this discipline and other kindred divisions of social science which were much more concerned with the problems of ‘society’ rather than ‘politics’. Dorothy Ross, Mary Furner and many others have viewed the ‘social sciences’ as one. Whilst their histories have regularly interlinked, the study of the state and the study of society have been rooted in two different sets of observations. As Robert Wiebe and Thomas Haskell have argued, the emergence of modern society invigorated new modes of explanation taking social thinkers away from the study of conscious choices by individuals to a new mode of explanation that ‘systematically construes people as creatures of circumstance’.⁸²¹ As we have seen, a similar transformation took place in the American study of politics. A commonplace understanding in the nineteenth century was to view political decisions as the actions of the individual. However, the new scholars of Political Science viewed ‘institutions’ (broadly construed) as central to modern life.

For all their similarities and overlaps, these two developments – the development of ways of understanding modern society and ways of understanding modern politics – have developed at different rates and often in opposition to one another. During periods of intense social tumult, ideas and theories of modern ‘society’ accelerated, such as in the 1920s and 1950s. Whereas in the aftermath of the Great Depression, the discipline of Political Science found its theories increasingly viable. Recognising this helps us to account for why it is that different branches of the same family of ‘American social science’, so seemingly homogenous, and affected by the same set of broader structural forces in American life, can experience such different fortunes at certain moments in time. This was the case in the 1930s

⁸²¹ Haskell, *The emergence of profession social science and the nineteenth-century crisis of authority*, p. iv

and 40s, when American political scientists seemed to profit at the expense of American sociologists and, for much of the 1930s, economists too. And this was the case as well in the decades after the 1960s, when political scientists experienced such a unique set of difficulties in having their intellectual tools and body of insights apply to the big questions of the day.

The emergence of Political Science alongside the growth of American government was never unproblematic. In a nation still characterised by an anti-statist and an anti-intellectual tradition, the challenges of describing and assisting the developing American system were considerable. Nevertheless, as we have seen in this thesis, between the 'Gilded Age' and the 'Great Society', political scientists, buoyed by the striking growth of the American political system, were remarkably ambitious. They managed to overcome challenges, to assert their usefulness and to develop a raft of stimulating and oftentimes influential scholarship. Their example is an instructive one for the new world that emerged after the 1960s, where the problems of government are no doubt complex and difficult, but the main challenge to political understanding is not a lack of answers, but a lack of scholarship willing to engage in the big questions.

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