

Paul F. Lazarsfeld

An Empirical Theory of Social Action - Collected Writings

Edited by Christian Fleck & Nico Stehr

Foreword by Raymond Boudon

Translations by Hella Beister

28th March 2011; 508pp; 234 × 156 mm; Hardback

ISBN: 978-1-905622-22-1; **£150.00**

Subjects: Social research and statistics; history of sociology

BIC: JHBC Readership: Postgraduate, research and scholarly

Ordering: Order direct from The Bardwell Press using contact details above or through Nielsen Book Net (Distributor ID 09548683).

Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901–1976) was a highly influential figure in the development of modern empirical methods in sociology and the social sciences. He laid many of the foundations for reliable social survey techniques and qualitative methods for understanding key aspects of contemporary society, such as voting studies, opinion polling, occupational and mass media research. Lazarsfeld's pioneering work in what he termed "administrative research" provided the intellectual basis for much of market and business research.

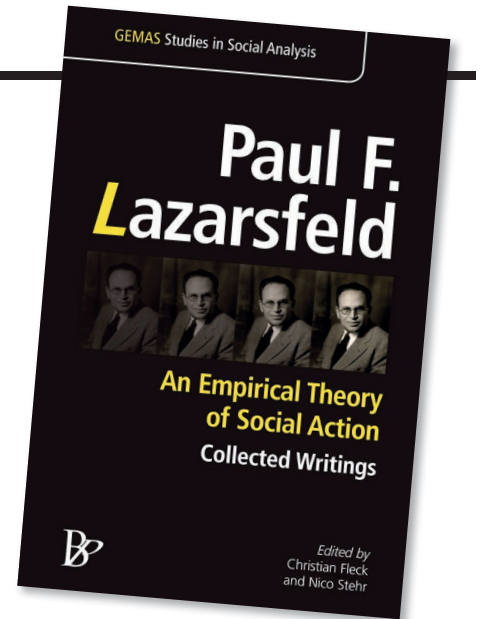
The articles collected together in *Paul F. Lazarsfeld: An Empirical Theory of Social Action* make Lazarsfeld's pioneering early work on youth and occupation available for the first time in English. They demonstrate the intellectual influences of Austro-marxism, academic psychology and the philosophy of the Vienna Circle, and their application to concrete issues of social concern. His development of an empirically grounded theory of social action was to produce many important insights into the analysis of social processes. His methodological approach was a key influence on both Robert K. Merton's "theories of the middle-range", and Barney Glaser's development, with Anselm Strauss, of "grounded theory".

Lazarsfeld's intellectual and methodological concerns played an important role in shaping the direction of sociology as a discipline in the United States. These were already evident in his early writings. They are remarkably modern in their approach and in their anticipation of some key concerns of current sociological methods.

The essays are accompanied by a detailed and illuminating biographical introduction by the editors, both eminent sociologists. It includes a foreword by the leading French sociologist Raymond Boudon who worked with and knew Lazarsfeld well. This collection is an invaluable contribution to the history of sociology in the 20th century, and represents the only source in English of his early writings.

Christian Fleck teaches sociology at the University of Graz, Austria. He was president of the Austrian Sociological Association (2005–2009) and of ISA's Research Committee on History of Sociology (2006–2010). His most recent publication is: *A Transatlantic History of the Social Sciences: Robber Barons, the Third Reich and the Invention of Empirical Social Research* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

Nico Stehr is Karl Mannheim Professor of Cultural Studies at the Zeppelin University, Friedrichshafen, Germany. His research interests centre on the transformation of modern societies into knowledge societies as well as the societal consequences of climate change. His most recent publication is: *Experts: The Knowledge and Power of Expertise* (with Reiner Grundmann, Routledge, 2011).



CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	
Foreword: Lazarsfeld's Main Intellectual Intuitions	Raymond Boudon
Introduction: From Vienna to New York	Christian Fleck & Nico Stehr
PART I: YOUTH AND OCCUPATION	
1. Behind the Scenes of School	Paul Lazarsfeld
2. Motives in Occupational Choice	Paul Lazarsfeld
3. Notes on Young Workers' Career Attitudes	Paul Lazarsfeld & Käthe Leichter
4. Young People on Authority and Family	Paul Lazarsfeld & Käthe Leichter
5. What Young People Want	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
PART II: UNEMPLOYMENT	
6. An Unemployed Village	Paul Lazarsfeld
7. The Psychological Consequences of Unemployment	Paul F. Lazarsfeld & Bohan Zawadzki
8. Marriage and the Sex Mores	Paul F. Lazarsfeld & Samuel Stouffer
9. Who Gets a Job?	Paul F. Lazarsfeld & Hazel Gaudet
PART III: QUALITATIVE METHODS	
10. Principles of Sociography	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
11. The Psychological Aspect of Market Research	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
12. The Art of Asking Why: Three Principles Underlying the Formulation of Questionnaires	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
13. Some Remarks on Typological Procedures in Social Research	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
14. Notes on the Logic of Generalization in Family Case Studies	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
15. The Quantification of Case Studies	Paul F. Lazarsfeld & W. S. Robinson
16. Remarks on Administrative and Critical Communications Research	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
17. Market Research On a Psychological Basis	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
PART IV: QUANTITATIVE METHODS	
18. The Analysis of Consumer Actions	Arthur Kornhauser & Paul F. Lazarsfeld
19. Interchangeability of Indices in the Measurement of Economic Influences	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
20. The Change of Opinion During a Political Discussion	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
PART V: RETROSPECT AND SUMMARY	
21. Historical Notes on the Empirical Study of Action: An Intellectual Odyssey	Paul F. Lazarsfeld
List of Sources	
Index	