

Emory Bogardus and the Origins of the Social Distance Scale

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Abstract This article provides some history of sociology by focusing on the origins of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. The scale was developed by Emory Bogardus in 1924 and is still widely used in measuring prejudice. It has been translated into several languages, and used in many countries in measuring attitudes toward a variety of groups. The authors use primary and secondary data, including an interview with one of Bogardus's colleagues, Thomas Lasswell, and the Bogardus archive at the University of Southern California. American racial and ethnic conflict, and the increasing scientific emphasis in sociology help explain the genesis of the scale. The personal biography of Bogardus is examined along with trends in sociology during his training at the University of Chicago and developments throughout American society. This study shows how the social environment of Bogardus influenced his personal life circumstances that help account for his creation of the scale.

Keywords Bogardus Social Distance Scale · Sociology · Social environment · Attitude scales

Introduction

This article provides some history of sociology as it responded to racial issues by focusing on the origins of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. According to Mills (1959) the promise of the sociological imagination allows the investigator to link an individual's culture with both their personal life and professional career. Investigators can switch their focus between these two levels and involves an

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understanding of the relationship between biography and history. This article uses Mills' idea of the sociological imagination to explain the attempt to present the discipline as scientific, the early life experiences of Emory Bogardus, the culture in which he lived and the creation of the Social Distance Scale.

Our analysis is based primarily on information from an interview with Thomas E. Lasswell who was a friend and colleague of Bogardus, the autobiography of Bogardus (1962), his personal correspondence and other materials written by Bogardus. Much of the written material is found in the Emory Bogardus Papers at the University of Southern California Archives. We also examine the 1920s at the University of Chicago's sociology department when Bogardus worked on his Ph.D. there, the history of the city of Chicago, as well as other parts of the United States. This analysis will help explain the increased interest in race relations in American society and among American sociologists at the time that Bogardus was beginning his academic career. The discipline was also trying to be scientific as opposed to what Levine (1995:92) called "a vehicle for social reform and social work" or what Faris (1967:3) called "moral philosophy." Chicago professor William Ogburn was a prominent proponent of the statistical method that was making headway at Chicago and in sociology as a whole (Duncan 1964). We discuss Bogardus's biography, focusing primarily on the factors leading to the invention of the Social Distance Scale and conclude with a discussion of the significance of this scale.

Ethnic Conflict and Immigration

At the time that Bogardus developed the Social Distance Scale conflict was caused by a surge of non-Protestant immigration. Prior to 1880 the majority of people immigrating to the United States were from Germany, Scandinavia, or the British Isles. These immigrants are often called the "first wave" (Uschan 1999:27). The "second wave" immigrants were mainly from Italy, Poland, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and other countries in Southern and Eastern Europe. The first wave immigrants who were primarily Protestant rejected the second wave because they imported "strange" languages, customs, and religions (Uschan 1999:27). The majority of these newer European immigrants settled in the ever-expanding slum areas of large industrial cities and joined others with similar racial or ethnic backgrounds. People who lived in the slum areas in cities faced rampant disease and terrible living conditions. Many "older" Americans wanted to stop this immigration.

At the beginning of the twentieth century many Asians emigrated from their homelands to the West Coast where they faced severe discrimination. In 1905, for example, San Francisco officials forced Japanese children to attend segregated schools, stimulating further anti-Japanese prejudice in the area. Many Anglos wanted to stop Japanese immigration or even deport all Japanese people, believing that the influx of Japanese "picture brides" meant that the Japanese would reproduce and eventually dominate the United States (Handlin 1972:268). In 1907–1908, President Theodore Roosevelt made an informal "Gentlemen's Agreement" with the Japanese government in which he could prevent Japanese laborers from entering the country and in return the U.S. government would refrain from labeling Japanese people as inferior (Handlin 1972).

This arrangement did not satisfy some on the West Coast. In 1913, soon after Bogardus began his career at the USC, California passed an “alien land law” which prohibited Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Asian Indian immigrants from purchasing land or leasing it for more than 3 years (Chan 1991). At the same time several other states enacted similar laws. In 1920, California passed a second law that totally prevented Asian immigrants from leasing land. Finally, in 1922, the United States Supreme Court ruled that Japanese people were “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” and therefore did not have the right to become naturalized (Wilson and Hosokawa 1980:137). At the same time the Hearst Press became increasingly critical of Japanese people in the United States. In addition to the Japanese, many other groups also endured prejudice and discrimination. In California, for example, Filipinos were classified as “Mongolians” and were therefore not allowed to marry Anglos (Handlin 1972:268). Moreover, Mexican immigrants were forced to live in segregated neighborhoods and given only the most menial job opportunities.

Beginning in 1910 United States immigration personnel attempted to restrict Indian nationals from entering the United States. In 1917, Congress created the “Asiatic barred zone” which was a clause in the 1917 Immigration Act that enabled immigration officials to stop their entry completely (Handlin 1972:268). In 1921, a federal law limited immigration from non-Protestant countries by means of a quota system. The quota limited the number of residents coming from each country “to 3% of the foreign-born persons of that nationality found to be resident in the United States in 1910” (Wilson and Hosokawa 1980:136). When the 1921 bill passed immigration dropped by 50%. Nevertheless, some still complained about the influx of immigrants from non-Protestant countries. Therefore, Congress passed a second law in 1924 (the “National Origins Act”) that lowered the quota to 2% and based this limit on figures from the 1890 census (Hanson 1999:59).

In addition to the other sources of hatred, World War I stimulated anti-German sentiment. Efforts to eliminate German cultural influences were especially visible in Chicago. In 1916, for example, the German Day Parade was cancelled. Moreover, the Chicago City Council changed the names of many local streets that bore German names. Although Bogardus was then living in Southern California, because he had lived in Chicago for many years, these events were likely significant to him. And during the 1910s and 1920s much of the criminal activity that occurred in the United States was attributed to “alien radicals” (Hanson 1999:61). In the fall of 1919, for example, an outbreak of bombings and bomb threats occurred. Although authorities were unable to identify the perpetrators, many people believed that the crimes were a result of “radical political activity by foreign agitators” (Hanson 1999:61). The public became increasingly concerned with these events. In 1920, the United States Attorney General directed a number of raids against people he labeled “dangerous aliens” which resulted in the arrest of several thousand men in cities throughout the United States (Hanson 1999:61).

Migration

In the 1910s and 1920s the northern industrial cities of the U. S. experienced an influx of black Americans from the rural South. Chicago was no exception and

during the 1910s Chicago's black population doubled. At the same time black people also began moving to western states, especially California. World War I had a major influence in this mass migration. Because travel restrictions drastically cut European immigration, employers could no longer rely on European immigrants as a cheap source of labor. At the same time, many young white men were forced to leave their jobs for the military. The ensuing labor shortage led to higher wages (Uschan 1999). Southern black sharecroppers typically earned \$2 to \$3 per week while northern blacks were paid on average \$2 to \$2.50 per day.

Northern blacks also were given civil liberties that they were not allowed in the South, including the right to vote and to send their children to school. Although they did not face southern segregation laws, northern blacks were still not treated equal to whites. They were forced to live in segregated neighborhoods in the slum areas of the large industrial cities. During World War I more than 370,000 black people served in the military, where they were also segregated. During the summer of 1919 several race riots broke out across the United States. The largest and most destructive occurred in Chicago (Spinney 2000). The Chicago riot lasted 6 days and did not end until the Illinois National Guard intervened. Although the event probably shocked people across the country it may have been particularly troubling to Bogardus because it occurred in the city where he had been educated.

During the riot 38 people were killed, 537 were injured, and more than 1,000 homes were demolished. The riot occurred when white people began to sense that blacks were posing a significant threat in the competition for scarce resources, especially jobs and housing. This caused a re-emergence of groups that terrorized many people. One of the strongest of such groups was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). At one point the KKK claimed a membership of 4 million people in the United States. A 1922 rally in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park attracted "twenty-five thousand Klan members and sympathizers" (Spinney 2000:175). Much of this conflict surrounding immigration and migration occurred at the time that Bogardus was being educated. Both sociologists and the general public showed an increased interest in race relations.

Sociology and Race

The original social science studies often focused on "racial mental capacities and a related eugenics concern" (Faris 1967:68–69). When Bogardus entered the profession there was little interest among sociologists in racism or racial conflict (McKee 1993). At the beginning of the 20th century the flagship journal of the profession was the *American Journal of Sociology* (AJS). It published only one article per year on these issues. For this generation of sociologists racial conflict was simply considered inevitable.

But perhaps as a result of the swirling ethnic and racial conflicts in the early twentieth century several sociologists began to criticize the view that mental capacity varied with race. For example, in 1918 Ellsworth Faris published an article that disputed some of the widely accepted views on this subject. In 1908, the same year that Bogardus began his graduate studies at the University of Chicago one of his mentors, W. I. Thomas, convinced a "wealthy Chicago heiress" to donate \$50,000 to

study race relations (Collins and Makowsky 1978:184). This was the first major American social science research grant. Thomas used the money to study Chicago's Polish immigrants. Although he originally planned to study other groups as well, his desire for "empirical thoroughness" caused him to narrow his focus (Collins and Makowsky 1978:184).

When Thomas began this study Polish-Americans were Chicago's largest immigrant minority. At the time local newspaper articles complained about "Polish Crime" (Collins and Makowsky 1978:184). They described how Polish-Americans presumably were prone to an "unpredictable outburst of violence" (Collins and Makowsky 1978:184). *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas and Znaniecki 1927) set out to criticize this stereotype. It was also the first major American attempt to collect data on theoretical issues and signifies the beginning of a concern with research methods. It convinced both Robert Park and Ernest Burgess to continue studying this topic. Thomas played a role in stimulating the Park and Miller (1921) study of acculturation in *Old World Traits Transplanted*. Burgess, on the other hand, turned his attention to the life of Russian peasants (Faris 1967:107). This developing concern with race and ethnicity was clearly found at the University of Chicago when Bogardus was completing his Ph.D.

The Early Life and Education of Emory Bogardus

Bogardus was born in 1882 and completed his undergraduate education at Northwestern, graduating in 1908 with a degree in psychology. During his first year of graduate school at Northwestern Bogardus received a fellowship that required him to live and work at the university's settlement house. While living there he learned about a variety of social problems including poverty, juvenile delinquency, and alcoholism. He also met Professor Edward A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin who stimulated his interest in sociology. Bogardus eventually considered pursuing a career in sociology after Ross reported that it focused on "the underlying social processes according to which people strive to live and to make life worth while" (Bogardus 1962:44). But first Bogardus pursued psychology.

By the time he finished his bachelor's degree, Bogardus had obtained a surplus of academic credits. He was able to use his settlement house experience as the basis for his master's thesis on the psychology of adolescence. While preparing his thesis Bogardus familiarized himself with research methods, learning how to accurately and objectively gather, classify, and report data. And he learned how to be objective when making inferences. He was awarded a master's degree in psychology from Northwestern in 1909.

During his first year of graduate school Bogardus determined that teaching might be his best career option. He initially considered becoming a high school teacher, both to try out the field of teaching and to save money for graduate school. Instead, according to Thomas Lasswell, Bogardus took the advice of a friend and spoke to Albion Small, head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago who urged him to apply for a scholarship. Bogardus was awarded the scholarship for 1 year and had it renewed the following year. This gave him enough money to complete 2 years of doctoral study in sociology. It was then that he was introduced

to the fundamentals of sociological theory. Small also made him aware of “‘the ongoing of the social process,’ universal and powerful yet subject in some ways to human direction” (Bogardus 1962:47).

In addition to Small, Bogardus took classes from W. I. Thomas (Bogardus 1962:48). The book of Thomas (1909) on *Social Origins* was published the same year that Bogardus began his doctoral studies. It may have been Thomas who stimulated Bogardus’s interest in quantitatively measuring attitudes toward racial and ethnic groups, having introduced the sociological concept of race prejudice in a highly influential 1904 paper (McKee 1993). Thomas is also known for his work on social attitudes as well as his prominent role in the attempt to create a scientific sociology (Faris 1967). Chicago professor Robert Park also had a profound impact on Bogardus. Park published numerous articles on race during the teens (Hughes et al. 1950) while Bogardus was studying at Chicago. And Bogardus (1928) repeatedly cited Park’s work on race in his later book *Immigration and Race Attitudes*.

Another factor that influenced the development of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale was the nature of academic sociology. At the time that Bogardus was being educated professional sociologists were trying to present their discipline to the academic community as well as the general public as a form of scientific inquiry. To be sure, the importance of scientific objectivity for social inquiry had been recognized since the 1880s when sociology first became an academic discipline. The goal was first articulated by Auguste Comte, the person who coined the term “sociology.” In the late nineteenth century American scholars followed suit adding to Comte’s aspiration a desire to apply sociology to “human welfare and the survival of ...civilization” (Faris 1967:3). However, unable to engage in “slow, calm, objective research,” these men failed to establish a truly scientific image for sociology, leaving the task to the newly established Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago (Faris 1967:6). The Bogardus Social Distance Scale is one result of their efforts. It displays “the 1920s craze for measurement” coupled with clear reformist values (Bannister 1987:10).

Entering Sociology

In the spring of 1911, Bogardus received his Ph.D. in sociology and had begun the search for a college faculty position. At the time there were very few openings for full time sociologists. Eventually, however, he was able to find one in South Dakota, and another at USC. Although South Dakota was closer to Chicago, he accepted the USC position because it “was in a more promising location from the standpoint of both a growing community and a region of complicated social problems calling for sociological research” (Bogardus 1962:51). Bogardus began at USC with an appointment in the Department of Economics and Sociology. While he primarily taught sociology courses, during his first semester he was assigned a course in Money and Banking (Bogardus 1962). In 1915 he was asked to found the Department of Sociology at USC and became its first chair, retaining this position until 1946.

In 1916 Bogardus established and became the editor of America’s second sociological journal, *Sociological Monographs*, which later became known as the *Journal of Applied Sociology* (Lasswell 1973). In 1920 he was promoted to direct

the USC Division of Social Work. It was then that he organized Alpha Kappa Delta, the sociological honor society. In 1921 Bogardus established the USC School of Social Work (USC archives). He did all this while publishing three books: *Introduction to the Social Sciences* (Bogardus 1913), *Essentials of Social Psychology* (Bogardus 1918) and *Essentials of Americanization* (Bogardus 1919). Bogardus published two more books in 1922: *Introduction to Sociology* (Bogardus 1922a) and *A History of Social Thought* (Bogardus 1922b), as well as many other later books. In 1931 he was elected president of the American Sociological Association.

Bogardus became involved with a social settlement organization called the All Nations Foundation of Los Angeles. It was founded in 1914 to serve immigrants in the impoverished east-central section of the city. By “good fortune” the foundation requested that he survey boys and the challenges they face (Bogardus 1962:58). The subjects were not just from the poverty-stricken neighborhood in which All Nations was functioning, but also included children from middle-class and upper-class neighborhoods. The results were published in a Bogardus (1925) book about the lives of boys in Los Angeles. Bogardus always had a great deal of appreciation for ethnic and racial diversity. His work for the All Nations Foundation reflects this, as does his participation in the International Institute of Los Angeles. The Institute was founded in 1914 to assist immigrants in adjusting to American society (Bogardus 1962). According to Lasswell a commitment to diversity is also indicated by the number of early graduate students working with Bogardus who were from foreign countries, especially those from Asia. Bogardus also had a strong interest in seeing “women and minorities” enter the field of sociology, Lasswell claimed. Above all, Bogardus was more than just an academic student of race relations; he also made an effort to improve them.

In a letter to Episcopal Dean Dillard Robinson of the Trinity Cathedral in Newark Bogardus wrote, “As a sociologist I learned long ago that the human race is one, with similar problems and with a universal need for encouragement of many kinds” (USC Bogardus Papers, November 16, 1970). As it happens, Dillard Robinson was the first African-American Episcopal Dean in the United States. In another letter to an unknown party Bogardus argued that people who cannot read or write should be given the opportunity to obtain these skills, and that people of all races should have at least some knowledge about their “civic and community responsibilities and opportunities” (USC Bogardus Papers, October 12, 1965). In still another letter Bogardus discussed his experience at a conference in Indianapolis: “We had a great time in Indianapolis. The address on ‘Race Attitudes’ was given to the Inter-racial Committee with about 100 present—half Negroes and half Whites” (USC Bogardus Papers, April 19, 1932).

Scale is Born

Bogardus was introduced to the concept of social distance by Robert Park. According to Park (1923:39) the concept refers to “an attempt to reduce to something like measurable terms the grades and degrees of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations generally.” It is “the degree of intimacy and understanding” that exists between individuals or social groups

(Hughes et al. 1950:88). Prejudice is in turn the “more or less instinctive and spontaneous disposition to maintain social distances” from other groups (Park 1923:343).

Park got these ideas from Georg Simmel whose lectures he attended while in graduate school in Berlin. This was the only formal instruction in sociology that Park ever received. According to Hinkle (1994:284) “Park was Simmel’s champion at the University of Chicago.” In fact, a textbook written by Park and Burgess (1921) (*Introduction to the Science of Sociology*) contains more selections from Georg Simmel than from any other author. One of these selections is titled “The Stranger.” In this essay Simmel outlined the problematic aspects of group membership. The stranger is a person who has come into contact with a racial or cultural group, but is nevertheless excluded from membership. The stranger may not even be concerned with obtaining membership. Simmel describes the stranger as being, in the words of Park and Burgess, “the combination of the near and the far” (Park and Burgess 1921, in Levine et al. 1976:836).

The stranger, Simmel writes, first appears as a trader, one who is not fixed in space, yet settles for a time in the community—a “potential wanderer.” He unites in his person the qualities of “nearness and remoteness, concern and indifference.”... This conception of the stranger pictures him as one who is not intimately and personally concerned with the social life about him (Levine et al. 1976:830).

Park believed that the concept of social distance as illustrated by Simmel in “The Stranger” could be used to study race and ethnic relations. In his 1924 survey of Japanese-Americans Park attempted to do just that. This was called the “Pacific Coast Race Relations Survey” with Bogardus as its regional director (Bogardus 1959:Preface). Park asked Bogardus to design a “quantitative indicator of social distance” (Harvey 1987:80). In 1924 Bogardus created the first edition of the Social Distance Scale, a pioneering statistical measure in the field of race and ethnic relations (Faris 1967:108).

Bogardus was clearly concerned with racial issues before he invented the Social Distance Scale. In his 1922 book, *A History of Social Thought*, Bogardus expressed concern with what he referred to as “the race problem” which he acknowledged to be one of the major social dilemmas confronting America (Owen et al. 1981:80). Bogardus hoped that the Thomas social survey method could shed light on this problem, and could potentially be used to propose solutions. In particular, he believed that by combining Thomas’s social survey with “appropriate statistical analyses,” scholars could cast “a flood of light” on here-to-fore hidden aspects of society (Owen et al. 1981:80).

Some historians claim that the increased interest in race relations nationwide was largely due to the influx of Asian immigrants in the far west (Levine et al. 1976:836). Indeed, in a document that discusses the Pacific Sociological Association (University of Southern California Bogardus Archive, Los Angeles) that Bogardus founded, one author argues that race relations’ interest “came to a climax in 1924 with the passing of anti-Japanese legislation in California in that year” (USC Bogardus Archives). What he is referring to is the 1924 Immigration Act that prohibited “aliens ineligible to citizenship” from entering the United States (Chan 1991:55).

The Bogardus notes on file at the USC Archives show that he considered the distinction between social distance and spatial distance. He noted that in rural areas there is much more spatial distance between people compared to urban areas. On the

other hand in urban areas there are typically greater class distinctions and thus more social distance. In another note he drew four concentric circles undoubtedly based on the concentric zone theory of crime and delinquency that was so prominent at the University of Chicago. In the smallest circle there are “close relations” and next come “friends.” The next even larger circle includes “acquaintances,” then “strangers” and the largest circle includes “enemies.” While there is a certain logic to this Bogardus drawing it does not provide a ready scale for mapping individual perceptions of social distance. On another page he drew a triangle that he used to display “triangular personal distance” between teachers, parents and pupils at each intersection of the triangle. The triangle also provides no scale to measure personal perceptions.

In any case, with the help of faculty members from 25 universities and colleges Bogardus administered the first Social Distance Scale survey in 1926 with race as the focus of interest, and he subsequently used it every 10 years through 1966, with the exception of 1936 when he was traveling abroad (Bogardus 1967:3). By using the same survey instrument at regular intervals he was able to trace the evolution of America’s experience with diversity and difference through four decades. This remains one of the most celebrated historical social psychological tools in American intellectual history.

Uses of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

The Bogardus Social Distance Scale is one of the oldest psychological attitude scales. According to Campbell (1952:322) “only the Harper test of liberalism–conservatism is older among attitude tests that have been used beyond the research in which they were originally presented.” The Bogardus Social Distance Scale is still a commonly used method of measuring prejudice. Published research using the scale has appeared in professional journals and conference papers as recently as 2006 (See for example: Doell 2006; Morgan 2006; Sakuragi 2006). Additionally, Schaefer (1987:30) claims that the Social Distance Scale is “so widely used...that it is frequently referred to as the Bogardus scale.” Newcomb (1950:164) refers to the Bogardus Social Distance Scale as “one of the landmarks in the history of attitude measurement.” It has been used in several disciplines including sociology, political science, psychology, language studies, and education.

The scale has been translated into a variety of languages, including Czech (Rysavy 2003), French (Lambert 1952), Japanese (Smythe and Kono 1953), Serbo-Croatian (Culig 2005) and Spanish (Betancor et al. 2002). The Social Distance Scale has also been used in a variety of countries including Australia (McAllister and Moore 1991), Egypt (Sell 1990), Ethiopia (Brown 1967), France (Lambert 1952), India (Chatterjea and Basu 1978; Singh 1965; Subramanian et al. 1973), Israel (Pirojnikoff, Hadar and Hadar 1971), Jamaica (Richardson 1983), Lebanon (Starr 1978), New Zealand (McCreary 1952), Nigeria (Adewuya and Makanjuola 2005; Ogunlade 1972), Pakistan (Zaidi 1967a, b), The Philippines (Yenko 1970), South Africa (Groenewald and Heaven 1977; Orpen 1973), Surinam (Brinkerhoff and Jacob 1994) and Taiwan (Maykovich 1980; Hunt 1956). Finally, the scale can be used with both children (Morgan 2006) and adults (Sakuragi 2006).

According to Sartain and Bell (1949:85) the items used in the Social Distance Scale “are of the ‘generalized’ variety” and can therefore be applied to any social

group, not just races. In order to find examples of studies that utilize the scale we searched the Education Full Text, PsycInfo, Sociological Abstracts, and the Web of Science databases. With the latter database we limited the search to publications from the year 2006 and used the Boolean terms TS = (social AND distance AND scale). With the former databases we used the phrase Bogardus Social Distance Scale and did not limit our search. The database searches returned eight results from Education Full Text, 72 results from PsycInfo, 29 results from Sociological Abstracts, and 28 results from the Web of Science. These included journal articles, dissertations and conference papers and dealt with analyses of attitudes toward the mentally ill (Adewuya and Makanjuola 2005), religious groups (Nataraj 1965; Hunt 1956), ethnic groups (Sakuragi 2006; Parillo and Donoghue 2005; Randall and Delbridge 2005), racial groups (Morgan 2006; Kinloch 1973; Morsbach and Morsbach 1967), disabled people (Eisenman 1986; Benton et al. 1968), people with specific diseases (Benton et al. 1968), homosexuals (Staats 1978), nationality groups (Morsbach and Morsbach 1967; Zaidi 1967a; Hunt 1956) and finally, occupational groups (Singh 1965). The scale can also be used to show which groups in a community are most prejudiced (Morgan 2006; Randall and Delbridge 2005; McAllister and Moore 1991; Sell 1990). The following table provides an illustration of a Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Table 1).

The Social Distance Scale is an example of a Guttman scale in that it is unidimensional and cumulative. The unidimensional aspect means that the scale items can be used to measure a single theoretical concept and *only* that concept. For example, in a scale composed of items that measure prejudice, items that measure a different concept would not be included. The items contained in a unidimensional scale can be placed on a continuum. In this sense, the scale is also cumulative. The Social Distance Scale usually consists of five to seven statements that express progressively more or less intimacy toward the group considered. Typical scale anchors are “would have to live outside of my country (7)” and “would marry (1)” (Cover 1995:403). In this case, a respondent who accepts item “seven” would be more prejudiced than a respondent who marks item “one” or any other item on the scale. The cumulative aspect also means that a respondent who expresses a given degree of intimacy will endorse items expressing less intimacy. A respondent willing to accept a member of a group in their neighborhood will also accept that same group in their country. Conversely, those who refuse to accept a group in their country will also refuse to accept them in their neighborhood. A scale is indeed unidimensional and

Table 1 Bogardus Social Distance Scale

	Mexicans	Germans
To close kinship by marriage		
To my club as personal chums		
To my street as neighbors		
Employment in my occupation		
Citizenship in my country		

1. Place an “X” in the box indicating the most intimate relationship that you are willing to accept with a member of each of the groups indicated.
 2. Think of each group as a whole, and not the best or the worst member(s) that you have encountered.
 3. Please provide your first feeling reaction in each case.
- Scale items taken from Miller (1991).

cumulative if at any point on the scale a respondent's attitudes change from accepting to not accepting, then there will be no further changes in response. The respondent willing to allow a minority into their nation, but not into their neighborhood or occupation will in addition not accept a member of the group in marriage.

Conclusion

In the spirit of Mills this article has shown how the invention of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale was the result of a unique convergence of biographical and historical circumstances. The sociologist who invented the scale, Emory Bogardus, was influenced by factors that permeated his own unique experiences, the discipline of sociology, as well as the larger societal context in which he and his fellow sociologists lived. A primary factor that affected the invention of the Scale was the phenomena of race conflict and the attempts by early American sociologists to present their discipline as a form of scientific inquiry. The atmosphere in sociology at the University of Chicago clearly had a profound impact on Bogardus. Without the direct leadership of Park it is doubtful that Bogardus would have created the Social Distance Scale. In addition, there was the racial turmoil in Chicago during the years Bogardus lived there as a student. The racist treatment of Asian immigrants in California occurred as Bogardus began his career at USC. Trouble almost seemed to follow him around.

This research also shows how qualitative historical and biographical information can be utilized by sociologists to learn more about their profession to fulfill the promise of what Mills called “the sociological imagination” to determine how an individual's historical and cultural environment influences his or her “inner life” and “external career” Mills (1959:5). Just as their historical and cultural environments influence individuals, they also influence this environment. Both things seem to be true for Bogardus. The circumstances of Bogardus's personal life combined with the societal and academic environment in which he was educated played a significant role in the development of the Social Distance Scale. The Social Distance Scale has, in turn, had a profound influence on the landscape of American sociology.

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