of other people but as "selective control of access to oneself or to one's group" (p. 18). Privacy, thus, is a matter of regulating interpersonal or group boundaries. It is only through inadequate control of social interactions, on the side of more interactions than desired, that the subjective state of crowding occurs. Individuals who feel the stress of crowding are expected to engage in coping behaviors to restore the desired level of privacy. The key to understanding the consequences of crowding resides in the success of the coping behaviors. Altman's analysis is frankly a preliminary statement which integrates concepts previously treated as disparate topics. It is an excellent initial taxonomy of important variables, whose specific relationships must be detailed by future research.

Both books were written to be textbooks and contain material that is not strictly necessary for supporting the major themes. This does, however, provide an opportunity for placing the analyses in a larger context and for explicating their implications. Each book, for example, concludes with a chapter on applications to environmental design. True to their different perspectives, Freedman's recommendations revolve around increasing the positiveness of people's responses to the urban environment, whereas Altman's suggestions emphasize design flexibility aimed at permitting individuals to attain their desired level of interaction with others.

These two views of crowding, as is perhaps already evident, do not represent alternative interpretations of the same phenomena, and they must be judged by different criteria. For Freedman, the critical issue is the correctness of the intensification interpretation, and the range of behaviors to which it applies. The test of Altman's contribution will be whether it serves as a template for future theoretical developments and empirical research.

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The Tasks of Sociology

The Idea of Social Structure. Papers in Honor of Robert K. Merton. LEWIS A. COSER, Ed. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1975. xii, 548 pp. $12.95.

The late 1940's and early '50's were one of those periods in which sociologists try to find themselves: try to find problems that are worth a grown person's time and some methods by which they can be dealt with. Robert Merton emerged in that period as a model of the complete sociologist—"Mr. Sociology," *The New Yorker* called him in its 1961 profile—and he remained his profession's first citizen until the middle '60's, when sociology again experienced a loss of purpose. There are significant papers in this tribute upon Merton's 65th birthday, but the collection's larger significance is its examination of the ideas and tools that empowered a generation of sociologists. It is the right gift for the man who gave form to the sociology of science: a challenge for his further understanding.

Several of the papers recall the problems with which Merton wrestled in the 1930's and the experiences that shaped his solutions. Lewis Coser and Robert Nisbet offer an informal conversation about the period, its outlook and its limitations. Coser separately examines the uses that Merton made of the European sociological tradition to form his own sociology. Paul Lazarsfeld gives us an account of his and Merton's collaboration in the organization of the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia and of Merton's developing fluency in the use of sample surveys and in the formulation of research having import for social policy.

All these papers provide helpful background. Arthur Stinchcombe goes further and tries to specify the appeal, the power, and the limits of Merton's sociology. His is perhaps the central paper in the whole symposium, and I shall return to it in talking about the book's larger significance.

Twelve of the papers look again at topics on which Merton has worked. A number of them move us well beyond existing knowledge. This is true, for example, of Robin Williams's reexamination of relative deprivation. It was recognized 30 years ago (and long before) that it is not so much the absolute degree of difficulty in people's lives that determines their readiness for social protest as it is the discrepancies between life as they know it and their expectations of how people like themselves should fare. Williams recasts extensive findings on this topic from psychology and the social sciences, putting them into a social-structural framework and developing a set of propositions which is at once a synthesis and a prospectus for further research. A pair of papers, one by Jonathan Cole and Harriet Zuckerman and the other by Stephen Cole, contain fresh developments in the sociology of science. Cole and Zuckerman trace the rise of the sociology of science itself. They make a statistical analysis of books and papers in this field to record its growth and crystallization. Stephen Cole employs a factor analysis to identify major schools of thought in the study of social deviance and assembles statistical evidence on their rise and decline. We shall, however, need more information about Cole's factor-analytic procedures in order to evaluate his interpretations. (Cole and Zuckerman find that Merton's papers on science were paradigmatic for the recent growth of the sociology of science. Cole shows us that Merton's essay on social structure and anomie provided one of the few foci for studies of deviance and was drawn upon by most of the major schools.) A fourth seminal paper is the speculative essay by Rose Coser. She builds on Merton's discussions of reference groups to recast proposals by George Mead and by Piaget that experiences in complex organizations lead to the growth of cognitive complexity in their participants.

The last set of papers are designated by the editor as "in the spirit of Merton." As that heading suggests, they are both substantial and diverse. Two are especially provocative. Robert Nisbet proposes that the Italian Renaissance was not so much a formative period in European life and thought as a kind of "origin myth" by means of which people at a much later time sought to legitimate their own aspirations. His case seems strong when he considers the continuity of philosophical ideas or of social thought from the 12th to the 17th centuries, but he may need to consider developments in the arts and the sense of contemporaries that something new was afoot in civic affairs and in value emphases before settling on his conclusions. And Alvin Gouldner sharpens for us a sense of the political and ethical meaning of a focus on studies of everyday social life as against a focus on studies of "great

events" and "pivotal" institutions. Gouldner suggests that either type of study must take systematic account of the other in order to be valid. He needs now to show us how that can be done.

The book ends with a comprehensive bibliography of Merton's writings through 1975. As William Fielding Ogburn, himself a great sociologist of science and technology, liked to insist, there is a strong correlation between a man's influence in science and the number of his publications. As of this compilation, Merton was an author or editor of 21 books and 111 papers. Cole and Zuckerman note that he is also the sociologist most frequently cited in the current literature of the field (p. 171).

That note on Merton's influence brings us again to Stinchcombe's paper and to the ideas, many of them adopted from Merton, that shaped so much work in sociology in the recent past. Stinchcombe thinks that Merton has a theory of social structure and that it deals with the "central intractable problem for sociology," which is "the relation of individuals to the social order" (p. 27). He notes, however, that this "general theory" is "nowhere extracted and systematized" (p. 31). Rather it is implicit in Merton's essays on empirical topics, and Stinchcombe sets out to recover it from those materials. It amounts, he says, to the recognition that "the core process . . . central to social structure is the choice between socially structured alternatives." Again, "the focus of Merton's theory . . . is on variations in the rates of choice by people differently located in the social order" (p. 12).

Before examining Stinchcombe's account of the qualities that made Merton's ideas fruitful, we need to remind ourselves what it is that sociologists hope to accomplish and the nature of Merton's proposals on that subject. The whole point behind a sociology is that people do things corporately as well as individually and that the way in which these joint activities are organized has great consequences. What is it, for example, that makes marriages stable or unstable? Or political systems? What is an effective way to organize a group if it is to foster loving and caring? To mobilize its members? To sustain liberty, innovation, or responsibility? To minimize corruption? What kinds of social order succeed in empowering individuals or in generating high rates of personal futility or disorganization?

The recurrent problem in sociology is to conceive of corporate organization, and to study it, in ways that do not anthropomorphize it and do not reduce it to the behavior of individuals or of human aggregates. When Merton entered American sociology, it had already achieved some impressive results. The difficulty was that many of these emerged more from theories about aggregates and individuals than from theories about corporate activity. (I think, for example, of the studies of the patterning of people and activities in communities and regions, the investigations of the role of innovation and of technological artifacts in social change, and the growing appreciation of the extent to which human nature was both a source and a product of social relations.) The social developments of the 1930's brought renewed interest to questions of the moral integration of large populations, of the methods by which organizations, public and private, can be constructed to cope with the needs of such populations and with problems of order, and of the foundations and fate of democratic societies. In short, they led to a new interest in the nature of corporate action.

Merton looked for essential conceptions and methods in what he considered the few paradigmatic studies of organizations and institutions. These had been conducted by historians, administrators, and others, including some of the fathers of sociology: Marx, for example, or Durkheim or Weber. The first step was to identify in these studies the more general conceptions that made them paradigmatic. The second was to systematize (Merton's word was "codify") those conceptions.

Merton came away from this reconnaissance with, among other things, three ideas and a style of work. All proved attractive to other sociologists. First there was the idea that social relations are systematic in the sense of being patterned and, more importantly, of being bounded (and, like living systems, boundary-maintaining). Second, there was the notion that social relations consist of systems of positions (Merton called them "statuses") in a network of rights and obligations. Sociology, Merton said, is the study of social structure: of people interacting, not as individuals, but as the occupants of statuses. Third, he came to support "functional analysis" as "the most promising" (Merton, *On Theoretical Sociology*, Free Press, 1967, p. 73) orientation to problems of sociological interpretation: "the practice of interpreting data by establishing their consequences for larger structures in which they are implicated" and especially in the study of "vital . . . processes considered in the respects in which they contribute to the maintenance" of social relations (*ibid.*, pp. 75, 100–101). (Examples would include normative procedures for settling disputes, making collective decisions, or allocating costs and benefits among the members of a group.) As for his style of work, Merton began to use these three ideas as guidelines, showing in theoretical essays on empirical topics (essays on bureaucracy, forms of social protest and alienation, the effects of the mass media, and many other subjects) how a functional analysis of social structure brought to light corporate properties of human association.

Why did his efforts have their wide appeal? Certainly because he analyzed corporate phenomena that were also socially important and because his analyses displayed an uncommon subtlety. Stinchcombe thinks that a fact of more importance is that Merton's work embodied and deployed "a general theory of action." That seems improbable. Not only does Merton deny having such a theory, but he and Stinchcombe manage to turn up in Merton's work only a few orienting concepts. Merton himself may be the best interpreter of the appeal of his own work, and he points to three of its properties that many sociologists were to find helpful. (i) In a period in which the core problems of the field were not sufficiently specified to be the subject of sustained empirical investigations, in which there were many concepts but little theory, Merton provided some simple guidelines which, if followed, enabled sociologists to keep organizational phenomena in view—enabled them to do this without anthropomorphics or psychological reductionism and with the prospect of the progressive delineation of general questions. (ii) By placing the choices of individuals in a structural framework, he provided a way to do sociology and still make use of a powerful new research tool, the sample survey, which obtained data from individuals rather than organizations. (iii) In highlighting functional analysis, he provided a rule for work that led investigators to search out the systematics of interacting forces—and his own work exemplified how rich the returns could be.

These strengths also suggest the conditions which, in the 1960's, led many sociologists beyond Merton's perspective: the demand to study organizations and institutions and whole societies as actors on the social scene and to fit the study of persons-in-statuses into that larger context; the discontent with approaches that took the existence of social structure, or

some form of it, for granted rather than making its existence and form the things to be explained. The theoretical equipment that Merton provided had helped sociologists to move forward with their distinctive tasks. The very success of their efforts then became an important force in leading sociologists to new directions in theory and method. And that is what Merton both hoped and forecast.

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Vignettes from an Oral History

Insights on the Child Development Movement in the United States. MILTON J. E. SENN. With commentary by William Kessen and L. J. Borstelmann. Published for the Society for Research in Child Development by University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1975. iv, 108 pp. Paper, $7. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, vol. 40, Nos. 3–4.

The field of child development as a distinctive scientific enterprise appears to have survived many of the stresses of its early days and to have begun taking on the privileges and burdens of maturity. After prolonged struggles with the problems of marginal status, multiple leading figures urging it in different directions, and deficiencies in empirical knowledge and conceptual sophistication, the field now can point to capable and imaginative investigators from a variety of scientific disciplines, established research institutes, more academic departments, rapidly expanding journals, and, in the past decade, an unparalleled surge of interest among talented students. And current demands on child developmentalists, including demands for more assistance in the solution of pressing psychological, biological, and social problems, reflect an assumption that they are capable of providing such help.

Not that the field is free of problems. Support of research on child development—especially federal support—is currently declining; the researchers themselves remain divided on the relative merits of "process" versus "substantive" research and on the importance of immediate social relevance; and communication between child developmentalists, on the one hand, and government, colleagues in parent disciplines, and social action groups concerned with children's rights and welfare, on the other, is less than optimal.

On balance, however, the growth and progress of the field have been impressive. Much has been learned about the development, particularly in infancy and early childhood, of such basic mental functions as perception, cognition, language, memory, and sensory capabilities and about the development of personality and social behavior throughout childhood and adolescence. Of obvious social relevance, we now know far more than in the past about the effects on development of separation from primary caretakers and of inadequate stimulation early in life; about beneficial and destructive child-rearing techniques; about the effects of pre- and postnatal nutritional deficiencies, chromosomal and hormonal abnormalities, and the effects of drugs; about psychological and neurophysiological factors in learning disabilities and their treatment; about sexual development, sex differences, and changing sex roles; about dealing with behavioral problems and psychophysiological disturbances; and about the contributions of poverty, discrimination, disturbed parent-child relationships, and social dislocation to a host of problems ranging from neurotic disorders to drug use and delinquency.

In the light of recent progress, it is easy to forget that the field is only about a half-century old and that the careers of a number of its pioneers have spanned much or all of that period. Fortunately for us, Milton Senn, a pioneer himself and for many years Sterling professor of pediatrics and director of the Child Study Center at Yale, realized that, although a sustained interest in children and their development frequently seems conducive to longevity, time ultimately extracts its toll. In 1963, he began a series of extensive, informal taped interviews with men and women who have been associated in one way or another with the study of child development over the years, obtaining their recollections about the development of the field.

This monograph is a partial distillation of the material obtained. (Complete tapes and transcripts have been deposited in the Child Development Archive of the National Library of Medicine.) As the author himself notes, it is not his intention to present a systematic history of the study of child development in this country, which has been done by others. Instead, he concentrates on three topics, which reflect his own special interests: the reactions of people who have worked in child development to some of the major figures and influences in the field during their careers; the relationship of the study of child development to pediatrics and child psychiatry through the years "as viewed by various scientists in a position to hold opinions worth hearing"; and the relevance of the child development movement to better child-care practices in the United States.

In each of these areas, Senn contributes additional information, a unique perspective, and perhaps most interestingly, a feeling for the personalities and idiosyncrasies of the major figures involved and their interaction (or lack of it): G. Stanley Hall, John Dewey, Caroline Zachry, Lawrence K. Frank, Robert S. Woodworth, John B. Watson, Arnold Gesell, Lewis M. Terman, Freud, Kurt Lewin, Piaget, and many others. Anyone who doubts that history not only makes, but is made by, outstanding men and women should read this monograph.

The role of Lawrence K. Frank in the child development movement provides a dramatic case in point. As an economics student at Columbia in the early 1900's, Frank became concerned with the high rates of infant and maternal mortality prevailing among the poor. Subsequently, as the interests of this charismatic, enthusiastic, and endlessly curious man expanded, he became convinced of the need for a sound program of child rearing for children generally—in the home, in school, and in the agencies of child care. He recognized that if such a program was to be carried out effectively there was a need for more intensive research in child growth and development, as well as improved adult education, especially parent education. In great measure through his efforts, a number of centers for research in child development were set up, including the Institute of Child Welfare at the University of California at Berkeley, founded in 1927. In a tribute to Frank, Henry Murray of Harvard once referred to him as "the procreative Johnny Appleseed of the social sciences, a peripatetic horn of plenty, crammed to his lips with everything that's new, budding, possible, and propitious, . . . who has gone from place to place, from symposium to symposium, radiating waves of atmospheric warmth, cheerfulness, and hope, as he spread the seeds for novel, hybrid, research projects to be nurtured, implemented, and actualized by others."

A striking aspect of these recollections is the essential contribution of many able women in the history of child development studies. It would be difficult to conceive of the development of the field without the work of such figures as Jean Macfarlane, Nancy Bayley, Lois Meek Stoltz, Mary Cover Jones, Myrtle