

2. Harold D. Lasswell: propaganda research from the 1920s to the 1950s

Safe Colleague
Amiable,
Respectful:
And
No
Intellectual.

Lasswell's poem (no date)¹

Harold D. Lasswell (1902–1979) was a world-renowned political scientist and a founder of comparative communications. Too young to fight in World War I and too old in World War II, nevertheless Lasswell showed in his consultancy roles, during and after World War II, the importance of studying war propaganda and later other types of propaganda and then communication in general. As he evolved from a young idealist to an ideologist, he saw no tension in being both an independent academic and a loyal servant of his country and its government. His life story offers interesting material for analysis of an academic career, but also of the usefulness of Mannheim's concepts of ideology and utopia, of generation and of Merton's Insider/Outsider position. I argue that Lasswell was an intergenerational figure whose work sheds light on relationships between generations and on conflict, and the avoidance of conflict, between them. He shifted his focus from utopias to ideologies, from political science to policy science, but never faltered in his belief that communism was the enemy. He started as an Outsider, but eventually became an Insider in academia and in policymaking. Lasswell's devotion and dedication were tested in the early 1950s, the McCarthy period, when he had to provide evidence that he was not a communist himself, because his studies of communism had aroused suspicion.

It is important to remember that white, American-born men with elite educations or with elite jobs (such as Lasswell) were not the most obvious Outsiders in the way, for example, women or people of colour were. But we

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should also remember that Lasswell may have carried a secret during the time when the American Psychiatric Association, in 1952, diagnosed homosexuality as a sociopathic personality disturbance. A year later President Eisenhower signed an executive order banning homosexuals, as a potential security risk, from working for the federal government (Gross 1993; Johnson 2004). My research into Lasswell's life encountered no conclusive evidence, only persistent contemporary rumours, of his sexuality. But if Lasswell was homosexual, and if this had become known, it would have made him an Outsider not only in academia but also in US society as a whole. However, as Kirchick (2022, p.16) argues, sexual orientation is a secret history, *ad usum Delphini*, that requires 'reading between the lines' of any documents found. The documents I have studied reveal, even without reading between lines, close friendships between men and a range of relationships with them, some of which may have been sexual. Letters that often went through secretaries unsurprisingly made no reference to sexual orientation. However, as Nardi wrote, 'middle-class men only become heterosexuals when they define themselves and organized their affective and physical relations to exclude any sentiments or behavior that might be marked as homosexual' (1999, p.31).

This chapter is divided into two parts, in accordance with the interplay of utopias and ideologies in each of the two most distinctive intellectual periods of Lasswell's life, which I define as (1) the academic period of progressive internationalism (1918–1938) and (2) the policy science period of pragmatism and promotion of US interests (1939–early 1970s). Lasswell spent the first period mainly in Chicago and in Europe, while during the second he was based mainly in Washington, New York and New Haven. The first period ended with a time of uncertainty, when Lasswell was in danger of losing his academic career. During both periods he was influenced by and contributed to different ideologies and utopias. The more of an Insider Lasswell became, the less we see him to be preoccupied with utopias.

Although earlier work has examined Lasswell's career (see, for example, Almond 1987; Dunn 2019; Gary 1999; Rogers 1994; Rogow 1969; Rosten 1971; Torgerson 2019a), very little has considered his importance as a pioneer in comparative communications studies. This chapter thus concentrates particularly on his comparative communications studies, which I define as 'those where researchers or research teams with diverse cultural, practical and academic skills, and possibly in different locations, use specifically defined theories, concepts and/or methods to analyse materials/data concerning communications' (see Chapter 1). Lasswell fitted into all those categories, although his theorising of comparative communications primarily involved the concept of propaganda.

2.1 The academic period of progressive internationalism

Analysis of Lasswell's early development shows a sharp difference between how he was raised and how his university studies changed his thinking. He

was born in 1902 in Donnellson, a town of 300 people in Illinois, the son of a Presbyterian minister, Linden D. Lasswell (1868–1943), and a teacher, Anna Prather Lasswell (1868–1943) (Almond 1987, p.249), both well educated (Perry 1982, p.280). Lasswell was a ‘psychological only child’, using his own expression, because his older brother had died when he was five years old. Lasswell felt a loner and an Outsider at school because he was poor at sports and smaller and younger than most of his classmates (Perry 1982, p.280). The family lived in a number of small towns in Illinois.² His highly religious and teetotal parents had very little money and he supported them financially throughout his working career. Lasswell, who never married, cared for his parents for the rest of their lives, but he left behind their religion and their ideology, as he did their lifestyle.

Lasswell came to be known for his ‘essential demand of privacy and abstinence of deep emotional entanglements in their customary forms, particularly marriage and family’ (Caldwell 1979, p.47), and as a ‘kind of secretive’, a ‘very private’ but ‘very elegant man’. He owned ‘an elegant apartment, with Persian rugs on the floor and original oil paintings on the walls and Louis XVI chairs’ at One University Place in New York, to which he rarely invited friends. Lasswell was also known for his love of dining in style and of good whiskies ‘he imbibed exceptionally well’ (Eulau 1979, pp.88–89; see also Rosten 1991, p.279). The only known influences on Lasswell’s childhood other than that of his parents were those of another relative and of his schooling. During the summers of 1916 and 1917 he visited his uncle, a medical doctor, in Indiana and learned among other things about the work of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) (Freedman 1981, p.104). By the time Lasswell went to college, he already knew some of Freud’s work in German (Perry 1982, p.280; Rosten 1971, p.79). He is also known to have become familiar with Karl Marx’s (1818–1883) writing when he was still at high school (Almond 1987, p.250).

So, how does a young Outsider become an Insider? If one is lucky, having an influential mentor opens many doors. At the very early age of 16, in 1918, Lasswell, after graduating from high school as an outstanding student and receiving a scholarship, started his studies at the University of Chicago (Perry 1982, p.280). (Figure 2.1 was taken while he was in Chicago.) In 1922 he became a graduate student under the tutelage of Charles E. Merriam (1874–1953, pictured in Figure 2.2), who chaired the Department of Political Science from 1923 to 1940 (Heaney and Hansen 2006, p.589). Lasswell was one of several young recruits in the department, but was clearly Merriam’s particular *protégé* (Sproule 1997, pp.69–70) and favourite (Perry 1982, p.280). It has even been argued that Merriam built his kind of political science for people like Lasswell (Seidelman and Harpham 1985, p.133).

As a student Lasswell worked as a teaching and research assistant for Merriam, who became not only his mentor but also his friend. The correspondence between Merriam and Lasswell was intense and lasted for several decades. They called each other in their correspondence ‘Dear Chief’ (Merriam) and ‘My dear Doctor’ or ‘Judge’ (Lasswell)³ and saw each other regularly during those years, both in their professional roles and privately. Their

Figure 2.1: Harold D. Lasswell, 1935

Source: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf1-03681, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf1-03681.xml>

Notes: The photo was taken in 1935 when Lasswell was assistant professor of political science at the University of Chicago (1922–1938).

Figure 2.2: Charles E. Merriam

Source: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf1-04419, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

<http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf1-04419.xml>

Notes: Photo undated, photographer J.E. Waters. Merriam was the Morton D. Hull distinguished service professor of political science and chairman of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. During World War I, Merriam was a captain in the US Army Signal Corp, and served as commissioner for public information in Rome, Italy.

correspondence started with the young Lasswell's detailed letters from Europe to his supervisor in the 1920s and ended with an equal relationship between two professionals who also clearly enjoyed each other's company outside work. Merriam opened many doors to the young Lasswell by writing letters of introduction and recommendation and by recommending him for different jobs.

Lasswell's first book chapter was co-authored with Merriam and came out in 1924 (Merriam and Lasswell 1924) and they went on to work together on many occasions throughout the 1920s and 1930s in the US, Europe and Russia.⁴ Merriam was a very well-connected man with networks inside and outside academia. In addition to his many academic roles, Merriam was a policy scientist *par excellence*, serving on various committees from the Hoover to the Roosevelt administrations and was a central figure in US political science (Berndtson 1987, pp.91–92; Seidelman and Harpham 1985, p.101). Merriam's (1919) own experience of working in 1917–1918 in Rome as a propagandist for the American High Commissioner for Public Information contributed to Lasswell's interest in propaganda research (Smith 1969, pp.53–55) and Merriam offered Lasswell a job as an instructor in his academic department in 1924.⁵

Lasswell, according to his own account, was influenced during his college years by Merriam, George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) and John Dewey (1859–1952) and later at LSE by Graham Wallas (1858–1932).⁶ During his studies he became interested in symbolic interactionism, and especially in the role of symbols as a binding factor in societies, which later led into studying communication (Littlejohn 1978, p.55). The Chicago School of Political Science in the 1920s and 1930s was known for advancing a new, empirical 'science of politics' that inspired Lasswell's trust in the social sciences' capacity to 'produce precise and useful knowledge' (Torgerson 2019a, p.122). Later Lasswell was remembered to have continuously cited Mannheim,⁷ with whom Lasswell shared an interest in elites (Chapter 5). Politically, Lasswell was a lifelong Democrat (Farr, Hacker and Kazee 2008, p.28).

In this way, the son of a preacher man and a teacher turned into a promising young academic thanks to an influential mentor whose connections were able to open many doors. It all looked very good for the young Lasswell, but he was still dependent on the relationship with Merriam. It was time to leave Chicago to complete his education abroad.

Propaganda studies

Even as late as the 1930s, the Chicago School (including political science and sociology) was much influenced by German academics. Edward Shils⁸ (1910–1995), for example, recalled (1995, pp.223–34) attending a class on several mornings each week given by Wirth (1897–1952), the translator of Mannheim's *Ideologie und Utopie*, on the history of German sociology. Shils (1995, p.225) also met Hans Speier⁹ (1905–1990), who had emigrated from Germany to the US in 1933 and would become one of Lasswell's future collaborators, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Many US social scientists, among them some of Lasswell's teachers at the University of Chicago including Merriam (Karl 1974, pp.37–38), had traditionally gone to Germany to study. Merriam had encouraged Lasswell to go to Europe to collect materials for his PhD, personally guaranteeing a loan to finance his travel.¹⁰ Lasswell not only went to Germany; in the 1920s he also visited Geneva, Vienna, Paris and London, as well as Berlin – some of these cities several times. He first went to Geneva in 1923, where he observed sessions at the League of Nations. In a letter to Merriam, he analysed its weaknesses and concluded that (referring to the Treaty of Versailles):

the isolationism of the U.S. is humiliating to an American ... unless he admits that America would have made an ass of herself and supported the unqualified French thesis on its reparations.¹¹

Lasswell's letters from this period in Geneva reveal his increasing criticism of the internationalism of the period. His time in London at LSE in 1923 had a more positive influence on him, especially in his policy science orientation, which had already been set at the University of Chicago. Little has hitherto been known about Lasswell's visit to London, mainly because when he left Chicago in 1938 and moved to Washington, DC, the vans carrying his effects were involved in an accident, destroying his professional and personal files. Some of his lost files created a small sensation when they were found after the crash, as reported by the *Chicago Daily Tribune* ('Solve Red Angle in Crash Death' 1938), since they included books by Marx and pamphlets about communism (Muth 1990, p.14).

The Yale University archival collection holds the letters Lasswell sent during his time in Europe to his parents, who kept them, and the University of Chicago Library collection has some of his letters to Merriam. He wrote to Merriam:

I am having the most glorious time [in] England [that] I ever imagined to exist ... And the most impressive thing about the whole business is the extreme opinionation of the scholars. Take Laski, for instance. He has a formula to solve every international or national problem past present or prospective: or look at Wallas, who is outfitted with an armor quite as complete, though not quite as obvious.¹²

He was a frequent writer, often sending three letters in a week to his parents, with detailed and vivid descriptions of his life as a 21-year-old PhD student experiencing London. Lasswell was clearly impressed by the Fabians and their policy research. He was excited about meeting Sidney (1859–1947) and Beatrice Webb (1858–1943) in October 1923 and wrote to his parents:

I have had the pleasure of meeting the Webbs ... Sidney Webb has for thirty years been turning out books on public administration,

the history of trade unionism, socialism; organized the Fabian Society for the study of social questions, exercised a powerful initiative in the organization of the London School of Economics and Political Science; accepted the responsibility for the political tactics of Labour and had the cooperation of a wife who is in every respect his equal. Most of their books are joint productions. And they have cooperated on any number of government reports ... blue books. I think it was H. G. Wells (1866–1946) who remarked that theirs was a very fruitful marriage in blue books.¹³

While at LSE, Lasswell attended a lecture by Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), which made him conclude that ‘science must be captured by men of good will’, spent an evening at the ‘Nursery, of younger elements of the Fabian Society’, met with Laski, and attended lectures given by George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) and Graham Wallas (1858–1932).¹⁴ He was also much impressed by his fellow students, describing them as:

definitely in training for some branch of the public service, Consuls, diplomats, M.P.s [Members of Parliament] and the like are on exhibit and in transit in various stages of embryological evolution.¹⁵

He was equally impressed by the number of foreign students at the School. Lasswell spent only one term at LSE and regretted that he could not stay longer¹⁶ (Rantanen 2020). He was clearly influenced by LSE thinking, whereby social science was there to help societies flourish and understand the causes of things (LSE’s motto is ‘*rerum cognoscere causas*’) for the betterment of society.

In London, Lasswell learned about the power of the international mass media and about the European news agency cartel (more in Chapter 3) – curiously from a Foreign Office civil servant. This was new to him. He wrote to his parents, warning about the confidentiality of his information.¹⁷ (Here is one of the early connections with Kent Cooper’s career, much of which was devoted to trying to improve the AP’s position within the cartel, discussed in Chapter 3.)

You may have noticed that since the war the great news collecting associations have by contract divided the world into zones, and have arranged to interchange news from zone to zone. Thus the great English agency is Reuters, the French is Havas, the German is Wolff, and the largest American is Associated Press ... The wireless is now being used unceasingly as an agent of information and obfuscation.

Lasswell considered the limitations affecting the news, including issues of accuracy, unconscious bias, and how all the relevant facts about a situation were never known. The information he acquired about European news found its way into his PhD thesis, where he specifically referred to Reuters (see Lasswell 1927, pp.3, 80). After leaving LSE, Lasswell continued his research in

Paris, where he collected most of the materials for his PhD. At the age of 24, in 1926, he was awarded his PhD by the University of Chicago (Freedman 1981, p.104). His dissertation was published in 1927 as *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Lasswell 1927), and he rapidly became a leading expert in the US on war propaganda, which then led him to develop the research methodology of content analysis. The times he spent at Chicago and in Europe were Lasswell's formative years of preparation for his professional future. His interest in propaganda and communication and in policy science all originated from the time at Chicago and from his travels in Europe. However, one element is still missing: psychoanalysis.

The combination of symbols and propaganda

Lasswell had found his topic, propaganda, but had not yet found *how* to study it. Sigmund Freud was to become a major influence for him and he later called these years his *Wanderjahre* in Europe, highly praising Wallas at LSE and the thinkers around Henri Bergson (1859–1941), as well as Freud (Lerner 1968, p.406). In 1928, in Vienna, he met Anna Freud (1895–1982), Sigmund Freud's daughter.¹⁸ Lasswell had been granted a postdoctoral fellowship by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC)¹⁹ for 1927–1928 and spent most of that year in Berlin, where he was briefly psychoanalysed by Theodor Reik (1888–1969), a student of Freud, and became interested in psychoanalysis as a method of studying politics (Rosten 1991, p.281).²⁰ In Berlin, in 1929 he also spent time with Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949), a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, who struggled with prejudice against homosexuals both in his professional and private life (Wake 2008, p.151). Lasswell had known Sullivan since 1926, when he had suggested a meeting between himself, Merriam and Edward Sapir (1884–1939), a notable anthropologist and linguist (Perry 1982, p.280).

Lasswell's interest in psychoanalysis was pioneering in his field, and was later shared by, for example, Adorno and Horkheimer. The first publication of the authoritarian personality research of the Frankfurt School, *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (*Studies on Authority and the Family*), came out in 1936 (Institut für Sozialforschung 1936), while *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950) by Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik (1908–1958), Daniel Levinson (1920–1994) and Nevitt Sanford (1909–1995) appeared only in 1950 (Almond 1987, p.254). According to Dorzweiler (2015, pp.356–57), Horkheimer, Franz Neumann (1900–1954) and Lasswell all considered culture to be the body of symbols and practices employed by elites to maintain their social and political authority. The members of the Frankfurt School did not openly criticise Lasswell, despite their theoretical and methodological differences, and even published an article from him (Lasswell 1935a) in their *Zeitschrift* in 1935 (Dorzweiler 2015, pp.353, 363). As Dorzweiler (2015, p.371) concluded, 'throughout the 1930s and early 1940s Lasswell, Horkheimer and Neumann not only supported each other's work but also shared areas of interest, most notably the politics of culture'.

In 1928, at the age of 26, Lasswell was invited to speak before the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, in which Freud and his colleagues participated. He delivered a paper entitled: 'Can We Distinguish Different Types among Our Politicians and Is Their Taking Up Politics Conditioned by Certain Definite Factors in Themselves?' (Freedman 1981, p.104). In 1930, after his return from Europe, he published his book *Psychopathology and Politics* (Lasswell 1930). It is a remarkable book in which Lasswell analysed life stories of politicians, including their sexuality, and divided them into different types. It remains a pioneering work in its methodology and materials, even if one does not agree with its conclusions. As Lasswell (1938, p.37) himself puts it, 'the many disasters of World War I had led the political scientist to the door of the psychiatrists' (quoted by Herman 1995, p.24). According to Gabriel Almond²¹ (1911–2002) (1987, p.254), the book was 'the first relatively systematic, empirical study of the psychological aspects of political behavior'. Gary wrote that 'Lasswell's students (Almond was one of them) and contemporaries contend that Lasswell fundamentally challenged conventional political science with his distinctive uses of behavioralism and Freudian theory' (1999, pp.67, 69).

Lasswell's interest in psychoanalysis was also reflected in his study of symbols. In his early work on propaganda, he was interested in hidden, 'latent' meaning in the same way that Freudian psychoanalysts are interested in hidden meanings in speech. He defined propaganda as a 'technique, a 'manipulation of collective attitudes by the use of significant symbols (words, pictures, tunes) rather than violence, bribery or boycott' (Lasswell 1935b, p.189). His goal was to reveal both facts and the hidden aspects of propaganda through the study of symbols. He was inquiring into not only what was being said but also what was *not* said when symbols were used. Lasswell was influenced by the Freudian concept of a symbol, famously defined in Freud's (Freud and Strachey 1899/1954) analysis of dreams, originally published in 1899, as revealing its true meaning to the extent that 'the compared term will disappear' (Jones no date). In this way, Lasswell became interested in the relationship between the symbols used in propaganda, for example in relation to communism (Lasswell and Blumenstock 1938; 1939) and to fascism (Lasswell 1933). Lasswell's co-author of studies of communist propaganda published in the late 1930s, Dorothy Blumenstock Jones (1911–1980), was his student at the University of Chicago and during World War II became the chief of the Motion Picture Analysis Division of the Office of War Information (OWI). Blumenstock is one of the forgotten women in communication research (Varão 2021).

Thus Lasswell's early work leans on European research traditions and had not yet been influenced by the rising popularity, notably in the 1950s, of behaviourism (Berndtson 1997). His approach to studying propaganda was very different from the well-known Lasswellian slogan 'who says what in which channel, to whom, with what effect?' (Lasswell 1948, p.37) for which Lasswell is best known in communication studies. This model of communication, published after World War II implies a one-way flow of influence with

no feedback and no room for recipient interpretation that concentrates on manifest, rather than latent, content. The European influence on Lasswell's early work was significant and it was inspirational when he started developing content analysis. Lasswell also showed an early interest in qualitative and later in quantitative (for more on which, see Chapter 4) research. His article, entitled 'Prussian Schoolbook and International Amity', was an early example of content analysis, where he sought 'in every case to indicate by some quantitative measurement the importance of the item to which reference is made' (Lasswell 1925a, p.718). He also published in 1925 'The Status of Research on International Propaganda and Opinion' (Lasswell 1925b). Both articles reflect his interest in what would become established as communication research. He chose here a new topic, propaganda, which would later lead him to become interested in studying communication more generally. Lasswell was not alone in his interest in studying propaganda. As Torgerson (2019b, p.232) observes:

the advent of propaganda and its dramatic rise during WW1 caused a disillusionment among post-war progressives in the 1920s with the notion of 'the public', as seen in Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (1922) and *The Phantom Public* (1925). Citing Lippmann among others, Lasswell framed his *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (1927) explicitly in terms of this disillusionment, writing that: 'The whole discussion about the ways and means of controlling public opinion testifies to the collapse of a traditional species of democratic romanticism and to the rise of a dictatorial habit of mind.' (Lasswell 1927, p.4)

Lasswell, like many of his contemporaries, had lost his optimistic, utopian belief that the public was able to resist propaganda. In his doctoral thesis of 1927, he notes his almost exclusive reliance on American, British, French and German experience. He writes that:

this study is a preliminary and highly provisional analysis of the group of propaganda problems connected with the control of international antipathies and attractions in wartime. How may hate be mobilized against an enemy? How may the enemy be demoralized by astute manipulation? How is it possible to cement the friendship of neutral and allied peoples? (Lasswell 1927, p.12)

He also paid attention to the role of the press and of news, which again connects him with Cooper's work (see Chapter 3). Lasswell (1927, p.80) wrote:

the Germans were aghast at the efficiency of Allied propaganda and they undertook to steel their people against it by protesting

loudly against the official French and British Press and Press services. Rudolf Rotheit (1919) declared that one of the conditions of peace must be the emancipation of the World Press from the clutches of enemy telegraphic agencies. Even the schools had such copying exercises as 'Reuter's Agency, the fabricator of War lies' ... The Germans took Northcliffe as the symbol of the British Press and poured vials of abuse on his head.²²

Lasswell pioneered the empirical study of the concept of propaganda. He was among the first not only to collect empirical materials but also to analyse them – in the beginning entirely qualitatively: there was no methodology or theory in the largely descriptive thesis. He noticed that:

actual propaganda, wherever studied, has a large element of the fake in it. This varies from putting a false date line on a despatch, through the printing of unverified rumours, the printing of denials in order to convey an insinuation, to the 'staging of events'. (1927, p.206)

He also emphasised the totality of propaganda – how it appeals to all sectors of society:

Effective propaganda is catholic in its appeal. It ignores no loyalty inside a nation. Protestants, Catholics, Jews, workers, financiers, farmers, merchants, city dwellers, and rural elites, sportsmen and philosophers, men of affairs and academicians, women and men, old and young; every possible line of cleavage in the nation is appealed to by some direct or indirect device. (Lasswell 1927, p.201)

He wrote about the role of the press in propaganda, how everybody becomes involved, how difficult propaganda is to resist, and how all are drawn into it whatever their educational background or status.

A literate world, a reading world, a schooled world prefers to thrive on argument and news. It is sophisticated to the extent of using print; and he that takes to print shall live or perish by the Press. All the apparatus of diffused erudition popularizes the symbols and forms of pseudo-rational appeal; the wolf of propaganda does not hesitate to masquerade in the sheepskin. All the voluble men of the day – writers, reporters, editors, preachers, lecturers, teachers, politicians – are drawn into the service of propaganda to amplify a master voice. All is conducted with the decorum and the trapper of intelligence, for this is a rational epoch, and demands its raw meat cooked and garnished by adroit and skilful chefs. (Lasswell 1927, p.221)

Lasswell later criticised his own thesis, calling it 'an essay in technique', where:

we are not informed whether the author actually read or glanced through all the copies of the principal mass-circulation newspapers, periodicals, books and pamphlets of Germany and other countries; or whether he read British, French and American materials as fully as German. (1949, p.42)

Despite this self-criticism, Lasswell rapidly became a leading expert on propaganda. His course on public opinion and propaganda at the University of Chicago in 1926–1927²³ was probably the first ever taught on this topic (Rogers 1994, p.215). In Lasswell's (1933, p.521) view, propaganda in its broadest sense is the technique of influencing human action by the manipulation of representations. He later writes that:

every government on the globe, whether despotism or democracy, whether at war or at peace, relies upon propaganda—more or less efficiently harmonized with strategy, diplomacy, and economics—to accomplish its ends. (Lasswell, Smith and Casey 1946, p.1)

Ascher and Hirschfelder-Ascher (2003, p.62) note that for Lasswell propaganda was neither intrinsically good or bad but an instrument of persuasion that could be used for positive or negative causes. They emphasise the importance of the concept of symbol and its power in Lasswell's thinking not only as an instrument but also as a marker of continuity with changing meanings and associations (Ascher and Hirschfelder-Ascher 2003, p.61). Lasswell's definition of propaganda was broad enough to pave the way for the conceptualising and study of what came to be known as mass communication, but there was still a strong link to political science because of the role of governments in disseminating propaganda.

The period of early propaganda studies witnessed a radical change in relation to the previous period: the concepts of propaganda and, indirectly, of communication (as news influencing public opinion) were introduced. What had earlier been seen only as foreign, in both meanings of the word, came increasingly to be viewed as different, suspicious and even dangerous. But the concept of propaganda was defined and seen in relation to earlier concepts such as those of public opinion and of news. All this together fertilised further research and indirectly, and often subconsciously, emphasised the importance of the study of communication.

The 1930s was a particularly interesting and exciting period at Chicago, when class and class conflict were the dominating issues. Almond, one of Lasswell's doctoral students, recalls:

hearing the class-struggle analysis of Communists, Trotskyites and socialists on the University of Chicago campus, in the Reynolds

Club, on open-air demonstrations and in graduate seminars led by Merriam, Lasswell, Harold Gosnell [1896–1997], Frederick Schuman [1904–1981] and others, where students were exposed to the ideas of Marx, Freud, Max Weber [1864–1920], Vilfredo Pareto [1848–1923], Gaetano Mosca [1858–1941], and Roberto Michels [1876–1936]. (Almond 1998, pp.xx–xxi)

But Almond emphasises that ‘ideas were brought down to earth in *American* accents and tested against *American* experience’ (Almond 1998, pp.xx–xxi, emphasis added). Gary adds Mannheim to the list of academics who had influence on Lasswell’s thinking, but also emphasises the importance of Pareto in relation to ‘political symbolism, ideology, power, myth and the sociology and psychology of the ruling classes’ (Gary 1999, p.70).

Lasswell fitted well in this environment and began to gain celebrity as an instructor and assistant professor. Leo Rosten (1908–1997) wrote about his memories of Lasswell as a teacher, later as his mentor and friend (Rosten 1971, p.284), in 1927:

I thought him a bit of a freak: pedantic, verbose, and quite ill at ease. He wore his hair in a short, stiff, Prussian cut, and his knowledge in a high, stiff, abrasive manner. He was only twenty-five, and he lectured us desperately, with a glazed stare into space, unaware of whether we understood him and unconcerned what we might be thinking. (Rosten 1971, p.274)

Through his studies in the US and in Europe, as well as through his mentors and teachers, he was deeply influenced by European academic thinking. A former student of Lasswell described him in the following way:

He was an assistant professor, not much more than a graduate student himself, and he had many young men and women around the University who were attracted by his brilliance; by his willingness to listen to them; and by the boldness of his imagination.²⁴

Lasswell’s departure from the University of Chicago

In the 1930s Lasswell continued to combine psychoanalysis with the study of politics (see, for example, Lasswell 1930; 1931; 1935c), while also further developing ways to study the content of propaganda. In 1938 he left the University of Chicago for reasons Almond (1987, p.260) describes as ‘push and pull’ and Rogers (1994, p.216) as ‘Lasswell’s midlife crisis’. It is difficult to find archival evidence of the reasons why Lasswell left Chicago. Rosten (1991, p.284) writes that Robert Hutchins (1899–1977), president of the University of Chicago, ‘let it be known’ that neither Lasswell nor Gosnell, another protégé of Merriam, could hope for promotion. Schramm, Chaffee and Rogers (1997,

p.29) write that the main reason may have been that Lasswell had been denied promotion to full professor, what was known as the Chicago School having come to an end as a cross-disciplinary experiment in 1931 (Dunn 2019, p.17) but Rogers (1994, p.217) argues that Lasswell had been treated well at Chicago, earning \$4,500 a year, and was tenured. Another reason possibly was that Lasswell wanted to pursue his interest in psychiatry at the Washington School of Psychiatry, co-founded by Sullivan in 1936, to collaborate with him and Sapir; however, he failed to do so (Gary 1999, p.82; Muth 1990, p.14; Rogers 1994, p.217) 'for a variety of reasons' including Sapir's death, or falling out with Sullivan, and financial support being cancelled (Perry 1982, p.356; Rogers 1994, p.218). Yet another plausible reason concerned a possible decline in support for his own career and projects, with Merriam's approaching retirement in 1940 and the university's decreasing interest in empirical research.

A fourth possible reason may have been that the university had come under attack by Charles R. Walgreen (1873–1939), head of a national chain of drug-stores, who caused his niece to withdraw as a student at the University of Chicago and in 1934 wrote a letter criticising the institution for its 'communitistic' influence ('C.R. Walgreen Takes Niece From College' 1935). In 1935 a committee of the Illinois State Legislature investigated alleged communism at the University of Chicago (Bell 1949). The result was that the University of Chicago was cleared, even by Walgreen. Lasswell was not mentioned in the course of investigation, but the formal investigation was preceded by a pamphlet, 'How Red Is the University of Chicago', that included his name several times, referred to his lectures at the Workers School and to him being 'one of the red aiding and associating professors' (Hewitt 1935, pp.12, 88).

Although Lasswell was not personally criticised, the Walgreen incident signalled a change in how the university was seen in public discourse outside academia. His departure from Chicago marks a period in his life when he stopped publishing in political science. Lasswell's own obituary stated that 'from 1937 to 1950, not a single article of his was published in a political science journal because of resistance to his ideas' (Ennis 1978). However, Lasswell had many articles published in psychiatric journals, 'introducing psychiatrists to the interrelationship of psychiatry and the social science' (Ennis 1978). Lasswell's re-entry into political science took place in 1955, when he was elected president of the American Political Science Association (Ennis 1978). After a long time as an Outsider, his peers thus made him the ultimate Insider in his own field.

2.2 The policy science period of pragmatism to promote mainly US interests

Lasswell's new career started in Washington, working for the government in various consultancy roles and conducting research funded by private foundations. He became a policy scientist (Peters 1986, p.535), the term he

himself later established, and his first known use of the term ‘policy sciences’ dates from 1943 in then unpublished personal memoranda (Lasswell 1943/2003; Torgerson 2019a, p.128). Lasswell’s work during World War II at the Wartime Communications Research Unit at the Library of Congress and later with the Commission on Freedom of the Press was to change his career. In both roles, he deepened his knowledge about communication and became a policy scientist in that area. In this period he established connections with men who shared his ideas about propaganda, democracy and threats to democracy.

Lasswell became, from 1940 to 1943, director of the Experimental Division for the Study of Wartime Communications at the Library of Congress, funded, like many other wartime research projects, by the Rockefeller Foundation (see, for example, Gary 1999; Levyatan 2009; Nietzel 2016; Pooley 2019; Simpson 1994). As Gary (1999, p.89) has argued, wartime communications research is an example of collaboration among the academy, private foundations and the state. The Rockefeller Foundation coordinated several projects including Lasswell’s. During the war, he directed an office that used content analysis to analyse propaganda. Almond writes:

the Department of Justice set up a special war policies unit to help administer the Foreign Agents Registration Act and the Sedition Act. Both of these tasks involved content analysis of the media of communication: on the world scale, as the propaganda war heated up in 1939 and 1940, and on the domestic organizational scale, as Nazis and fascists infiltrated foreign language groups and media in the United States. Lasswell gave expert testimony in a number of trials under this legislation; he was also instrumental in the effort to have quantitative content analysis admitted as evidence in the federal courts. (Almond 1987, p.262)

For the first time, the content of war propaganda became a systematic object of study, analysed daily by a team of researchers. The need to know more in order to ‘anticipate the enemy’ (Lasswell 1949, p.48) fostered this research. It gave Lasswell an opportunity to experiment with and attempt to prove the usefulness of content analysis, which came to be seen not only as the method for analysing content but also as something that could predict the future (Lasswell 1949, pp.49–51). What was called public opinion analysis amounted in fact to analysing US newspaper coverage of certain topics, and then producing a quick internal analysis for decision-makers and analysts. Content analysis was used by trained staff who worked to a tight schedule, producing reports on a daily basis.²⁵

This was not individual work but was carried out by a team consisting of men (and women in assisting roles) who later became leading academics in the field of political science or researchers working for the government, or both, often on Lasswell’s recommendation (as detailed in more depth in

Chapters 4 and 5). Many of these had either known one another before, often from their time at the University of Chicago, or were émigrés with a European background whose names have been almost forgotten and whose role I analyse in these later chapters. They became lifelong friends and 'comrades in arms', united by their wartime experience, later calling themselves 'the old gang'.²⁶ Farr, Hacker and Kazee (2006, p.581, years added) included some of these, but not all, in their all-male list:

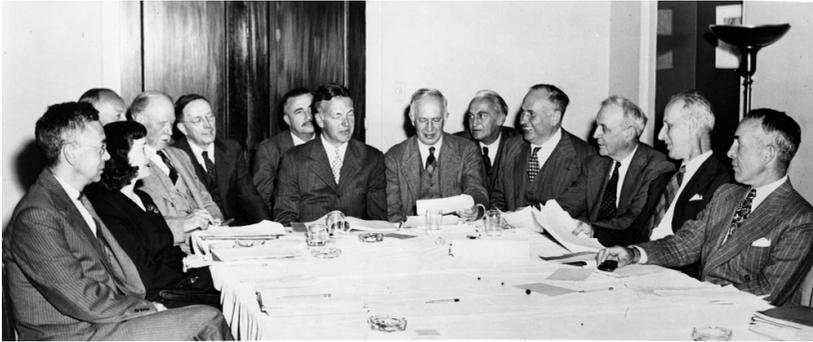
The war-time chieftom, most important, allowed Lasswell to draw around him a brilliant group of young policy-scientists-in-the-making, including [Daniel] Lerner [1917–1980], Abraham Kaplan [1918–1993], Bruce Lannes Smith [1909–1987], Heinz Eulau [1915–2004], Gabriel Almond, David Truman [1913–2003], Ithiel de Sola Pool [1917–1984], Nathan Leites, Edward Shils, Morris Janowitz [1919–1988], Irving Janis [1918–1990], and Sebastian de Grazia [1917–2000]. He and they collaborated with other intelligence specialists on duty in Washington, like Samuel Stouffer [1900–1960], Paul Lazarsfeld, Kurt Lewin [1890–1947], Bernard Berelson [1912–1979], Wilbur Schramm [1907–1987], Hans Speier [1905–1990], Carl Hovland [1912–1961], Hadley Cantril [1906–1969], and Ralph Casey [1890–1977]. As brought together by war, they defended democracy, advised decision-makers, analyzed policy, devised research, invented methods like content analysis, wrote quickly and at length under deadline, and created an interdisciplinary 'corps of scholars seasoned by responsibility' (Lasswell 1951b, p.133), who would invent communications research as a field and foment a behavioral revolution in the social sciences.

It is important to remember that the academics were not in charge – the military and civil servants were. This was not always a happy relationship, and there were also tensions between different departments.²⁷ Lasswell probably enjoyed some autonomy because his funding came from the Rockefeller Foundation, but his position in the organisation as a whole was not the most central. Many different governmental departments conducted research on different aspects of communication. The most important criterion was that the research should serve the interests of the US government in its goal of winning the war. His own ideology unsurprisingly now matched completely the US government's ideology.

The Commission on Freedom of the Press

Lasswell served between 1944 and 1947 as a member of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, also called the Hutchins Commission after its chair, Robert Hutchins (pictured with committee members in Figure 2.3), president

Figure 2.3: Robert Maynard Hutchins chairing a meeting of the Commission on Freedom of the Press ('The Hutchins Commission')



Source: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf1-13545, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
<http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf1-13545.xml>

Notes: Photo undated. Robert Maynard Hutchins (head of table, left), University of Chicago president (1929–1945) and chancellor (1945–1951), commission chairman. Commission members (from left): Arthur M. Schlesinger, professor of History at Harvard; Ruth A. Inglis, commission staff member; Robert Redfield, dean of the Division of Social Sciences; William E. Hocking, professor of philosophy emeritus at Harvard; Robert D. Leigh, commission director; Llewellyn White, commission assistant director; Zechariah Chafee, Jr., professor of law at Harvard and commission vice-chairman; Kurt Riezler, professor of philosophy at the New School for Social Research; Beardsley Ruml, chairman of the board of R.H. Macy and Company, Incorporated; Charles E. Merriam, professor of political science emeritus; George N. Shuster, president of Hunter College; Archibald MacLeish, former assistant secretary of state for public affairs.

of the University of Chicago, who formed the commission and invited Lasswell and Merriam to join it (see, for example, Blanchard 1977; McIntyre 1987). This membership gave Lasswell and Merriam another opportunity to work together, which they clearly enjoyed, also exchanging notes about the future agenda. Merriam was very clear about his goals, based, as he put it, on:

my own personal experiences beginning as a printer's devil and through my observations and experiences in the area of metropolitan government, the politics and administration of Washington, and my observation of the relation of the social sciences to the techniques of communications.²⁸

This highly educated group of men met 17 times and interviewed 58 witnesses. Their staff spoke to 225 others, while commission members and staff prepared 176 documents for review (Commission on Freedom of the Press 1947, pp.v–viii). The membership of this committee was again significant for Lasswell's career: as one member put it, it was 'the best club he had ever belonged to'.²⁹ This was although he was quite junior compared to its other members. It gave Lasswell an opportunity to define what he thought were the principles

of a free press: (1) accuracy of observations and quotation; (2) disclosure of source: reporting facts enabling the audience to evaluate the competence and bias of the direct and quoted source; and (3) separation of fact and opinion.³⁰ Obviously, these principles were not invented by Lasswell, but they show his understanding of journalism.

The report concerned perceived threats to the freedom of the press and produced a new policy of accountability that was then reworked by Theodore (Ted) Peterson (1918–1997) into the US social responsibility theory (McIntyre 1987, p.137) as set out in *Four Theories of the Press* (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm 1956; see Chapter 6), while also having a link with Cooper's campaign on the freedom of news. Interestingly, the committee also had foreign advisers. It is difficult to separate the foreign from the domestic when the report (Commission on Freedom of the Press 1947) stated that 'the world seems to be on the brink of suicide' (p.99), and that an irresponsible press could bring about 'universal catastrophe' (p.4) and even the end 'of democracy and perhaps of civilization' (p.106) (quoted in Bates 2018, p.4791).

There was, again, an embedded comparative aspect to the report, because the commission also published a separate report on international communication, *Peoples Speaking to Peoples* by Llewellyn White (1899–1959) and Robert Devore Leigh (1890–1961) (White and Leigh 1946). A considerable amount of research for this report was done by interviewing officials in the mass-communications industries and in government. The research team also talked with hundreds of experts in the field of international communication, including heads of state, members of parliament, officials, and top executives of major news agencies, newspapers, and other media companies, both in the US and abroad (White and Leigh 1946, p.115), including Kent Cooper (see Chapter 3). The report recommended, in relation to the role of the US and its citizens in international communication, that:

(1) The government and the people of the U.S. should recognize the importance of a mutual understanding, as between peoples, of each other's true character and purposes and should be prepared not only to communicate to others as truthful and comprehensive account of our national life and purposes but to receive and to circulate in the same spirit reciprocal communication with regard to other nations and people. (White and Leigh 1946, p.vi)

The commission made a number of recommendations, including the creation of an autonomous unit in the US Economic and Social Council, and coordinated closely with UNESCO and with the Commission on Human Rights to 'promote the free flow of true information and the removal of artificial barriers restricting such free flow' (White and Leigh 1946, p.109), thus emphasising the role of international and intergovernmental organisations.

Thus, during the war years, Lasswell himself became a policy scientist in communications, both domestic and international. This was the time when he

really expanded his networks through his collaboration with US and émigré academics, with policymakers, the army and the government. Lasswell, the Chicagooan and Europeanised American, was now in Washington to serve his government and his country.

Lasswell as a defence intellectual

After World War II Lasswell was appointed in 1946 as professor of Law at Yale University (pictured in his office there in Figure 2.4), where he had been a visiting lecturer (though when his appointment was under consideration there were accusations made against him that he was a ‘commie’).³¹ Later, in 1947, he became one of the four members (of 22) of the faculty of the Yale Law School who did not sign the letter protesting the government’s loyalty programme to the president, the secretary of state and the speaker of the House of Representatives (Emerson and Helfeld 1948, p.2). He also continued to work for the US government in different roles. His most long-standing role, however, was as a consultant for RAND (Research and Development Corporation), founded in 1948 and originally funded by the US government and the Douglas Aircraft Company in Santa Monica, California. He continued

Figure 2.4: Harold D. Lasswell in his office at Yale



Source: Photographer unknown. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers (MS 1043), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

<https://findit.library.yale.edu/catalog/digcoll:4346702>

Notes: Lasswell was professor of law at Yale from 1946 to 1952; professor of law and political science, 1952–1961; Edward J. Phelps professor of law and political science, 1961–1967; Ford Foundation professor of law and the social sciences, 1967–1970; emeritus, 1970–18 December 1978.

in this last role until the early 1970s and RAND paid him from \$40,000 to \$60,000 annually.³² This was a substantial sum of money additional to his salary as a university professor at Yale, which was \$20,000 in 1966.³³ Before he was appointed to this role, Lasswell had to prove that he was not a communist, following allegations that he had been 'a Communist Party member, associated closely and sympathetically with Communist Party members and openly and actively expressed sympathy with many communist doctrines and ideologies.'³⁴ He had to report in detail his professional life since starting as a student at the University of Chicago, his travels, the people he had met and the research he had done. He also had to compile a list of over 100 people who had known him and could testify on his behalf, including colleagues and students from the University of Chicago, Merriam and Almond, and many of his wartime collaborators, including Speier and Joseph M. Goldsen (1916–1998; see Chapter 4), his colleague from the Library of Congress period.³⁵

Lasswell passed the security check and started working with many other academics to produce classified research for RAND Corporation. This work was to play a significant role in setting up new research programmes, including the Research Program in International Communication at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Center for International Studies (CIS) (Bessner 2018, p.3; see Chapter 5). According to Bessner (2018, p.179), together with Lazarsfeld's Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia and Hovland's Communication and Attitude Change Program at Yale, the CIS was one of the early Cold War's most academically and politically influential programmes dedicated to communication studies.

In one of Lasswell's first meetings at RAND Corporation, the group discussed what would happen if the next world war broke out and if the US used the atom bomb to defeat the new enemy, the Soviet Union.³⁶ Later, with RAND Corporation's support, an evaluation of wartime content analysis was carried out by the very same people who had used it during the World War II (see Chapter 5).³⁷ Many of the academics who had first collaborated during the war and at RAND also participated in Project RADIR (Revolution and the Development of National Relations) at Stanford University's Hoover Institute in the years following World War II, as discussed further in Chapter 5. The Hoover research consisted of three series: elite, symbolic and institutional studies. These were based partly on confidential work at the Library of Congress by Lasswell's Experimental Division for the Study of Wartime Communications, and by the Organizations and Propaganda Analysis Section that Lasswell had set up in the Special War Policies Unit of the Department of Justice (Eulau 1966, p.392; Lasswell and Lerner 1965; Lerner, de Sola Pool and Schueller 1951).

A selected list of unclassified publications³⁸ shows that many articles published in academic journals came from RAND Corporation supported studies, many of these on the Soviet Union and communism (Sherburne 1953). Together with the research based on wartime studies by 'defense intellectuals' – as Bessner (2018, p.3) called them – RAND produced a major proportion

of the studies in what came to be known as communication studies. Through his collaboration with RAND Corporation, Lasswell became one of the most prominent defence intellectuals of his time.

2.3 Conclusion

Lasswell is most often remembered as one of the world's leading political scientists and one of the inventors of content analysis, but what he should also be remembered for is his contribution to early comparative communications. He was in many ways a remarkable academic, a man who effortlessly crossed existing disciplinary boundaries but also opened up new and previously unknown avenues of research. The young Lasswell, in his interest in propaganda and psychoanalysis, was a loner, a pathbreaker, but he also had an influential supporter in Merriam, who provided mentorship, friendship, research collaboration and jobs for him. Lasswell learned well from Merriam, about not only how to do research but also how to network. He learned how to build networks between academics, policymakers, experts, politicians and men with power in general. He was known as a 'prodigious team-worker; whose associates in published work could be counted by hundreds' (Caldwell 1979, p.47). His letters revealed how he supported the men he had worked with during World War II in their subsequent careers and how these very same men became influential in their respective fields, as Chapter 5 will show. Lasswell defined the research topics to receive funding, including propaganda research and content analysis. His career shows how it is possible to become an Insider despite a rather modest background. It required high intelligence, hard work and ambition but also powerful mentors, eminent and loyal students and colleagues both in the academic and in the non-academic worlds. And perhaps most of all it required sharing the values of the dominant US ideology of the period, including militarism and anti-communism.

In this chapter Lasswell's career is divided into two different periods, although these are partly overlapping (for example, Lasswell's dislike of communism). This is why he can be described as an intergenerational figure. As a young man he was much influenced by the University of Chicago and by LSE in their approaches to applied research. He was an interesting mixture of European, international and US national pragmatist thinking, both new and progressive. The older Lasswell saw no difference between his goals and those of the US government. For him, policy science now meant research that was applied and thus useful beyond academia, and the good political scientist was *inter alia* a good citizen.³⁹ This idea can be traced back not only to his mentor, Merriam, and to the spirit of the Chicago School, but also to Sidney and Beatrice Webb and their applied critical work and thus to LSE. Easton (1950, p.451) argued that in the first half of his career Lasswell followed the Weberian tradition, which 'refused to prioritize values,

indicate preferences in terms of goals, or privilege a particular theoretical perspective.' However, later in his career he sought to 'say something about our ultimate social objectives' and considered that the social sciences could offer a normative perspective by 'knowing what these goals ought to be' (quoted by Zittoun 2019, p.211).

The change from a young utopian idealist inspired by continental European ideas into a defence intellectual for whom US governmental interests were close to his heart was not a unique development in that period. On a very general level it can be seen as reflecting fluctuations in the dominant US ideologies of the time between isolationism and internationalism. Clearly, Lasswell was influenced by these dominant ideologies, and even contributed to them in his research. At the same time, throughout his entire career he supported the émigré scholars from Europe with whom he had collaborated during World War II. Personally, he may have felt that his two early passions, psychoanalysis and the study of symbols, never achieved the acceptance he had hoped for, but meanwhile he was materially well rewarded by his university and by RAND Corporation and could afford the lifestyle he wanted. At RAND Corporation he may, ironically, have experienced a freedom that was not possible elsewhere: to meet and talk with his European colleagues about past times, while developing tools to fight the Cold War against communism. He changed from a young man who wanted to prevent wars into an old man who wanted to win them.

By becoming a policy scientist, Lasswell changed from an Outsider into an Insider. He first wanted to be an Insider at the University of Chicago but was not granted a full professorship. By leaving the university and starting a new career mainly as a policy scientist, before getting his chair at Yale, he secured access to materials he would not have been able to access as an Outsider, even as an academic. This is one of the key factors in defining 'Insiderness,' according to Merton (1972, pp.11–12), who explains how particular groups of Insiders have enjoyed monopolistic and/or privileged access to particular kinds of knowledge while Outsiders have been excluded from these. In the course of all this, Lasswell also achieved access to other elites, especially the military.

However, there are also other types of Outsideness, perhaps its most 'felt' forms. Partly this has to do with structures, partly with private life. If Lasswell was homosexual, he had to keep his sexual orientation the most well-guarded of secrets, especially during the McCarthy period, when communists and homosexuals, the 'Commie-queer bogeyman' (Gross 1993, p.12), were targets of the witch hunts, especially in the federal government (Johnson 2004). His working life at RAND Corporation was also partly secret since much of the research could not be made public. If Lasswell was homosexual, his access to RAND Corporation, the inner sanctum of military research, was an achievement during a time when the dominant ideology was not only anti-communist but also anti-homosexual. As Chauncey, Duberman and Vicinus (1991, p.13) write,

the history of homosexuality goes well beyond filling in missing gaps in our knowledge of the past. It has already demonstrated that personal sexual behaviour is never a simply private matter, but always shaped by and shapes the wider social and political milieu.

What made Lasswell a pioneer in early comparative communications? His contribution started with his PhD thesis on war propaganda and continued with the work that followed over some decades. He defined propaganda as a concept and developed a method of studying it. Later, his contribution was largely a methodological one in developing comparative content analysis, particularly of different types of propaganda. As a method, content analysis became popular across the whole field of communication studies, not only in early comparative communications studies. News flow studies of the 1950s (International Press Institute 1953; Kayser 1953) used mainly quantitative content analysis to compare news flows from different countries, as they did in the 1960s (Galtung and Ruge 1965), in the 1970s (Hester 1971) and in the 1980s (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985) (see Chapter 5). This tradition is still alive and regularly produces new work every year.

But, for Lasswell, content analysis may have been his biggest personal disappointment. As Janowitz (1969, p.156) observes, it is striking that in Lasswell's (1963) book on the future of political science there is not a single reference to content analysis. So much effort and resources went into developing this, as shown in Chapters 4 and 5, but at the same time it never quite achieved his aim of discerning the latent meaning of messages in order to 'anticipate the enemy' (Lasswell 1949, p.48). Janowitz wrote:

for Lasswell himself, as well as for interested social scientists and sympathetic critics, quantitative content analysis failed to achieve its expected potentialities, although political science, sociology, and social psychology have been enriched by particular penetrating monographs and specific research studies. (1968, p.652)

Lasswell's personal journey from a young idealist to a propaganda specialist working for the US government was not an unusual one for men of his generation. In the end he was not lonely but part of a crowd supported by others who shared the dominant ideologies of the time, of heterosexuality, the exclusion of women from public life, patriotism and anti-communism. Only by studying other members of the forefront generation, both academics and non-academics, is it possible to understand how similar their paths were. This is why my next chapter is about Kent Cooper, general manager of the AP. Cooper met Lasswell only a couple of times, but despite this, and despite their different careers, their life stories are characterised by remarkably similar utopias and ideologies.

Notes

- ¹ H.D. Lasswell's poem, no date. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 5, Folder 3. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ² Ershkowitz, M. The roots of a genius, manuscript, 1995. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 4, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³ Letters between C.E. Merriam and H.D. Lasswell. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 34 Folder 4; Box 35, Folder 3; Box 51, Folder 1, Box 65, Folders 1–4. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library; Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files, 1920–1978, 1043, Series I, Box 64, Folder 859. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ⁴ Lasswell, H.D. Summary of activities, dictated on 19 October 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ⁵ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 16 March 1924 from Paris. In his letter he calls Merriam 'Friend Merriam' and talks about his career interests including studying public opinion and whether he is going to fit in the department. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 779. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ⁶ Lasswell, H.D. Summary of activities. Dictated on 19 October 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ⁷ Myres S. McDougal (1906–1998) remembers Lasswell continuously citing Mannheim as someone he should study. M.S. McDougal to W. Ascher on 13 September 1982. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 4, Files, Folder 13. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ⁸ Edward Albert (Abraham) Shils (1910–1995) was born in Springfield, MA, to Ukrainian and Belorussian Jewish immigrant parents but grew up in Philadelphia, where as a high school student he became interested in Max Weber's work and learned German. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania and later at Cambridge University, where he received an MA in 1961. He worked as a research assistant for Louis Wirth at the University of Chicago when Wirth was translating Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*. During the war Shils served at the Office of War Information (OWI) and afterwards had a joint appointment as a lecturer at LSE 1946–1950 and as an associate professor at the University of Chicago, where he was appointed distinguished service professor in 1971 (Bulmer 1996; Epstein 1996).

- ⁹ Hans Heinrich Speier (1905–1990) was born in Berlin to Adolf and Anna (née Person) Speier, a white-collar worker and housewife, both conservative Lutherans (Bessner 2018, pp.17–18). He studied economics, modern history and sociology at the Universities of Berlin and Heidelberg and received a DPhil from the University of Heidelberg, where he was Mannheim’s first doctoral student and an assistant to professor Emil Lederer. Speier was a lecturer in political sociology and economics before emigrating to the US in 1933 with his Jewish spouse, Lisa (Louise) Griesbach (1903–1965). Speier was one of 10 intellectuals who formed the University in Exile and recruited other refugees to form its faculty at the New School. He served as a professor of sociology at the New School in 1933–1942 and 1947–1948. He joined RAND Corporation in 1949 and worked there for 15 years (Bessner 2018; ‘Hans Speier Papers, 1922–1989’ (no date)).
- ¹⁰ Affidavit for Army-Navy-Air Force Personnel Security Board, 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ¹¹ H.D. Lasswell to C.E. Merriam on 8 October 1923 from Geneva. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 34, Folder 4. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ¹² H.D. Lasswell to C.E. Merriam on 8 October 1923 from London. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 34, Folder 4. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ¹³ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 15 October 1923 from London. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ¹⁴ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 4 November 1923 from London. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library; H.D. Lasswell to C.E. Merriam on 8 October 1923 from London. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 34, Folder 4. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ¹⁵ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 9 November 1923 from London. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ¹⁶ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 2 December 1923 from London. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ¹⁷ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 16 October 1923 from London. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

- ¹⁸ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 12 August 1928 from Vienna. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ¹⁹ The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) was born in 1923 from the foundations of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund, the Carnegie Corporation, the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the Russell Sage Foundation. The major political scientist behind the SSRC's birth was Merriam (Seidelman and Harpham 1985, p.106).
- ²⁰ H.D. Lasswell to his parents on 2 December 1928 from Berlin. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 56, Folder 775. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ²¹ Gabriel Abraham Almond (1911–2002) was born in Rock Island, Illinois, to Russian rabbi David Moshe Almond (né Pruzhinski) (1872–1956), a migrant from Russia, and to Lisa (Lizzie, Elizabeth) Leah Almond (née Tulsy Eslon) (1882–1953), a migrant from Ukraine, both Jewish. He did his undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the University of Chicago. He was married to Anna Dorothea Almond (née Kaufmann) (1914–2000), who was born in Düsseldorf, Germany. In 1942 he joined the Office of War Information to study propaganda and subsequently went to Germany to study the effect of strategic bombing on attitudes and behaviour. Almond became a member of the Institute of International Studies at Yale University in 1946 and later taught at Princeton and Stanford, from where he retired from in 1976 but continued writing until his death in 2002 (Verba, Pye and Eulau 2005).
- ²² Lord Northcliffe, born Alfred Harmsworth (1865–1922) founded the *Daily Mail* newspaper and headed the British war propaganda operation of World War I. He was seen by Germans as the embodiment of Allied propaganda (Tworek 2019, p.1980).
- ²³ Courses given by Prof. Harold D. Lasswell at the University of Chicago. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 64, Folder 22. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ²⁴ Transcript of Oral History Interview with Philleo Nash. Interview by Jerry N. Hess on 24 June 1966, p.24, Harry S. Truman Library, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/oral-histories/nash>
- ²⁵ H.D. Lasswell to J.M. Goldsen on 16 February 1942. Memorandum regarding research programme on coding method. Experimental Division for the Study of War Time Division. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 38, Folder 516. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ²⁶ H.D. Lasswell to B. Berelson on 31 October 1946. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 18, Folder 229. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

- ²⁷ R.K. Kane Memorandum to the members of the staff. Bureau of Intelligence on 18 March 1942. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 52, Folder 727–29. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ²⁸ C.E. Merriam to H.D. Lasswell on 18 June 1944. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 65, Folder 3. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ²⁹ C.E. Merriam to H.D. Lasswell on 30 November 1946. Charles E. Merriam Papers, Box 65, Folder 2. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ³⁰ Lasswell, Harold D. Memorandum: Standards for Mass Communication. Document No 70, no date. The Commission on Freedom of the Press Records, Box 3, Folder 6. Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
- ³¹ Lasswell, H.D. Summary of activities. Dictated on 19 October 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³² Agreements between H.D. Lasswell and RAND. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 79, Folder 998. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³³ Salary note, 1966. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Bibliographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 4, Folder 16. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³⁴ M.J. Fitzgerald (Army-Navy-Air Force Security Board) to Lasswell on 29 August 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Bibliographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 15. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³⁵ Lasswell, H.D. Summary of activities. Dictated on 19 October 1951. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Bibliographical/Memorabilia Files 1043, Series V, Box 213, Folder 16. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³⁶ Conference on methods for studying the psychological effects of unconventional methods. RAND, Social Science Division, 3 February 1949. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 89, Folder 1095. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³⁷ See, for example, George, A. The intelligence value of content analysis, no date; Hans Speier to Lasswell on 8 April 1949. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 89, Folder 1095. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
- ³⁸ A selected list of unclassified publications, no date. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, General Files 1043, Series I, Box 80, Folder 1004. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

- ³⁹ Kirkpatrick, J. Harold D. Lasswell and the great tradition, 1980. Harold Dwight Lasswell Papers, Biographical/Memorabilia Files, 1043, Series V, Box 52, Folder 14. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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