

Sociological Knowledge

Theoretical knowledge grows when there is a framework that synthesizes existing knowledge, pointing up gaps and problems that can stimulate new research. Thus Linnaeus, Darwin, Mendel, Fisher, Haldane, Wright, Crick, Watson, Venter and others built or modified frameworks for the biological study of human variability. In so doing they developed an appropriate theoretical vocabulary.

Theoretical or Practical?

Within the social sciences, the psychologists were first off the starting blocks when they used Freud's writing to develop the theory of frustration and aggression; they followed this with the study of stereotypes and of social attitudes, intelligence testing and the authoritarian personality. In 1954, Gordon Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice* launched a continuing series of experiments on the effect of personal contact upon intergroup attitudes; then in 1961, a book by Muzafer Sherif reported on his famous Robbers Cave experiments with groups of adolescent boys and formulated his 'realistic conflict theory'. Later came Henri Tajfel's 'social identity theory'. The point to note about these contributions is that they fostered the growth of theoretical knowledge about social interaction in general, including black-white interaction, without being dependent upon any concept of race.

A comparable advance in economics was heralded with the publication in 1957 of Gary Becker's *The Economics of Discrimination*. This used the economists' model of international trade to analyse the economic relations between blacks and whites in the United States. That is not the best kind of model for the analysis of imperfect competition and exposes it to the criticisms that have been outlined in chapter 2

The character of economists' contribution to the study of black-white relations is therefore better illustrated by a study published in 1995 about the relations between people who, in Chicago, sought to buy new automobiles and the men employed to sell them. It showed how, in that sector of the car market, considerations at the interpersonal level could decide aggregate outcomes.¹

Those who conducted the experiments employed assistants, here called testers, who played the purchaser role. Black male testers inquiring about the possible purchase of particular vehicles were quoted prices \$1,100 (or 9 per cent) higher than the prices asked of white testers. If the testers bargained, they could secure price reductions, yet the black-white disparity remained. Black female testers were quoted prices \$280 higher than white male testers and, though the price was reduced in the course of bargaining, it finished \$400 higher than the final offer made to white male testers for the same vehicle. Initial offers to white female testers were \$55 higher than to white males, but the discrepancy in final offers increased to \$130. Several factors apparently contributed to these findings.

An earlier study had found that many would-be purchasers believed that the prices quoted to them were not negotiable. In the Chicago study, 31 per cent of white purchasers and 61 per cent of black respondents believed this. Women were more likely than men to be misinformed about the willingness of dealers to bargain, though the gender discrepancies were not as great as those between blacks and whites. The research workers concluded that the main reason for the price differences was that dealers, wanting to make profits, drew their own conclusions about how much inquirers might be willing to pay (their 'reservation prices'), and, irrespective of whether the dealership owners or their sales representatives were black or white, they thought they needed to concede less to blacks and to females than to white males. Blacks, particularly black males, were disadvantaged by the dealers' images of them as customers, and this explained much of their disparate treatment.

Blacks and women were treated less favourably because sales representatives, wishing to maximize their earnings, took advantage of purchasers who knew less about how the market operated; they concealed the extent to which quoted prices were negotiable. If legal proceedings had been instituted, and charges had been brought against individual sales representatives, they would have been difficult to prove, though it would be possible, by law, to lay an obligation on their em-

ployers to see that all classes of customer were treated equally and then to bring charges of another kind.

In the attempt to account for observations such as these, a social science distinction has been drawn between categorical discrimination and statistical discrimination.² Categorical discrimination is the less favorable treatment of all persons assigned to a particular category. The black and female car purchasers were subject to statistical discrimination, i.e. less favorable treatment arising from a belief that people in a particular category are less likely to possess attributes that the discriminator is seeking. Thus it is generally believed that some employers, when considering whether to give employment to a young woman, will weigh the chances that before long the woman may be applying for pregnancy leave, so that a replacement will have to be found, and that replacement may require job training before she is of value to the employer equal to that of the woman she is replacing. The black and female would-be car purchasers were at a disadvantage because the sales representatives assumed them to be less well-informed about prices. (Racial disadvantage is any form of handicap associated with assignment to a racial category.) Children from minority families could experience statistical discrimination if their teachers believed that their academic potential was lower. In neither case is there any presumption that the belief is without objective justification.

For reasons that are not described in the article, the manufacturers of the automobiles apparently believed that, rather than announcing a fixed price, it was in their interest to allow their products to be marketed by a process of bargaining between sales personnel and potential purchasers. Had they wished to establish fixed prices they would presumably have needed to introduce a procedure for the oversight and sanctioning of sales personnel who, in pursuit of their private interests, broke the rules.

So, in economics, as in psychology, it is possible to analyse the buyer-seller relation in general, including black-white interaction, and to show that the same principles govern white discrimination against blacks, and male discrimination against females, without using any concept of race or gender. These emic constructs have been subsumed in more general conceptual frameworks based on etic constructs. The general frameworks convert categorical distinctions into variables, employing nominalist rather than realist definitions, and they can more easily measure the effects of causal influences. In retrospect, it would appear that sociological knowledge would have

grown more rapidly had there been a stronger drive to construct a comparable generalizing framework for the explanation of what is sociologically distinctive about black-white relations. Later chapters will return to this critical contention.

The Chicago School

Twentieth-century sociologists inherited from their predecessors an emic conception of racial difference as influencing the relations between large populations. Starting in the 1920s, foundations for the sociological study of race relations were laid at the University of Chicago by Robert E. Park. Wanting sociology to become a natural science of human behaviour, Park began by seeking inspiration in the approach of biologists, particularly in their studies of ecology. So, to start with, he looked for causes underlying conscious behaviour. Together with Ernest W. Burgess, Park published *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* in 1921.³ If it was to be recognized as a new subject, sociology had to offer something distinctive. So in this field it had to put forward an explanation challenging the assumption that group differences in behaviour were inherited in much the same way as differences in skin colour. The prevalence of such an assumption was documented in a study of how children reasoned. A researcher in education in the early 1920s gave some school classes the following silent reading test: ‘Aladdin was the son of a poor tailor. He lived in Peking, the capital city of China. He was always lazy and liked to play better than to work. What kind of boy was he: Indian, Negro, Chinese, French or Dutch?’ To his bewilderment, he found that many children in states close to the North-South border were so impressed by the statement that Aladdin was lazy that they answered that he must be Negro.⁴ For the children, the description of Aladdin as Negro was more significant than the statement that he lived in China; they assumed that his laziness was inherited. If sociology had anything to say about ‘racial relations’, it needed to offer better explanations than this.

The early Chicago work started against the background of the city’s race riot of 1919; this had led to the appointment of the Commission on Race Relations. Park wanted sociology to account for processes of communication, conflict, accommodation and interaction in human society. Society was conceived as an organization of persons by means of communication, socialization and collective behaviour; it

was founded upon the ecological community as an aggregate of individuals characterized by symbiosis, the division of labour and competitive cooperation. Such a scheme was not obliged to incorporate the word 'race', but when Park came to apply his ideas, it slipped in unquestioned.

Among the new ideas contributed by Park was the notion of social distance: 'Everyone, it seems, is capable of getting on with everyone else, provided each preserves his proper distance.' On this basis, Emory S. Bogardus devised a social distance scale that could be used to measure majority attitudes towards members of minorities in the United States. In Zambia it was employed to measure intertribal attitudes, enabling the author to publish a table of 'Percentage of Northern Matrilineal Respondents accepting Africans of other groups of tribes in given relationships'.⁵ The scale could have been elaborated to measure the maintenance of many forms of social distance, including those based upon gender, religion, socio-economic status, etc. This way, the study of distance between blacks and whites could have been subsumed within a larger framework had the sociological imagination risen to the opportunities.

Though Park encouraged empirical research, the measurement of behaviour, like the observance of social distance, was not a priority. Over the years, he came to put greater emphasis upon human consciousness as a determinant of behaviour, so that by 1939 he wrote that:

Race relations, as that term is defined in use and wont in the United States, are the relations existing between peoples distinguished by marks of racial descent, particularly when these differences enter into the consciousness of the individuals and groups so distinguished, and by so doing determine in each case the individual's conception of himself as well as his status in the community. ... Thus one may say, without doing injustice to the sense in which the word is ordinarily used, that there are, to be sure, races in Brazil – there are, for example, Europeans and Africans – but not race relations because there is in that country no race consciousness, or almost none. One speaks of race relations when there is a race problem.⁶

The significance of 'marks of racial descent' varied from one social situation, one country, and one time, to another. Their significance for members of minorities differed from their significance for members of majorities. To define a field of study in such terms was therefore a retreat from Park's initial aspiration to contribute to a natural

science of human behaviour. It was an abandonment of any attempt to subsume the study of 'race' under the concepts of a more general explanatory theory and was a capitulation to the demands of ordinary language usage.

Park's reference to a 'race problem' echoed the way that white people used this expression to misrepresent a moral issue. Thus Gunnar Myrdal's book *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* concluded that white Americans faced a choice between the 'American Creed' of equal citizenship and the practices of their daily life.⁷ So the United States faced a white problem. That the book's subtitle should have contradicted its main argument says much about the temper of the times.

How did the consciousness of 'racial descent' differ from the consciousness of assignment to a category based on ethnic origin? Park never properly grasped the sociological problem posed by the distinction between race and ethnic origin, even though his department was also famous for William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki's five-volume account of *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, a study that brought the ethnic dimension to the fore. Park's pupils were the prime contributors to a canon of works that set the parameters of the new field. This featured works by Charles H. Johnson, Franklin Frazier, Everett and Helen Hughes, Herbert Blumer and by some others who stood on the sidelines, including Lloyd Warner, John Dollard, Allison Davis and Oliver Cox. Together, these scholars built a tradition of inquiry and identified intellectual problems for research workers to tackle. One feature of this tradition has been the assumption that sociology should search – in the words of the US constitution – for a 'more perfect union'. It should help promote assimilation.

Whereas Park's frame of reference was usually the United States as a society, and often with processes of social change, W. Lloyd Warner was interested in how a local society could function when it was forcibly divided into black and white sections. He analysed black-white relations in the Deep South in terms of caste and class, a conceptual scheme that treated black-white relations as caste relations modified by distinctions of social class within both sections of the local population.⁸ It contributed a detailed exposition of how social categorization was enforced in daily life.

In the post-World War II era, the main criticism of Park's and Warner's explanations came from Oliver C. Cox, who pioneered a Marxist interpretation. Agreeing with Park that race relations were

the behaviour that developed among peoples who were aware of each other's actual or imputed physical differences, Cox insisted that the sociologist should specify the social circumstances in which that awareness arose. Racial consciousness was not inevitable: 'By race relations we do not mean all social contact between persons of different "races", but only those contacts the social characteristics of which are determined by a consciousness of "racial" differences. Two people of different "race" could have a relation that was not racial.'⁹ Or he might have said that two persons with different physical and cultural characteristics can enter into relations that are not racially categorized.

Cox examined seven modern situations of free relationship between whites and persons of colour in which racial consciousness was generated: the stranger situation; the original contact situation; the slavery situation; the ruling class situation; the bipartite situation; the amalgamative situation; and the nationalistic situation. The United States exemplified the bipartite situation.

Having quoted Park's statement that there was no 'race problem' in the United States before the Civil War, Cox elaborated upon it:

The race problem developed out of the need of the planter class, the ruling class, to keep the freed Negro exploitable. To do this, the ruling class had to do what every ruling class must do; that is develop mass support for its policy. ... Race prejudice was and is the convenient vehicle ... [it is] the socio-attitudinal matrix supporting a calculated and determined effort of a white ruling class to keep some people or peoples of colour and their resources exploitable.¹⁰

He might well have added that the description of this consciousness as 'racial' suited the interest of the ruling class better than a description of it as a consciousness of colour difference.

His was a global vision, dramatized in the statement: 'If we had to put our finger upon the year which marked the beginning of modern race relations we should select 1493–94. This is the time when total disregard for the human rights and physical power of the non-Christian peoples of the world, the colored peoples, was officially assumed by the first two great colonizing European nations.'¹¹ Cox did not note that there here had been an Arab slave trade, from the eighth century onwards, that took into the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent almost as many men and women from East Africa as the Atlantic trade took men and women westwards.¹² Yet had he done so he would have been able to argue that the Arab trade could not have

the same consequences because its control of slave labour power did not become part of a capitalist economic system.

Cox maintained that hostility towards Jews and the oppression of blacks served different social functions, were differently motivated and fitted into different parts of the capitalist system.¹³ Therefore they did not pose the same sociological problems.

In World Perspective

In 1954 a conference on Race Relations in World Perspective was convened in Hawaii.¹⁴ Dedicated to Robert Park, the conference brought together some forty social scientists and administrators selected for their knowledge of 'what happens when people of different racial backgrounds meet'. In retrospect it can be contended that what the sociology of race relations most needed was a conceptual framework in which race was subsumed within a more general theory of the creation and maintenance of social bonds and divisions. That had to remain a long-term aspiration, because, inevitably, the conference papers fell far short of any common sociological perspective.

Though Park had been particularly interested in what might be learned from the study of black-white relations in Brazil, the conference participants had to acknowledge that their 'emerging discipline' was obliged to take its lead from research into the US 'race problem', and that this had been 'largely conceived in terms of the Negro; in Latin America it dealt with the relations between Indians and whites; while in other parts of the world it was concerned with the "native"'. The editor regretted that the comparisons and generalizations that 'constitute the essence of science' have 'as yet only slightly penetrated into studies of race relations'.

The 'emerging discipline' was necessarily conceived in a manner that took US experience as the paradigm example of 'race relations', although this had drawbacks that were underlined by the participant who warned, 'In the study of race relations the student has crossed his pons asinorum when he has learned to define his "races" afresh for each new situation he is called upon to discuss.'¹⁵ (The pons asinorum or 'bridge of asses' invoked by Maurice Freedman is the test of ability designed to assess the competence of beginners.) Freedman was referring to the different definitions employed in the countries of Southeast Asia when they counted the size of their Chinese popula-

tions, but his argument was of much wider application. As emic constructs, the meanings given to 'race' and 'ethnicity' varied from place to place and time to time. This problem was not properly addressed.

One of participants was J. S. Furnival, from 'the Ministry of National Planning, Rangoon, Burma'. He was the author of two books, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy and Colonial Policy and Practice*, in which he had launched a claim that Java and Burma in the years before World War II were examples of a 'plural society', 'a society, that is, comprising two or more elements or social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit'.¹⁶ The 'elements' he had in mind were those classified by the Dutch as Europeans, Foreign Orientals and Natives. His conference paper did not discuss this concept, but since it later became very influential and described a perspective very different from that of Park, it invites comment at this point.

An Australian historian, Charles A. Coppel, later re-examined the evidence for the period and found much that was inconsistent with Furnival's account.¹⁷ At that time one in five of the marriages contracted by European men in Java were with an indigenous or a Chinese wife. Furnival himself was married to a Burmese woman. Those classed as 'European' 'included the Eurasian population as well as Indonesian Christians, and "non-Europeans" could legally become "Europeans" (or be equated with them) in various ways. Illegitimate children of a non-European mother could become European by acknowledgement by the father, and where a European man married a non-European woman, she and her husband acquired European status.' There were many indications of social intercourse between these supposedly separate 'elements'.

The 'highly-aculturated peranakan Chinese of Java' were a living disproof of Furnival's assertion that the Chinese group held 'by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways'. Most of the peranakan were of mixed ancestry, spoke Malay and were unable to read (or even speak) Chinese. Their conversion to Islam had been 'quite widespread'. Later, many became Christians. In the period before 1910 there were some two hundred publications in Malay written by Chinese alone. Coppel therefore concluded that Java was not a 'plural' but a mestizo society, employing an expression used in the Philippines to describe persons of mixed ethnic origin. To classify Java and Burma as 'plural societies' was to overlook the structure of political power and to take insufficient account of a socio-economic

status structure common to societies being drawn into capitalist economic relations.

Many authors (the present author included) were insufficiently critical of the conception of a plural society. Furnival was an economist by training and it might have been better had he written about the plural economy as administered by colonial governments. The word 'society' is an emic construct often used to designate the population of a state; there is no agreed method in sociology for differentiating 'society' from 'state' or for classifying different kinds of society. By representing the society as responsible for intergroup conflict, the conception of a plural society distracted attention from the political responsibility of individuals at the various social levels.

The Hawaii conference volume opened with an essay aspiring to provide 'a necessary framework of basic concepts and hypotheses' prepared by Herbert G. Blumer. He distinguished seven 'major lines of social relations in group life' without referring to any particular countries. Blumer was a leading exponent of the symbolic interactionist perspective that had been pioneered by Park's colleague George Herbert Mead. He began with the declaration that 'the term "race" is fundamentally a biological concept', which suggests that he had not talked much with the biologists at his university. Blumer insisted that, despite any biological ideas, people viewed and acted towards one another on the basis of social conceptions of race, and that these did not coincide with classifications made by physical anthropologists on the basis of biological traits. For this reason, social scientists had shifted to a social conception of race, such that they observed the relations between categories of people and sometimes found it instructive to classify them together as 'racial' even when the people themselves employed ethnic or religious rather than racial categories.

Social Race?

The anthropologist Charles Wagley had led the way in launching a conception of 'social race'. Studying a community in the Amazon basin where there was considerable admixture of European, African and Amerindian inheritance, he found that, in classifying one another, people paid more attention to a person's hair than to any other physical character.¹⁸ There was, apparently, a scale of socio-economic status in which hair was most important attribute. Why then call this 'race'?

Wagley brought with him a scientifically unjustifiable US assumption that classification by 'race' was a universal mode of classification superior to classification by any particular phenotypical character. In referring to a 'social conception of race', Blumer was adopting a similar assumption.

Nor did Blumer show any awareness of Cox's arguments when, having asked, 'How do a given people come to be regarded as a race?' he went on, 'This question has not been studied, as far as I know, chiefly because it has not been posed as a scholarly problem.' He offered some conjectures that might contribute to an answer. Blumer did not acknowledge that whereas members of the general population in most countries used proper names (like Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba in Nigeria) to identify social categories based on ethnic origin, in the United States they used comparable proper names to identify subdivisions of the categories black and white. It was this practice that Warner had followed.

Though, for its time, Blumer's statement was a valuable contribution, it helped popularize the assumption that there can be a social concept of race, and it therefore helped create the paradox that was described in this book's introduction. Blumer failed to mention that use of the word 'race' in the United States had a history, or to ask which set of people were responsible for the usage he described. The dimension of power was neglected.¹⁹

How were these problems reflected in US undergraduate teaching? In 1966 Peter Rose conducted a comprehensive survey. The information collected persuaded him that most courses were ethnocentric, in that they concentrated on United States material and viewed the issues through American eyes. They were 'infused with an aura of scientific certainty as well as an undercurrent of moral indignation' such that tensions were presented as 'blemishes on the fabric of American society which must be understood, then eradicated'. The teachers did not present race relations 'in the context of such basic concepts as "power" or "conflict" or "alienation", but stressed the uniqueness of their concerns and the special nature of [US] racial problems'.²⁰

The political environment was about to change, as the Civil Rights movement in the United States gathered strength, and as in 1968 students in many Western countries challenged the prevailing conceptions of social order. So it is apposite to pause over two student texts published in 1967 in order to review what constituted knowledge about 'race relations' in that year. At the outset, it may be noted that the expression 'race relations' (or 'racial relations') was employed only

reluctantly because the connection between 'race' and 'relations' was questionable. Nevertheless, the expression had come into widespread use and there was no convenient alternative to it.

In the view of one author, there was by this time widespread agreement that the study of race relations brought together three approaches.²¹ First, there was an approach from ideology that used racism as its basic concept. This was defined as the doctrine that a person's behaviour was determined by stable inherited characters deriving from separate racial stocks having distinctive attributes and usually considered to stand to one another in relations of superiority and inferiority. Second, there was an approach from attitude that used prejudice as its basic concept. Its essential features were its emotional character and its rigidity. Third came the approach from social relationships, based upon the concept of discrimination. It was the differential treatment of persons ascribed to particular social categories.

These were nominalist definitions. Racism was identified with typology, the pre-Darwinian doctrine outlined in the introduction, because this was the clearest example of a biologically based doctrine of racial inequality. It distinguished a specific doctrine from others with which it might be confused. Prejudice was defined in such a way that the expression of an attitude could be explained as the outcome of a disposition that could be measured on an objective scale. Acts of discrimination could be explained as the outcome of a choice between the costs and benefits of alternative ways of behaving.

The second author defined racism as 'any set of beliefs that organic, genetically transmitted differences (whether real or imagined) between human groups are intrinsically associated with the presence or absence of certain socially relevant abilities or characteristics, hence that such differences are a legitimate basis of invidious distinctions between groups socially defined as races.'²²

Both books described situations that might be thought to constitute 'race relations.' The first book described seven: peripheral contact, institutionalized contact, acculturation, domination, paternalism, integration and pluralism. The second compared 'paternalistic and competitive types of race relations', identifying similarities and differences between Mexico, Brazil, the United States and South Africa, with particular attention given to the 'dimensions of pluralism'. Both, therefore, focused on the way in which the larger social institutions influenced interpersonal behaviour. Both employed what had been identified, six years earlier, as an 'oversocialized conception of man.'²³

This conception developed a top-down perspective that analysed the pressures on individual behaviour, but paid insufficient attention to bottom-up social processes whereby individuals engage in collective action and change institutional structures.

The difficulty of inter-relating top-down and bottom-up processes has sometimes been called the ‘micro-macro problem’.²⁴ One resolution of this problem, insofar as it arises in interpersonal relations, is to identify the multidimensionality of those relations. To elaborate: relations between A and B can be conducted on the basis of many relationships. They can be relationships of gender, age, religion, socio-economic class, language and so on. Such distinctions may be used to create categories (e.g. whether old enough to qualify for a licence to drive a car) or be variables. They may interact, as in the way that a perception of a class difference may be modified by a perception of a person’s age. Much may depend upon the circumstances that may cause a party to become aware of a social difference as relevant to the business at hand. The social significance of a distinction will in practice be much more differentiated than the kinds of category employed in a research questionnaire.

The significance attributed to a difference in ethnic origin will be loaded by the persons’ previous experiences and by the opinions of his or her peers. For some persons, a sentiment of solidarity with those who live in the same local community may include a feeling that this community has precedence over other communities. For example, studies conducted in African and Asian countries have reported that groups distinguished by ethnic origin may believe that they are owners of the local territory, and therefore have prior claims.²⁵ In Europe, there are groups based on ethnic origin who believe that they constitute the *staatsvolk*, the majority people, whose customs and expectations have established norms with which immigrant minorities should conform. In the United States, descendants of those whites who had settled before the mid-nineteenth century sometimes expressed sentiments of this kind, and Native Americans could make a similar claim, but, basically, the United States was an immigrant society and the territorial dimension to social claims was weak.²⁶

The methodological principle is therefore that all macro distinctions will be present in micro relations, even if some of them are of little practical significance and may be difficult to locate.

A reference to a passage in a published book usually counts as evidence of what constituted knowledge at the time, but there are general understandings among those who work in a field that may not find a

way into academic publications. Thus it can be suggested that, by the late 1960s, many sociologists would have agreed that when two persons met they would have seen each other's physical appearance, or phenotype, but not their 'race'. Physical characteristics stimulated a first-order abstraction; to infer from them that the other person belonged in a racial category was to make a second-order abstraction. It was this second abstraction that was conditioned by the social environment.

This 'social conception of race' was a forerunner to the description of race as a social construct in the 2002 ASA statement.²⁷ Many authors have remarked that 'race' is important not in itself but because it is associated with social differences of major significance. Thus the present author, in his 1967 book, preferred to argue that race (or phenotypical appearance) served as a role sign, an indicator of expected behaviour.

This argument could have been better related to the analysis of social interaction that had been outlined in an account of 'Social Behaviour as Exchange' by George Homans.²⁸ The approach from exchange set out to uncover a transactional basis to interpersonal relations; it maintained that, consciously or not, individuals acted so as to secure maximum net advantage. The costs and benefits to them might be either material (as in cash payments) or psychological (as in emotional satisfaction gained by the fulfilment of a duty as opposed to the cost implicit in a feeling of guilt). A person might recognize a norm, but observe it in practice only so far as the anticipated benefits of observance exceeded the costs.²⁹ When a research problem is formulated in terms like these it is easier to test a hypothesis and to reach an explanation. However, this perspective has not so far been much used in sociological studies of racial and ethnic relations.

This chapter has discussed the principal ways in which the first generation of sociologists specializing in the study of racial relations worked to build a body of theoretical knowledge. That was their mission as sociologists, even if at times they joined in the search for practical knowledge. Some may wonder whether the great increase in practical knowledge had been matched by a comparable increase in theoretical knowledge. Such a question permits no simple answer because the two kinds of knowledge are not commensurable.

Notes

1. Ian Ayres and Peter Siegelman, 'Race and Gender Discrimination in Bargaining for a New Car', *The American Economic Review* 1995 85(3): 304–321.

2. Michael Banton, 'Categorical and Statistical Discrimination', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1983 6: 269–283.
3. Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921). The statement that Park 'conceived of sociology as a natural science of human behaviour' is taken from Burgess's article on Park in the 1970 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The contributions of the Chicago school have been discussed by many commentators. One recent critic is Stephen Steinberg, *Race Relations: A Critique* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007). Like many others, Steinberg is critical of the very notion of 'race relations'. Insofar as it identifies a field of study, Steinberg believes that its mission is to accumulate practical knowledge and to present it in ways that will maximize the opportunities for applying it to problems in public policy.
4. Bruno Lasker, *Race Attitudes in Children* (New York: Henry Holt, 1929), 237.
5. See Michael Banton, *Race Relations* (London: Tavistock, 1967), 315–333. For the psychological research, see Harry C. Triandis, Earl Davis and Shin-ichi Tazekawa, 'Some Determinants of Social Distance among American, German, and Japanese Students', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 1965 2(4): 540–551. For an example of recent research, see Willem Huijnk, Maykel Verkuytem and Marcel Coenders, 'Family relations and the attitude towards ethnic minorities as close kin by marriage', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2013 36(11): 1890–1990.
6. Robert Ezra Park, *Race and Culture* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1950), 81–82.
7. Gunnar Myrdal et al., *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1944).
8. W. Lloyd Warner, 'American Caste and Class', *American Journal of Sociology* 1936 (XLII) 234–237): 225. Warner's use of caste in the Mississippi situation is sometimes taken as drawing a parallel with Hindu caste, but it should be noted that the word 'caste' was sometimes used in the South in the nineteenth century to identify group boundaries.
9. Oliver C. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race: A Study in Social Dynamics* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1948), 320, 475.
10. *Ibid.*, 353–376.
11. *Ibid.*, 475.
12. Ronald Segal, *Islam's Black Slaves* (London: Atlantic Books, 2002).
13. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race*, 393.
14. Andrew W. Lind (ed.), *Race Relations in World Perspective: Papers read at the Conference on Race Relations in World Perspective*, Honolulu, 1954 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1955). An earlier book that was particularly important in calling attention to the different outlook in most of the countries of Latin America was Frank Tannenbaum's historical study, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Knopf, 1946).
15. Maurice Freedman, 'The Chinese in Southeast Asia', in Lind (ed.), *Race Relations in World Perspective*, 388–411, at 388. For the way in which 'race' was used in the census of Malaya, see *ibid.*, 59–60.
16. John S. Furnival, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 446; *Colonial Policy and Practice: A*

- Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).
17. Charles A. Coppel, 'Revisiting Furnival's "plural society"', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1997 20(3): 562–579. References to pages 567 & 575.
 18. Charles Wagley, *Race and Class in Rural Brazil* (Paris: UNESCO, 1952), 122.
 19. Herbert Blumer, 'Reflections on the Theory of Race Relations', in Lind (ed.), *Race Relations in World Perspective*, 3–21.
 20. Peter Rose, *The Subject is Race: Traditional Ideologies and the Teaching of Race Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 68, 153–154.
 21. Michael Banton, *Race Relations* (London: Tavistock, 1967), 7–8. For criticism, see Julian Pitt-Rivers, 'Race Relations as a Science: A Review of Michael Banton's *Race Relations*', *Race* 1970 11(3): 335–342, and the assessments of eleven reviewers in *Current Anthropology* 1969 10(2–3): 202–210. For self-criticism, see 'Finding, and Correcting, My Mistakes', *Sociology* 2005 29(3): 463–479.
 22. Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Wiley, 1967).
 23. Dennis H. Wrong, 'The Oversocialised Conception of Man in Modern Sociology', *American Sociological Review* 1961 26(2): 183–193.
 24. Theories in sociology, as in economics, have to resolve what is sometimes called the 'micro-macro problem', accounting for the interaction of top-down and bottom-up processes. One notable success was Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner and Mary Gardner, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941). At the same time, Max Gluckman also demonstrated how the macro could be seen at work on the micro plane; see *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand*, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper 28 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), reprinting an article in *Bantu Studies* 1940 14: 1–30, 147–174. The relative merits of the top-down and bottom-up perspectives was one of the components of the famous *Methodenstreit* that began in 1883 when Carl Menger, the founder of the Austrian school of economics, attacked the approach of the German historical school of economics represented by Gustav von Schmoller.
 25. E.g. Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000 [1985]), 138, 202, 209–211.
 26. The expression *Staatsvolk* featured (in a non-ethnic sense) in Georg Jellinek, *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, 3rd. edition (Berlin: Springer, 1921 [1900]).
 27. Over-use of the notion of a social construct has been criticized: Ian Hacking, *The Social Construct of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
 28. George Homans, 'Social Behavior as Exchange', *American Journal of Sociology* 1958 63: 597–606.
 29. This approach has sometimes been called rational choice theory, a name that has misled some commentators. It is a theory of all kinds of action, not only those that may be accounted rational; it simply tries to ascertain the costs of suboptimal decisions. It has to consider what alternative courses of action are available to an actor.