

and of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial into funding university social science had a transforming effect, not least because the officials of such foundations were themselves either trained in social science or had themselves been social scientists. James Angell at the Carnegie Corporation had been a professor of psychology at the University of Chicago, and Beardsley Ruml at the Rockefeller Memorial had a Chicago Ph.D. in psychology and had worked as an applied psychologist at Carnegie University and in the War Department before moving to New York.⁵²

These foundations, unlike Russell Sage, were much more oriented to scientific study of society grounded in the basic social sciences. In the case of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, the attacks on ill-judged Rockefeller Foundation sponsorship of industrial research in 1915 had made the trustees extremely wary of any kind of normative tinge to the research it supported, and one of Ruml's early measures was to draw up a careful definition of the scope of the Memorial's interests that specifically excluded support for projects which embraced reform as an aim. The Memorial and on a lesser scale the Carnegie Corporation made possible many of the developments of empirical social science that took place in the 1920s and 1930s, although to a large extent they reflected trends already occurring in university social science. There was an elective affinity between the two, which were mutually supportive, rather than a change engineered from without by the foundations.

Conclusion

A generation beyond 1906, social investigation by the 1930s had become very different from what it was in the Pittsburgh Survey. It was about to change still further with the rise of the modern social survey, based upon probability sampling, the digging tool not only of the academic sociologist and political scientist but also of the pollster and the market researcher from the 1930s on. These professionals, rather than Progressive reformers of the turn of the century, would set the tone for the second half of the twentieth century. This is not to say that Carroll Wright, Florence Kelley, or W. E. B. Du Bois were not professionals; they were, but the movement out of which the Pittsburgh Survey flowed was not rooted in professionalism. It was rooted in a tradition of American radicalism, labor reform, and a belief in social justice in a society in which there were relatively few restraints on employers, owners of capital, and others who determined people's life chances.

3

The Pittsburgh Survey and the Survey Movement *An Episode in the History of Expertise*

STEPHEN TURNER

THE PITTSBURGH SURVEY WAS PART OF THE survey movement. The movement was characterized in three key documents of self-interpretation: the first an article by Paul U. Kellogg, Shelby Harrison, and George Palmer in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* in 1912, the second a paper by Kellogg and Neva Deardorff presented to an international social work convention in 1928, and the third Harrison's introductory essay to the catalogue of surveys constructed by Eaton in 1930. Ordinarily, such documents provide the beginning of historical analysis and are critically revised by later historians. However, there has been relatively little written about the surveys and the survey movement since it expired (the exception is the volume edited by Bulmer, Bales, and Sklar). So these texts give shape to a kind of dim memory of a movement to promote social reform through social research, which, for mysterious reasons, disappeared.¹

The Pittsburgh Survey is recalled by social scientists and historians in the light of this memory. Yet each document of self-interpretation on which this historical memory is based was a deeply polemical construction. This chapter reconsiders the viewpoint and aims of the surveyors themselves by locating the Pittsburgh Survey in a history of expertise. The Pittsburgh Survey had a special place in the self-conception of the leaders of the survey movement, and this is reflected in these texts. It seemed to the surveyors to be the harbinger

of a major new form of social change in which a new kind of expert would play a central role. In fact, the Pittsburgh Survey was the high water mark of the movement.

Paul Kellogg was part of a circle of reformers and philanthropists associated with the New York City Charity Organization Society (COS). One particular philanthropic organization closely associated with the New York COS, the Russell Sage Foundation (RSF), supplied the funding, some of the personnel, and the guiding ideas of the Pittsburgh Survey. This New York-based foundation was not the only organization active in reform research. The New York Bureau of Municipal Research, which was copied in other cities such as Philadelphia, was an especially successful institution. The bureaus made some parallel claims to expertise. But they supported different reforms (for the most part, reforms in financial controls and municipal management) and were supported by different segments of the community and various philanthropists, notably Carnegie and Rockefeller.² Eventually, through the efforts of the Rockefeller Foundation in the thirties, public administration became a profession, and the reforms originally proposed by the bureaus of municipal research were carried out by municipal administrators who were, increasingly, trained professionals. Each model of research-based reform had its own successes and failures and its own historical trajectory. This chapter tells a parallel story with a different ending. The survey movement model made perhaps the most ambitious claims to expertise. But social work as conceived by Kellogg was supplanted by a different model, a model of individual treatment, and it became a profession on this basis—a change greatly aided, incidentally, by the Rockefeller philanthropies.³ The conclusion will explain why the survey movement took this trajectory.

What Did *Survey* Mean?

Surveys, in some sense of the word, had long been a method of producing change. In reform contexts, the term sometimes meant no more than a systematic cataloging of conditions. By 1905 canvassing had become a widespread activity of reform organizations. When Paul Kellogg wrote in 1912 that he had discerned a great movement in the direction of surveys like the Pittsburgh project, he had a particular idea of what the Pittsburgh Survey represented and exemplified. What did he have in mind? The specific examples he listed in "The Spread of the Survey Idea" included "surveys" of conditions in Buffalo's Polish section, in Newark, in Sag Harbor, and in Kentucky; Presbyterian

church surveys in rural Illinois, Missouri, and Pennsylvania; and federal immigration studies of localities, such as mill and mining towns.⁴

Why did Kellogg include these surveys? What did he exclude? He specifically distinguishes these "surveys" from several of the most famous reform-oriented surveys of the era, such as Rowntree's survey of York and *The Hull House Maps and Papers*. These surveys, he wrote, share *some* elements of the survey idea but are "not identified with the more or less crystallized movement which to-day engages our attention."⁵

The first entry on the Kellogg's "A" list, the survey of Kentucky conducted by the ladies' clubs, is revealing. In Kellogg's own view, this report fits his criteria more closely than Rowntree's studies. This "survey" seems to have been an example of a local organization seeking expert help from outside the community and paying for it out of its own resources. But it was not a survey in the sense that it collected data and analyzed it. This suggests that what Kellogg had in mind by the "survey idea" had little to do with the methodology of data collection and analysis and much to do with the question of who sponsored the survey and whether the sponsor employed and recognized a particular kind of social work expertise. Indeed, Kellogg eagerly pointed out communities that commissioned surveys from their own funds, involved leading citizens of the community, and used volunteer help from the community, led by professional "surveyors."⁶

Social Work Expertise: The Engineering Model

The professional surveyors Kellogg had in mind were expert social workers.⁷ But he had a special notion of social work and a distinct idea about social work expertise. Whereas *social work* was often applied indiscriminately to charity and reform activities, such as Social Gospel-oriented religious work, and implied no special training, Kellogg used the term to mean comprehensive community reform and conceived of the social worker as an engineer.⁸ His justification was that the cities he studied were *made* environments that could be remade. The fact that no single person had made these environments, built the buildings, designed the streets, constructed the factories, organized the social and charitable institutions, or invented the form of municipal government did not make these social institutions any less "made." The task of the social worker as engineer was to identify the problems in the community machinery and recommend steps to take to fix or improve it. Social research was an investigation of the structural elements of the community.

The concept of structural elements suggests, in addition to the analogy it draws between the social worker and the engineer, a theory of society—a theory of its structure and its elements. But what was the theory that informed the social engineer's thinking? There was no explicit theory. The topics of the Pittsburgh Survey largely reproduced the organizational division of labor at the Russell Sage Foundation, which itself reproduced, with some omissions, the standard list of reform movements and agenda. The RSF was organized around particular reform topics, such as playgrounds, child hygiene, and women's work. It relied on highly specialized experts in these areas with strong connections to activists. This model was a quite effective action tool. The individuals who headed Russell Sage departments, such as Mary Van Kleeck, who headed the Committee on Women's Work, Mary Richmond, who headed the Charity Organizations Department, Leonard Ayres, the education specialist, and other less well-known figures such as Clarence Perry, who became the head of the Playgrounds Department, helped to professionalize workers in their fields.⁹ All of these topics had a place in the Pittsburgh Survey; each had a long history of reform activism.

But the idea of "structural elements" suggests the one innovative idea the Pittsburgh Survey embodied: putting reform experts together with community activists to study one particular locality "comprehensively." The major result of their efforts at bringing together experts on various subjects, according to Kellogg and Deardorff's 1928 retrospective, was that they could now see the impact of one problem on many facets of community life.

The long neglected hazard of work accidents was found at the first staff conferences ramifying in so many directions that practically every member was faced with one phase or another of it. It bore upon the relief funds of the labor unions, the multitudinous benefits societies of the immigrant races, and the relief plans of corporations; it had led to the organization of employers' liability associations and employees' liability associations; it was bringing pensioners to the charitable societies and inmates to the children's institutions; it was a dominating factor in the local system of state subsidies to charitable institutions; it was the concern of the coroner's office, the office of foreign consuls and the health bureau, where it was one of the two causes which gave Pittsburgh its high general death rate; it had to do in a minute degree with the discipline, intelligence, grit, and moral backbone of the working force in the mills; in the courts it harked back to the fundamental issues of public policy and freedom of contract; and in its effect on income on the standard of living of workingmen's families it set its stamp on the next generation.¹⁰

This discovery was retrospectively presented by Kellogg as the major fruit of the distinctive approach of the survey.¹¹ It is perhaps no surprise that he was attracted to the model of the social worker as an engineer fitting together the parts of a large problem.

As Kellogg conceived it, the basic task of the survey was to consult with local experts, such as directors of orphanages and other eleemosynary institutions, notables of the community who were involved in its philanthropic, religious, and charitable institutions as well as, to a more modest extent, owners of business and property. The idea was that these individuals, especially the leading professionals of the community, such as doctors and educators, were experts in their own domain and as such were already aware of certain community problems. What these individuals were likely to be less aware of, and in any case could not deal with, were problems that arose outside their own special domains and over which they had no practical control. Thus, a physician concerned with the high rate of tuberculosis in a community might be aware of environmental or workplace causes but would be unable to prevent these health hazards. Similarly, if industrial accidents caused impoverishment in a community, the director of the poorhouse or other charitable institutions could not improve working conditions in dangerous industries.

The Pittsburgh Survey team viewed the social worker as facilitating and directing community leaders in reaching a consensus on reforms. Commitment was crucial to the whole survey idea. The survey needed local initiative and sponsorship because local notables were one of the target audiences for the survey's results. According to the model Kellogg elaborated, the circle of participants was to expand and various community leaders would air their views before the surveyors. Naturally, this stage of the survey required a certain delicacy. But it assured that the results of the survey would not simply be dismissed.

Publicity and Commitment

Consensus building involved more than enlisting local leaders. The Pittsburgh Survey, like the similar Springfield Survey later directed by Harrison (the only survey truly comparable to the Pittsburgh Survey in scope, but done in a middle-sized town), devoted considerable effort to publicizing the survey results to a wide public. For example, the surveys built models and held exhibits. The official title of the Russell Sage Foundation section devoted to surveys, the Surveys and Exhibit Unit, reflected the centrality of public presentation to this conception of a survey.

The public exhibit of the Pittsburgh Survey findings was carefully constructed and considered a triumph by the surveyors. Frank E. Wing, an associate director of the Survey and director of exhibits, described it: "One startling and convincing feature of the Pittsburgh Civic exhibit in November, 1908, . . . [was] a frieze of small silhouettes three inches apart stretching in line around both ends and one side of the large hall in the Carnegie Institute in which the exhibit of the Pittsburgh Survey was installed."¹² The silhouettes, a sign explained, represented the death toll from typhoid fever in the previous year. The exhibit was well attended, and the lessons learned were used in the Springfield Survey, which went even farther in attempting to rouse civic consciousness by participatory publicity devices.

The Fate of the Survey as a Model

What was the fate of this ideal? The short answer to this question is simple. It was a dead end. Kellogg's "survey idea" did not spread; although non-governmental surveys did proliferate, few resembled the Pittsburgh Survey. But in the late twenties, Shelby Harrison, in his preface to Eaton's bibliography, attempted to salvage the ideal of the Pittsburgh Survey and to substantiate the historical claim that there was a survey movement. He did this by reinterpreting the proliferation of surveys. Harrison identifies three more or less paradigmatic surveys: the Pittsburgh Survey, the Springfield Survey, and the Syracuse Survey. Harrison uses this list as proof of the existence of a survey movement with the Pittsburgh-style survey at its core. But Eaton's bibliography and Kellogg's account of the survey idea seem to conflict. Harrison tried to resolve this glaring conflict in his introduction. He explained,

The first surveys covered a broad range of subjects; they were general studies of entire communities, these communities ranging in size and form all the way from the local neighborhood or parish, city ward, town, and city up to counties and states. . . . [But soon] a tendency set in . . . toward employing the survey to appraise one major phase of community life, such as health and sanitation, public education, housing, recreation, employment and industrial relations, child welfare, dependency and charitable effort to reduce or relieve it, and delinquency and correction.¹³

This is an accurate description of what occurred. The survey movement did not develop in the direction favored by Harrison and predicted by Kellogg. The Pittsburgh and Springfield surveys date from the earlier part of the

period covered by the bibliography. The later surveys in the bibliography were specialized. The trend toward specialization without synthesis through the efforts of the social work "engineer" was exactly the opposite of what Kellogg had envisioned. What went wrong?

Harrison tried to put the best face on this outcome. If we start with an engineering conception of social work and the notion that the various institutions in a community fit together in a way that could be "engineered," we can think of the kinds of surveys involving these specialized institutions, such as school surveys, or church surveys, or sanitation surveys, or health surveys, as elements of the social survey conception in its full form. So the Eaton bibliography included many studies that were not directly connected to social work at all, such as research motivated by the efficiency movement in primary and secondary education.

The idea that such subjects as school efficiency, sometimes involving such picayune matters as the proper time to cut and water grass at schools and maintenance schedules for school buildings, were part of social work is strange only if one has in mind present notions of social work. For Kellogg and Harrison, the engineer was concerned with all parts of the machine. The problem for Kellogg and Harrison was that the very idea that justified all these concerns as part of the same movement, the engineering conception, was itself a failure.

To put it a little differently, the issue is this: for Kellogg and Harrison, the true social survey was distinguished by the central place it accorded to social work "engineering." This notion had lost favor by the time the Eaton bibliography was compiled. The bibliography is, in effect, an apologia, written after the survey idea had expired. But Harrison reports only a "trend." Why did the survey model fail to develop as Kellogg had originally hoped?

Social Workers as Experts

Kellogg's model makes the social worker "engineer" central. He presents the social worker as an expert with the kind of diagnostic powers that a physician acquires through the study of other cases and applies to each new case. As he says in "The Spread of the Survey Idea," "The survey takes from the physician his art of applying to the problems at hand standards and experience worked out elsewhere."¹⁴ The expertise is by its very nature external to local situations—that is to say, not normally possessed by persons within a given community and not even obtainable by analyzing local conditions without

help from the outside expert. But it is quite different from the expertise claimed by the scientist, and the investigations Kellogg envisioned had a quite different starting point from that of "pure science."

"To illustrate," Kellogg wrote, "if your pure scientist were studying the housing situation in a given town, he would start out perhaps without any hypotheses, tabulate every salient fact as to every house, cast up long columns of figures, and make careful deductions, which might and might not be worth the paper they were written on." This was obviously not the procedure he recommended. He proposed research that applied the standards worked out elsewhere. "Your housing reformer and your surveyor ought to know at the start what good ventilation is, and what cellar dwellings are. These things have been studied elsewhere, just as the medical profession has been studying hearts and lungs until they know the signals which tell whether a man's organs are working right or not, and what to look for in making a diagnosis."¹⁵

Part of the expertise of the social worker, then, is the possession of standards. Over and over again in the field of social concern, says Kellogg, the right standards conflict with popular taste and the desires of commerce. In other domains, conflicts between correct standards and popular taste or commerce occur as well. The failure to resolve them in favor of standards known to experts, results in such events as the *Titanic* disaster. "Compare the commercial demand for speed and capacity in ocean liners with the commercial demand for butter fat. Compare the blind popular demand for luxuries in cabins with the blind popular demand for a thick collar of cream. Life boats are like clean milk." In the case of the *Titanic*, the experts knew, "but their judgments have fallen on deaf ears." After the disaster, "the average man at last sees; and (in high rage) he is calling for a change. Those responsible for ocean vessels are charged to make safety keep pace with the great structural changes in the shipping industry; to apply science to human well-being, as well as to speed."¹⁶ Just as the naval expert possessed expert knowledge of the need for lifeboats on the *Titanic*, the social worker, Kellogg thought, possesses expert knowledge of human needs.

Kellogg had no doubts about the ability of social work experts to establish standards, but he says nothing about how the standards are to be established and what "science" should be "applied" to social problems. He is more concerned with publicity, with the conditions under which the public becomes aware of the need to impose standards.

In many of these deep-seated social needs, apparently some great disaster has to overtake us, and smite us, before as a people we are aroused to them, and half-blindly often

wholly unthinking of our own responsibility, demand immediate reform. This is so whether it is a dam which gives way like Austin; or a theater which burns like the Iroquois; or a blazing schoolhouse full of children like that at Cleveland; or a loft building like the Triangle.¹⁷

The survey commended itself as a method of publicity that emblazons these needs upon the public consciousness *without* the occurrence of a catastrophe. The journalistic means of bringing these real needs to human terms was the case study method. As Harrison later wrote, "The survey takes from the charity organization movement its case-work method of bringing problems down to human terms; by figures, for example, of the household cost of sickness—not in sweeping generalizations but in what Mr. Woods called "piled-up actualities." The aim is to enable people to act without a catastrophe,

to visualize needs which are not so spectacular but are no less real . . . to bring them to human terms, to put the operations of the government, of social institutions and of industrial establishments to the test of individual lives, to bring the knowledge and inventions of scientists and experts home to the common imagination, and to gain for their proposals the dynamic backing of a convinced democracy.¹⁸

The survey, Kellogg believed in 1912, need not do this unaided. "Two strong movements—one towards greater efficiency; the other towards greater democracy" had, he believed, created the conditions in which experts and an aroused public could work together for reform.

The first is reflected nationally by the President's Commission on Efficiency and Economy; the second finds expression in the Western Insurgent Movement which through the initiative, referendum and recall, seeks to bring the legislative "say" back to the people. If we were to personify the first movement, it would be to give it the character of the expert; the second, the character of the average citizen. And in the general trend, we have the expert and the average man coming together; and jointly challenging the frontage which existing institutions, professions and organized forces bear toward the needs of the time.¹⁹

The social worker is the expert in the social realm, an expert on human needs and the engineering of community institutions to bring about the satisfaction of basic human needs. The survey is a particularly powerful means of creating a bond between the expert and the public. "The public interest it cre-

ates comes harder but has better staying qualities. In so far as it must lay a framework for setting forth the wide range of needs and opportunities which fall within its field, so it has inherent the prospect of a more sustained and organic accomplishment." Kellogg thus supposed that the "common man" could be brought around to accepting the expert ministrations of the social worker by the techniques of publicity and persuasion exhibited in the Pittsburgh Survey. This enabled him to believe that the survey was itself a kind of democratic force, and he envisioned the average citizen and the expert "coming together" and "jointly challenging the frontage which existing institutions, professions, and organized forces bear toward the needs of the time."²⁰

The Aftermath

This optimistic vision, needless to say, was never realized. The "pure scientist," upon whom Kellogg heaped such scorn in 1912, became in the twenties the beneficiary of massive support by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRM). Research of the sort that Kellogg advocated, involving the "expert" evaluative assessments of "social workers," disappeared entirely. Research on questions of social policy and on the effectiveness of social programs came to more closely resemble the research done by "pure scientists." Kellogg was bitterly jealous of the beneficiaries of this change in climate and protested vigorously against it. He ascribed it to the foundations' fear of being accused of "the heinous crime of 'propaganda.'"²¹ There was some truth in this accusation: the foundations were subject to congressional investigations that threatened the revocation of their tax-exempt status and were cautious about such accusations. The Rockefeller philanthropists were especially sensitive, after a formative incident in which it appeared that philanthropic funding was used to support propaganda that benefited the interests of Rockefeller businesses—a serious misuse of the charitable exemption. After this episode, a number of changes were made to let "the objectivity of research be established beyond cavil."²² Kellogg complained that the effect of this effort was "to declass as recipients for grants some types of organizations that have a penchant for bringing things about," resulting in "affluent research bodies and poverty stricken agencies which are endeavoring to effect results."²³

But this was an oversimplification. When the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial decided to fund the social sciences in 1923, the aim was just as "practical" as the smaller Russell Sage Foundation's. But its young director, Beardsley Ruml, was deeply skeptical about the knowledge base for social action. He wrote in 1922, "All who work toward the general end of social wel-

fare are embarrassed by the lack of that knowledge which the social sciences must provide. It is as though engineers were at work without an adequate development of physics and chemistry, or as though physicians were practicing in the absence of the medical sciences." Kellogg, with his rhetoric about engineering and medical practice, embodied precisely the kind of embarrassment Ruml had in mind.²⁴

Ruml was not alone. The validity of the kind of approach to social problems that the Russell Sage Foundation had adopted was being called into question, even within the RSF, and the question of the role and purpose of research was a source of ongoing friction. Robert W. DeForest, one of the founding fathers of the Russell Sage Foundation and a close personal friend of Olivia Sage, the donor, wrote in 1920 to the director, John Glenn, "Any expenditure for research or investigations should clearly be directed toward some practical end to be obtained as a result of such expenditures; . . . where we already know enough for purposes of practical action I think further knowledge is unnecessary." Glenn, himself an activist, replied by saying, "I agree that research should be 'directed toward some practical end.' There is, however, a question as to what ends are practical." Most of the research done by action agencies was not motivated by an interest in such questions. Mary E. Richmond, head of Russell Sage's Charity Organizations Department, in an internal memo about the research uses of Charity Organization Society data, observed in 1915, "The social reformers wanted us to begin to gather the data they needed in order to interest people in measures already decided upon." The research "was prompted not so much by a spirit of discovery as by a desire to gather more publicity material." Propaganda of exactly this kind, of course, was at the heart of Kellogg's strategy in Pittsburgh, a strategy continued and refined by Harrison in Springfield.²⁵

Kellogg, like DeForest, believed that enough was known to proceed with "getting things done." He defended to the last the expansive claims for the expertise of social workers that he had made in 1912. The notion came, however, to an ignominious end in a "research" effort that attempted to assess the effects of Prohibition. In the 1928 paper written with Neva Deardorff, he complained that though "our Federal prohibition amendment was the most sweeping piece of social legislation that ever attempted to regulate the manners and morals of a whole people. . . . It has gone for ten years without any comprehensive inquiry." This, for him, was an example of the failure of the "scientific approach" and an opportunity to demonstrate the notion of social work expertise. The Social Science Research Council, funded by the Rockefeller philanthropies to support social science, had a committee on the subject

that issued a report showing the lack of data and the difficulties of gauging results. But the settlement houses, "with their slender resources but essential dynamic, . . . had the initiative to gather testimony as to the social consequences of our half-enforced prohibition."²⁶ The report, *Does Prohibition Work?* written by Martha Bensley Bruère (under the auspices of a committee that included Kellogg himself and various important settlement house heads, such as Jane Addams) is even more explicit than Kellogg in its hostility to social science as supported by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial.²⁷

The foreword, written by Lillian Wald of the Henry Street Settlement in New York, explicitly dissociated the book from attempts "to prove or disprove the value of prohibition by statistics," which had "been extensively undertaken by both sides of the controversy and with criticism equally destructive to both." Bruère made a similar comment: "I hope this material will be used for some good purpose and not just more statistics."²⁸ Instead, the book collected the impressions of 193 settlement house workers and social workers all over the country. A questionnaire was given out, with the following instructions:

This questionnaire does not call for "yes" or "no" answers, but for detailed, descriptive information as accurate as you can make it and graphic enough to make the reader understand the kind of people you are talking about and the conditions under which they live. Whenever possible make your answers the records of individual experiences and realistic pictures of family life as it has been affected by drink—or the lack of it—since the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment.²⁹

The compilation was thus, according to Bruère, "not a statistical report but an authentic document of professional opinion couched in the language in which it came to me. Not one statement in it but was made by some social expert who was asked to contribute to the study; not one fact that we do not believe we have verified; not one quotation that is not from a signed report now on file in the office." When her respondents offered statistics, she said, "I have covertly discouraged them—have indeed, opened the way to their redoing their statistical material back into the human elements it is composed of."³⁰

The study concluded "that all of the things hoped for by the advocates of prohibition are being realized in some places and that even where the law is least observed, some of them have come true."³¹ This expert judgment was at variance with that of the electorate, which shortly after repealed the Eighteenth Amendment. It was also at variance with the emerging ideas of "professionalizing" social workers. Kellogg and his peers thought that there are various "root causes" for social problems that could be identified and eliminated.

The causes were individual causes, like drink or workplace accidents, that could be eliminated by regulation or by the provision of the appropriate goods and social services. The intellectual model for this reasoning was built into the forms that COS workers used to deal with cases. The COS form listed standard reasons for family problems, such as drink. This tempted social workers to think that abolishing drink would abolish the problems that alcohol "caused." This assumption had been under assault for two decades by the time this book was written. With the rise of professional social work, it became passé.

Mary E. Richmond, in an internal memo in 1916, went to the heart of the problem with this reasoning, which is of course central to the Pittsburgh Survey, in a discussion of the notion of "the causes of poverty." In the case of a certain drunkard under treatment, she asks,

Is drink the cause of poverty here, or is it merely the outcropping of certain personal and environmental characteristics? I think the latter, but at one stage or another, this man's poverty and that of his family might have figured in statistics as "caused" by any one of half a dozen favorite labels, whereas all we could truthfully say was that, at successive stages of treatment, these and these and these conditions appeared along with poverty in his family and helped to complicate its treatment.³²

Intellectual considerations like these would not alone have discredited the "root causes" model. But Richmond's point about the causes of poverty fit with the practical experience of case workers and was a better basis for the training of case workers. Individual therapy, rather than community reform, became the dominant model in social work as it was "professionalized" in the twenties. Professionalization, tied to therapeutic expertise, solved a problem that Kellogg's notion of the social worker as community engineer could not solve. For Kellogg's model of the survey as a vehicle for expert-directed reform to work, it was necessary for the public to accept "social work" expertise on a retail basis, so to speak, issue by issue, rather than wholesale, by accepting the value of the agencies that employ case workers. The public, or at least community leaders, had to be persuaded, because the public had to finance surveys, and then not only to accept the results but also to support the politicians who were to put the recommendations into effect.

The idea that communities should supply the bulk of support and participation for their own surveys collided with several political realities, notably the reality that communities did not wish to be portrayed in an unflattering way—a problem faced by other forms of social research as well. The problem with the comprehensive community survey was that the public relations con-

sequences of such a survey were likely to be negative. As Leonard Ayres, director of the Education Division of the RSF, shrewdly observed, "People who have their photographs taken usually feel, upon seeing the negative, that it should be retouched."³³ Ayres was a successful promoter of school surveys. But he presented school surveys as a means of assessing public spending on schools and concentrated on such high-consensus issues as the full utilization of school buildings. This gave the education survey a base of support and an interested audience.

Kellogg never found an analogous base of support and audience for comprehensive community surveys. He gamely argued that "a survey is 'good business' in the long run from the standpoint of a city's prosperity." But the argument is not very convincing. Community leaders, who might accept or encourage school reform, would be less inclined to support a community survey that would be negative, much less one that would "challenge the existing frontage which existing institutions, professions, and organized forces bear toward the needs of the time."³⁴ The survey, when it records municipal successes, is perhaps good advertising, and these are the cases that Kellogg points to. Rural sociologists learned that bland descriptions of communities praising the friendliness of its citizens were acceptable, whereas seriously critical surveys with statistical evidence, together with photographs, were likely to be suppressed and cost the researchers their jobs.³⁵ But in most cases, the bulk of what would be documented would be the unmet needs of a community, journalistically enhanced for maximum impact. A progressive elite might find various ways to use such a survey against entrenched institutions and politicians. Nevertheless, the number of cases in which a survey of the sort done in Pittsburgh would be attractive must have been very small.³⁶

The surveyors' strategy, in short, was intrinsically flawed. The strategy of the Rockefeller philanthropies was more successful. They sought, on the one hand, to promote what they called realistic knowledge and, on the other, to professionalize the relevant workers by strengthening the system of professional training. The expert is understood in this model to speak primarily to the professionalized worker rather than the citizen. The tactical role of subsidy obviously changed in this model. "Expert knowledge" that was useful to the professional was subsidized through outright support of the production of expert knowledge constructed for these useful purposes, through subsidized training, and especially through subsidized publication—the key element in the creation of the modern "expert."³⁷ The model was extremely successful in the case of medicine and public health, and later in the case of public admin-

istration. The LSRM helped social work to become professionalized by its support of several key graduate schools of social work in the twenties and thirties.

The success of this expert-to-professional relationship reflected the more realistic match between the kinds of knowledge that experts could reasonably claim to possess and the needs and career structures of professional social workers. Like public administrators or public health officials and physicians, social workers became a "professional" community structured in such a way that the reliance on expert guidance was integral to the identity and structure of the profession itself. The specific role of the expert and the professional are made for one another. The relationship is limited and therefore not subject to the full range of conflicts with public opinion that arise in the case of the more grandiose vision of social work backed by an aroused citizenry advanced by Kellogg. It is difficult, in the light of this history, to see the "failure" of the Pittsburgh model as anything but inevitable—a grasp for authority that exceeded the reach of "social work." It was the path not taken, but only because it was a path that led nowhere.

PITTSBURGH SURVEYED

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND SOCIAL REFORM
IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY



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*For Roy Lubove
who devoted much of his career
to studying American social reform,
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and Pittsburgh.*

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