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***‘The Perfect Sociology, Perfectly Applied’:
Sociology and the Social Gospel in Canada’s
English-Language Universities, 1900-1930***

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ABSTRACT

Sociology became part of the curriculum in Canada's English-language university system during the period 1900-1930. It took a variety of forms, but it was Protestant Social Gospel sociology that was first and most prominent among them. The Protestant Social Gospel was a socially and politically progressive international religious movement intent on establishing the Kingdom of God in the 'here and now.' Its proponents focused their efforts on trying to solve the myriad social problems that had accompanied the rapid industrialization, large-scale immigration and unregulated urbanization of Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their efforts were instrumental in setting the stage for the development of many aspects of Canada's welfare state. One of the major tools Social Gospelers employed in their efforts at economic, social, political, and religious reform was the nascent discipline of sociology. The sociology they developed and employed was resolutely religious, morally laden, and unabashedly political; indeed, minus the religious aspect, not unlike the 'public sociology' recently developed and advocated by Michael Burawoy. While there has been much written about the Social Gospel in Canada and the United States, almost nothing has been written about the Social Gospel sociology they developed and institutionalized in Canada's Protestant denominational colleges. My paper seeks to address this shortcoming by: 1) identifying the men, mostly clerics, who established the first sociology courses and programs in Canada; 2) describing the programs they developed; and 3) examining a selection of their writings (sermons, lectures, articles, books) in an effort to capture the essence of the Social Gospel sociology they taught.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Helmes-Hayes received his university education from Queen's (Hons. BA-BPHE, MA) and the University of Toronto (PhD, 1985). He was a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Carleton University, 1986-7. He has taught at the University of Waterloo since 1989. He teaches the department's required undergraduate and graduate courses in sociological theory as well as political sociology, the sociology of knowledge, modern theory, and a 4th-year graduate seminar (unique in Canada) dealing with the history of Canadian sociology. His research area is the history of sociology, especially Canadian sociology, and he has published articles on many of the pioneers of the Canadian discipline including S.D. Clark, Leonard Marsh, and John Porter. As well, he has published articles on key figures in the history of British and American sociology (Morris Ginsberg, Robert Park, and Everett Hughes). His work has appeared in a wide variety of journals based in four countries and published in three languages: *Recherches sociographiques*, the *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, the *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, *Sociological Quarterly*, the *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences*, the *American Sociologist*, the *British Journal of Sociology*, and *Sociologica* (among others). His most recent major publications include a co-edited special edition of the *Canadian Journal of Sociology* on 'Public Sociology' (October 2009) and a comprehensive intellectual biography of John Porter, *Measuring the Mosaic*, released in March 2010. *Measuring the Mosaic* won the 2011 Canadian Sociology Association John Porter Tradition of Excellence Award for the best book published in Canadian Sociology in 2010.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
I. The Context: Turn of the Century Canada	3
II. The Social Gospel: A Primer	4
III. Three Varieties of the Social Gospel	8
IV. The Place and Role of Sociology in the Social Gospel	12
V. The Establishment of Christian Sociology in Canada's English-Language Universities: Findings to Date	15
VI. Conclusions	20
Bibliography	27
Table 1: Those who taught Sociology for at least 2 years 1895-1930	16

‘The Perfect Sociology, Perfectly Applied’¹: Sociology and the Social Gospel in Canada’s English-Language Universities, 1900-1930

Introduction

In their 1996 volume *‘A Full-Orbed Christianity,’* Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau claim that prior to 1920 sociology was “almost totally absent” from the curricula of Canadian universities (75). And that is certainly the prevailing historical image of the discipline.² Extant accounts of the historical development of university-based English-language sociology all but skip over the period before 1930, saving at McGill and Toronto, on the grounds that there is no real story to tell.³ According to such accounts, the pioneers of Canadian university sociology were, at McGill, Carl Dawson and Everett Hughes and, somewhat later at Toronto, S.D. Clark.⁴ But such accounts gloss over the important efforts of about two dozen trailblazers – all men, most of them Protestant clerics – who established a form of so-called ‘social gospel’ sociology in Canada’s English language universities during the period 1900-1930.⁵ I come today to tell you their story.

It surprises me that I will do so, because it is a project I never intended to undertake. A year and a bit ago, I was about to start a long overdue sabbatical and I thought I had a perfectly tailored

¹ United Church Archives, S.D. Chown Papers, Box 13, file 380: 12 [hereafter UCA, Chown Papers, ...].

² There has been some discussion of research undertaken by social gospellers who were not university or college faculty (Allen 1971, 1972, 1976; Barber 1972; Rutherford 1972; Felske 1975; Campbell 1983a; Cook 1985; Fraser 1988; Whitaker 1992; Valverde 1991; Christie and Gauvreau 1996; Cormier 1997; Westhues 2002). The one in-depth treatment of a pre-1930 social gospel sociologist, Leonard Hatfield’s volume on Dalhousie University’s Samuel Henry Prince, says little about Prince’s scholarly work (Hatfield 1990; see also Cormier 1997).

³ Several accounts make passing reference to the sociology of the period as “social gospel” sociology, but don’t examine it in any depth (e.g. Tomovic 1975; Brym 1980: 15-6; Hiller 1982: 8-11; Campbell 1983a; Shore 1987: 75-80; Valverde 1991: 54, 129; Christie and Gauvreau 1996: 75-6, 83-4, 89; Semple 1996: 274, 351, 375, 393). Cormier (1997) briefly examines the careers of W.A. Riddell, Samuel Henry Prince, and Edmund Bradwin and argues that they “missed” opportunities to institutionalize academic sociology. Riddell got ‘sidetracked’ into government, Prince into church work and social work, and Bradwin into adult education. Cormier does not discuss the character of the social gospel or its namesake sociology.

⁴ Some useful sources re McGill during this period are Hall (1964, 1988, 1989), Wilcox-Magill (1983), Shore (1987), Helmes-Hayes (1985, 1994), Christie and Gauvreau (1996). Major sources re Clark’s role as a pioneer include Harrison (1981, 1983), Hiller (1982), Campbell 1983b; Nock 1983, 1986; Helmes-Hayes (1985), Clark (1988), and the essays collected in Magill and Michelson, eds. (1999).

⁵ My account focuses on developments in Canada’s English-language Protestant denominational colleges and theological schools. There was a similar movement in English-language *Catholic* post-secondary educational institutions such as St. Francis Xavier University (see, e.g. Hiller 1982: 8-9; Dadaro and Pluta 2012).

project ready to go. For many years I have taught a seminar course on the history of Canadian sociology – to my knowledge, the only such course in Canada – and I thought I could simply sit down and turn the notes from that course into a book. I was wrong. It's been fourteen months now, and I am still unable to get past the first chapter. This is not due to a lack of effort or a paucity of results; in fact, I have nearly 150 pages of draft text. The problem? Well, when I started to write the first substantive chapter, the one that dealt with the Protestant social gospel-style sociology which, according to the conventional wisdom, characterized the period 1900-1930, I discovered that we knew almost nothing about it. But I also found out that there were data sources to hand. And as I began to delve into these sources, it became apparent that: a) there was much I could do to fill in the historical account; and b) some of what we thought we knew about so-called “social gospel sociology” was wrong.

I started by reading about the social gospel in Europe and the United States, for that is where the Canadian social gospel originated. To understand the impact of the social gospel on Canadian society in general and Canadian universities in particular, I had to read not only considerable church history – the social gospel was tied intimately to developments in Protestant theology, pastoral practice, and efforts at evangelism – but also a good deal of 19th century theology and philosophy. More specifically, I had to get a sense of the Protestant churches' respective theological and practical responses to two sets of events: 1/ the rise of science as a way of knowing and, of course, to Charles Darwin's work in particular; and 2/ the widespread and debilitating social problems that began to bedevil Canadian society in the last part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th. As I examined the impact of the social gospel on the universities, I discovered – in part by reviewing hundreds of university course calendars from the period – that there was more sociology taught in Canadian English-language universities than we knew. I then used the leads provided by these calendar listings to guide me as I rooted around in university and

church archival collections. The result? Again, much to my amazement, I found myself – an atheist in the mold of Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins – absorbed throughout my sabbatical in trying to understand where sociology fit in the plans and activities of Canada’s turn-of-the-century Protestant churches in all their progressive, optimistic, practical, scientific, religious, do-gooding glory.

I. The Context: Turn of the Century Canada

After a quarter-century of slow economic growth 1870-1895, Canada industrialized rapidly between 1895 and 1930. During roughly the same period, its population grew from 4.3 million to 10.4 million, in the main due to large-scale immigration. Most of this growth occurred in the cities; Canada’s urban population grew over 500%, from 1.1 to 5.6 million, so that by 1931 over half the nation’s population lived in urban centres.⁶ These three developments taken together – large-scale industrialization, mass immigration, and rapid urbanization – created a set of interrelated social problems, especially visible in the city, that held the attention of Canada’s Protestant churches throughout the period.

In discussing the reform efforts of the Protestant churches and the specific influence of the social gospel, it is important to bear in mind that it was just one of a large number of reform movements, mostly religious in inspiration, which tried to come to grips with Canada’s problems at the time. Though not all Canadian reformers were ‘believers,’ most were and, without a doubt, the core belief system that guided their efforts was Christianity. At the time, about half of Canadians were Protestant and, outside of Quebec, Canada was overwhelmingly a Protestant nation: about 80%.⁷

⁶ These data were taken from Statistics Canada, Historical Statistics of Canada, Population Series A1-247: Series A1: Estimated population of Canada, 1867-1977); and Statistics Canada, Historical Statistics of Canada, Population Series A1-247: Series A67-69: Population, urban and rural, census dates 1871-1976.

⁷ 40% were Catholic, and the rest held other faiths, or none (re 1901, see Airhart 1992: Appendix p. 148; re 1931, see Statistics Canada, Section A: Population and Migration: Series A, Table A164: Principal religious denominations of the population, census dates, 1871 to 1971,” [www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-X/sectiona/A164_184-eng.csv; accessed 21 December 2012]).

II. The Social Gospel: A Primer

You will gather from what I have already said that the social gospel was a Protestant theological and practical response to the serious and widespread social problems that plagued Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is referred to as the *social* gospel because it was based on a then-novel conception of the place of Christian *conversion* in the process of humanizing or “Christianizing” the social order. According to traditional Protestant theology and practice, the church’s first purpose was to save *individual* souls – to get people to convert to Christianity: to believe in God, accept Jesus as a personal saviour, and follow a pious life in the here and now with the promise of everlasting life in Heaven as their ultimate reward. The social problems of the secular world were seen to be a strictly secondary and derivative concern. They were regarded as the consequence of widespread sin and would be solved only via successful mass evangelization. As more people adopted Christian beliefs and acted with a proper Christian “character,” *social regeneration* would occur automatically.

Protestant reformers influenced by the *social gospel* rejected this view. Stressing the idea that Christians should be more concerned about creating the Kingdom of Heaven on earth in the here and now, they noted that the prosecution of many successful evangelical “campaigns” had done little to solve social problems.⁸ They argued that *social regeneration* was *at least as important as* and would have to *precede rather than follow individual regeneration*. They did not deny that individuals had limits and faults that led to sinful behaviour and created societal problems (Allen 1975: 3), but they reminded the pious middle class that in many respects people were products of their environment. Where their life circumstances exposed them to poverty, vice, and crime, they would likely fall prey

⁸ The rate of evangelization in Canada was very high at the time, though recruitment rates varied by denomination. Anglicans and Presbyterians were particularly successful; between 1901 and 1921, the Anglican Church grew by 106%, the Presbyterian by 67%. By comparison, the Baptist church grew by 32% and the Methodist by 26% (“Publication of Census Figures,” *Christian Guardian*, 23 May 1923: 3; cited Airhart 1992: 127, see also 78- 93).

to sin (Shore 1987: 76; see also Valverde 1991: 132-34). The influential and well known Methodist James Shaver Woodsworth put the argument in plain terms in a 1915 article in *The Grain Growers' Guide*: "At least in this world, souls are always incorporated in bodies, and to save a man, you must save his body, soul and spirit. To really save one man, you must transform the community in which he lives" (cited MacInnis 1957: 91).

Without basic changes to the Canadian economy and other faulty institutions, including the church, Woodsworth argued, people would lack the economic, social, political, and moral wherewithal to realize the task of establishing God's Kingdom on Earth. As S.D. Chown, the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church of Canada from 1910-1925 put it: "You must abolish the social wrong to give the individual a chance."⁹

To this day, scholarly debates exist regarding the popularity and influence of the social gospel. Indeed, disputes remain regarding even who should be counted as a social gospeler – and I will return to this key point momentarily. That said, it is generally agreed that in one version or another social gospel ideas slowly gained acceptance in the Protestant churches – to a greater degree among Methodists than Presbyterians, Baptists or Anglicans – reaching the zenith of their influence between 1918 and 1925 when, in the Methodist Church in particular, the social gospel became the official doctrinal orientation and guide to practical social service activities (Bliss 1968; Allen 1971; Emery 1977; Airhart 1992: 105-11; Semple 1996: 345-55). That said, throughout the period, Protestants of all denominations championed a remarkable variety of moral and social causes and never did come to a consensus on the degree of social change required to Christianize Canadian society. The best known and most widely documented of their social causes was, of course, temperance, which they promoted alongside a clutch of other personal moral issues gathered under

⁹ UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 367: 3. In *The Lord's Dominion*, Neil Semple's history of the Methodist Church in Canada, he notes: "A starving, exploited family living in a slum was not in a position to contemplate heavenly salvation; only a truly just society could produce good individuals" (1996: 351).

the heading of “social purity”: an end to prostitution, “illegitimacy,” gambling, and the like (Valverde 1991). But Protestant reformers fulminated about economic and political issues as well: urban planning, slum clearance, political corruption, prison reform, labour unions, feminism, old age pensions, unemployment and health insurance among others. Some even went so far as to champion the nationalization of land, railroads, banks, and industries (Rutherford 1972; Cook 1985; Phillips 1996).

As you might expect, given this wide range of concerns, the social gospel was not, except in the most vague and general sense, a unified perspective and movement. Indeed, students of the movement claim that by the time World War I broke out there were three varieties of the social gospel – radical, liberal or progressive, and conservative – the camps differentiated one from another by the degree and kind of change they judged necessary to create a truly Christianized Canada (Allen 1971: 17). These political distinctions among camps of so-called “social gospellers” are important; they raise a point crucial to the argument I make in the balance of this paper. To distinguish between kinds of social gospellers based on their political and economic views is to conflate two things that do not necessarily belong together. The social gospel was a theological view concerning the relative importance and temporal priority of individual and social regeneration. It was not logically linked to any particular set of political-economic beliefs. Historically, we have regarded the social gospel as a progressive social doctrine. And so it was. But most Protestant social reformers were *not* radicals – or even liberals in a hurry. This was particularly the case with Anglicans (Pulker 1986) and Presbyterians (Fraser 1988), but progressives from all denominations were distressed by the reluctance of their respective churches to take official positions on political and economic issues that moved very far from the status quo.¹⁰ Indeed, they charged, and rightly, that the established Protestant church had come to be both a cause

¹⁰ Re: the Methodists, see Semple (1996: 349-54); re: the Baptists, see Moir (1980).

and a symbol of the problems of the age. Simply put: it had become a bastion of conservatism. It had abandoned Christianity for “churchianity” – a falsely pious, formal, conservative style of worship and living mired in the self-satisfied and self-serving biases of the comfortable middle and upper classes (Bland 1920; Allen 1973: 16-7, 2008: 189; Cook 1985: 192; McKay 2008: 99, 237-9). Caring for one’s neighbour had always been an integral part of what was expected of the committed Christian, but the individualistic ethic of Protestantism, when practised in conjunction with the competitive, individualistic ethic of capitalism, had led people to forget that such was the case. Mainstream Protestants had come to focus on personal piety and economic success at the expense of social service, downplaying, if not ignoring, their individual and collective duty to be instruments of societal-level regeneration (Semple 1996: 334-62 *passim*).

This is where social gospelers and their more socially minded traditional evangelical allies came in. They reminded their complacent brothers and sisters that “Jesus was a social reformer as well as an evangelist, seeking to regenerate the surroundings as well as the souls of his followers” (Airhart 1992: 77; citing Albert Carman).¹¹ But progressives were in a distinct minority and forced to fight an uphill battle until about 1920. Bryan Fraser’s description of Presbyterian progressives in *The Social Uplifters* captures the cautious liberal reformism of the majority of Protestants of all denominations most of whom were not really *social* gospelers.

Presbyterian progressives ... welcomed alliances with Canada’s business and professional communities ... and sought reforms that would make the social and economic system work more harmoniously and efficiently. If their moralism was at times passionate, it did not involve any fundamental critique of the values and institutions that had been the vehicles for the providential progress of Anglo-Saxon civilization throughout the nineteenth century

¹¹ Carman was a General Superintendent of the Methodist Church of Canada 1884-1914, though he shared the duties with others 1884-9 and 1910-14.

(2001: xii; see also McKay 2008: 217).

III. Three Varieties of the Social Gospel

Bear in mind as I outline the three versions of the doctrine that none of the people I use as an exemplar held a university appointment,¹² so they are not part of my ‘data base’ here. It is nonetheless useful to review their work, first, because their respective ideas clearly capture the spirit of the three different varieties of the social gospel and, second, they remind us that for much of this period the social gospel had a much higher profile outside the universities than within them.

Radical

The best-known radical social gospeler of the period is J.S. Woodsworth, a Methodist clergyman and Christian socialist who ran All People’s Settlement House in North Winnipeg from 1907 to 1913. Woodsworth was inspired by his experiences at All People’s to write two classic volumes of the radical social gospel – *Strangers within Our Gates* (1972 [1909]) and *My Neighbour* (1972 [1911]) – both of which were intended to draw attention to the terrible living and working conditions of immigrants and other members of the underclass living in Canada’s urban slums.

Woodsworth eventually pursued a career in federal politics. In 1932, he helped to found the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (later the New Democratic Party)(MacInnis 1953: 253-60,261-80)¹³ and, in 1933, had a hand in the drafting of the Regina Manifesto, a radical political statement which called for the complete “eradication” of capitalism in Canada (see Zakuta 1964: Appendix B: 160-9). Though a Christian socialist, he was much influenced by the gradualist socialism of the British Fabians and the New Liberal philosophy of the British Labour Party of the period (MacInnis

¹² Though he never held a university appointment, Woodsworth organized and/or taught a number of courses under the aegis of various Canadian universities. Re Woodsworth at the University of Manitoba, see LAC, J.S. Woodsworth Papers, C7, vol. 2, J. Howard Falk to J.A. Maclean, 28 September 1914; re Woodsworth at McGill, see MacInnis (1953: 90-92).

¹³ Woodsworth served seven years as the President of the CCF (1932-9) and six consecutive terms as the MP for his riding, North Winnipeg (1921-1942).

1953: 203-4, 217, 276; McNaught 1959: 92-7, 126-7, 134-5) and, thus, espoused policies such as the conscription of wealth, the public ownership of utilities, the development of progressive labour legislation, and the formation of a comprehensive welfare state (MacInnis 1953: 217-8). And he was eventually successful, at least on the last-mentioned front, helping to secure the passage of a number of early pieces of Canada's welfare state legislation, in particular old age pensions (MacInnis 1953: 185-93; McNaught 1959: 215-20).

Liberal/Progressive

A classic example of the liberal wing of the social gospel is Prime Minister Mackenzie King.¹⁴ King's contribution to the literature of the progressive social gospel is *Industry and Humanity* (1918), a treatise on industrial relations which he wrote while a fellow at the Rockefeller Institute and while serving as an industrial relations advisor to John D. Rockefeller. *Industry and Humanity* demonstrates the very modest nature of King's reformist views about the rights of labour and the role of the state. Unlike American progressives, British Fabians, and prominent British New Liberals who were then advocating substantially augmented rights for labour that would be guaranteed by a powerful interventionist state, King demurred. He employed the *rhetoric* of reform liberalism, but retained what Reg Whitaker has referred to as a "paternalistic" attitude toward workers' rights and a generally supportive stance toward the privileges of capital (1992: 61, 64, 65). Certainly, he never entertained the notion that anything beyond tinkering with the system was necessary. In *Industry and Humanity* he expressed absolute support for the principle of the "national minimum" on a number of fronts (1918: 350) and rejected the doctrines of *laissez-faire* and the minimalist state (350). However, once in power, he undertook reform measures only after being pushed to do so by labour, women's groups, and the CCF. A good example is the Industrial Disputes Investigations Act, which he wrote

¹⁴ King was prime minister for 22 years between 1921 and 1948. On King, the social gospel and sociology, see Cook (1985: 196-227), Fraser (1988: 104, 136, 141-2, 151n, 159, 162), Whitaker (1992: 46-79), Christie and Gauvreau (1996: 87, 107-8, 214, 243), and Westhues (2002).

while Minister of Labour, and which his government enforced between 1921 and 1948. It neither required owners to recognize unions nor forced them to enter into collective bargaining.

Conservative

Conservative social gospeler Herbert Brown Ames was even less convinced than Mackenzie King that any sort of major restructuring of capitalism was necessary. Like King a Presbyterian, Ames was a wealthy Montreal businessman who inherited substantial industrial and insurance concerns. Despite his privileged background, he was sympathetic to the plight of working-class Montrealers and became an advocate of scientific principles of urban renewal and town planning who fought bossism and electoral corruption in Montreal. However, his primary concern was housing reform. In an effort to draw attention to the housing problems of the poor, he undertook a detailed social survey of the living and working conditions of 38,000 people living in a slum community at the foot of Mount Royal. He published his findings as *The City Below the Hill* in 1897 and then drew on these data to press for the passage of legislation that would create and enforce minimum housing standards in Montreal. At the same time, as a businessman, Ames felt that the most viable solution to the housing problem would come not from government oversight or intervention but via the market. Drawing on the slogan "philanthropy plus five percent," he argued that wealthy businessmen could do much to solve Montreal's housing problem by building adequate, affordable housing as a semi-philanthropic investment. He followed his own advice and built a model neighbourhood – Diamond Court on William Street in Montreal – but most of his efforts regarding changes to housing legislation, rental law and the like proved ineffectual.

Richard Allen, for decades the dean of social gospel studies in Canada, has pointed out that the three versions of the social gospel constitute a continuum. At one end were the conservatives, traditional evangelicals who "tend[ed] to identify sin with individual acts" and saw it as inappropriate to make more than minor changes to the economic system. Peoples' morals, not

institutions, were the problem. At the other end of the scale were radicals, many of them full-fledged social gospelers, who argued that “there could be no personal salvation without social salvation,” and pressed for sweeping changes to the system. Liberals in the middle worked with greater and lesser degrees of urgency for an expanded interventionist and welfare state, but always within the system-as-constituted (Allen 1968: 31).

The link that Allen draws here between political-economic radicalism and a belief in the social gospel is important. However, as I noted above, two further points must be kept in mind. First, as William Hutchison notes in his influential 1976 book, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*, to be a religious reformer did not make one a progressive and by no means implied that one was a social gospeler. Many period movements of “religious social reform” were, he notes, quite conservative. For example, many American Christians who were involved in crusades for temperance, peace, and/or mission work were neither theological liberals nor social progressives (Hutchison 1976: 165 n.36; cited Airhart 1992: 104). Canadian research shows that the same situation obtained above the 49th parallel (see Valverde 1991; Airhart 1992). Second, Hutchison goes on to note that even many of those Protestants who were *social progressives* were not full-fledged social gospelers. Rather – and this is the point I stressed in the Introduction – what made one a full-fledged social gospeler was a willingness to abandon traditional doctrinal views about the spiritual and temporal priority of evangelism in relation to social reform. Some traditional evangelicals, including prominent Canadian figures such as Samuel Dwight Chown came to espouse very progressive political and economic views. But he never wavered from the principle that the surest route to the Kingdom of God on Earth was the time-honoured practice of saving individual souls.¹⁵ For progressive, socially oriented Protestants such as General Superintendent Chown, it was a question of seeing efforts at institutional reform as a core or essential rather than secondary aspect of

¹⁵ Re: Chown, see my remarks in the conclusion, drawn in part from Gauvreau (1991: 250-4).

the Christianizing efforts of the church and each of its individual members. The two processes were symbiotic and the social question had for too long been ignored. As S.D. Chown put it:

I do not think that Xt [sic, Christ] made much of the distinction we think so important today, between individual and social questions. Indeed, it is difficult to maintain any essential distinction. The actors in connection with all social questions are individuals. The responsibility for all social maladjustment lies in the final issue at the door of certain individuals.... It is foolish indeed to try to promote social welfare solely for individuals. Only society as such can strike at the root and carry out the program of Christ.¹⁶

My point is that we need to make distinctions not just between those who were politically progressive, even radical, and those who were not, but also between those who were true social gospelers and those who did not take the doctrinal step beyond being “progressive Protestant evangelicals.” This is crucial to my study of academic sociology of the period because my preliminary research suggests that the allegedly ‘social gospel’ sociology that was taught and advocated by most of the cleric-sociologists that taught in Canada’s universities and Protestant denominational colleges in the period 1900-1930 was not based on a ‘true’ form of the social gospel. Rather, it was a form of generic “social Christianity” perhaps best labelled as “progressive Protestant evangelical sociology” which, in political-economic terms, was congruent with what has heretofore been referred to (I would say mistakenly) as the liberal or progressive version of the “social gospel.” It is not surprising that this was the sort of sociology being taught in Canada’s universities in the early 20th century. The primary purpose of denominational colleges and theological schools was not to foment social revolution, but to train clergymen while keeping the rest of the student body on the straight and narrow Christian path.

¹⁶ UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 367: 3.

IV. The Place and Role of Sociology in the Social Gospel

By the time the Protestant Churches began to incorporate sociology into the curricula of their respective denominational colleges in the early 20th century, both the Bible and the Christian apologetics that had once made the Bible all but unassailable, had been successfully challenged by scientists, historians, and literary theorists. Much of what was in the Bible, and much of what had previously passed muster as Christian apologetics, was now seen to be either demonstrably wrong or open to multiple interpretations. For their part, theologians had tried to answer back during the 19th century, developing philosophical strategies that either denied scientific findings and claims about the Bible and Christian belief or, more frequently, incorporated them into new Christian apologetics (see, e.g., McKillop 1979; Armour and Trott 1981; Berger 1983; Cook 1985; Gauvreau 1991). And, even as late as the first decades of the 20th century, many scientists had not objected to being ‘incorporated’ in this manner. So powerful was Christianity as a worldview, and so much were they influenced by this aspect of their cultural heritage, that they were quite content to see theology and natural science as complementary rather than competing or mutually exclusive endeavours. As Gauvreau puts it in *The Evangelical Century*: “[There developed] a common context of understanding among clergymen and scientists. Protestant ministers claimed for theology the status of a science, and scientists professed the religious nature of their inquiries” (1991: 60-1).

Given that the general theological/intellectual framework social gospelers adopted involved a combination of religious and scientific understanding, it is not surprising that the sociology they adopted/developed had a similarly scientific and religious orientation. Right from the beginning, they adopted sociology as a *worldview* and as a *tool*. As a worldview, sociology stressed the collective, organic, and social character of human activity (Morgan 1969: 42). As well, it pinpointed the source of social problems in the structure of the social system rather than the

character of individual persons (Shore 1987: 76). This made it an ideal orientation for the Protestant churches as they tried to remain relevant in a secularizing world that threatened to leave them behind. Sociology was a particularly useful tool in this respect.

To retain their social status and political influence, progressive Protestant church leaders and clergymen turned their attention away from theological and philosophical argumentation toward what they referred to as “practical theology” or “applied Christianity” informed by a ‘scientific’ sociology. This is where the connection between sociology and social service came into play. The churches justified their collective shift from the level of Christian moral imperatives and a broad philosophy of progressive change to a practical, ‘hands on’ agenda by offering scientifically based advice to those who, on a daily basis, tried to help the thousands of ignorant, poverty-stricken souls living in the squalor of Canada’s slums. Indeed, Allen argues on this count that by 1914 “the social task” had come to rank equally with evangelism in the “official hierarchy of concerns of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches” (1973: 12) such that, by that date all four denominations had established committees of social service.¹⁷ As they immersed themselves in social service of various kinds, the churches relied ever more heavily on sociology, for sociology was the ‘disciplinary’ province of the social survey and, thus, a major source of reliable data. This is not to say that the small handful of cleric-professors teaching sociology in Canada’s Protestant theological colleges and universities carried out such surveys; they had neither the resources nor the time. Academic sociology remained basically a teaching subject. Such surveys as were

¹⁷ The Anglicans established a Standing Committee on Moral and Social Reform in 1908; it was replaced by their Council on Social Service in 1915. The Baptists established a Committee on Temperance and Moral Reform in 1906 and joined, first, the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada (MSRCC) in 1907 and, subsequently, its successor, the Social Service Council of Canada (SSCC) when it was formed out of the MSRCC in 1914. The Presbyterians established a Standing Committee on Temperance and Moral Reform in 1907 and joined the MSRCC the same year. They, too, joined the SSCC in 1914. The Methodists set up a Department of Temperance and Moral Reform in 1902, became a member of the MSRCC in 1907 and joined the SSCC in 1914 (all from Allen 1971: 37, 70 and Pulker 1986: 26, 31).

undertaken were carried out by either wealthy individuals (Ames 1972 [1897]) or, more commonly, by a group empowered and funded by one or more of the churches (see Campbell 1983a: 21-2, 1983b: 58-62; Christie and Gauvreau 1996: 178-86).¹⁸ But church colleges certainly made divinity students familiar with the purpose and results of social surveys of all kinds and some churches taught the techniques of the social survey to candidates for the ministry as part of their program of theological studies.¹⁹ Indeed, so useful did the churches find sociology to be that they unabashedly drew on the growing body of scientific sociological literature, including textbooks, then being produced in the United States. They saw no disjunction between their efforts in aid of social change driven by religious moral imperatives and the use of scientific sociology; in fact, they trumpeted the partnership.

V. The Establishment of Christian Sociology in Canada's English-Language Universities: Findings to Date

Bear in mind as I outline these findings that they are preliminary. To begin, some of the data are missing. I have not yet visited the archives of some of the universities and colleges that played a role in this story. Two particularly significant omissions to date are the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg. The latter in particular is crucial because until 1938, it was known as United College and United College, of course, was the spiritual “epicentre” of the social gospel in Canada, home to the Methodist preacher Salem Bland, the author of *The New Christianity*

¹⁸ Perhaps the best example of this is the series of over a dozen social surveys carried out in several Canadian communities – urban and rural – under the auspices of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in 1913-14 (UCA, Methodist Church of Canada and Presbyterian Church in Canada, Reports of ... Social Surveys, 1913-1914; see also Christie and Gauvreau 1996: 165-96; Hunt 2002).

¹⁹ The program at Victoria University (Toronto) directed by S.W. Dean (1915-19), who was listed as “Special Lecturer in Practical Sociology” and whose office was listed as the “Fred Victor Mission” (*Victoria University Calendar 1915-16*: 14) required candidates for the ministry to take “Sociology”: “The probationer is to make a study of the social, moral, and religious condition of his field along the lines of a questionnaire supplied by the College.” Suggested reading: *Rural Survey of the County of Huron* (*Victoria University Calendar 1915-16*: 21, 24). In 1920, Charlotte Whitton, in her capacity as assistant secretary to J.G. Shearer of the Social Service Council of Canada, produced detailed guidelines for the prosecution of social surveys, urban and rural, in a nineteen-page document entitled *The Community Survey: A Basis for Social Action* (LAC, Canadian Council of Churches, MG 28 I 327 vol. 32, file 35; see also Christie and Gauvreau 1996: 179-80).

(1920), perhaps the most influential of all Canadian social gospel texts. As well, there is a paucity of material respecting the kind of sociology taught by these pioneers. Course descriptions in university calendars often include lists course texts, and these are helpful indicators but they are no more than that. My problem is that some of these people were not sufficiently prominent to leave much of an archival trail. With that caveat in place, I would highlight the following findings of my research:

Table 1: Those who taught Sociology for at least 2 years 1895-1930; listed by date course first offered [including courses with “sociology” in course description^β and those titled “sociology”]

<u>Name</u>	<u>Univ</u>	<u>Rel Affil</u>	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>taught SGY</u>
Borden, B.C. ^β	MtA	Meth	C	1895-1924
Newman, A.H. ^β	Mc	Bap	N	1896- NK
Paisley, T. ^β	M	Meth	K	1898-1903
Tufts, J.F. ^β	Acadia	Bap		1899-1913
Caldwell, W. ^β	McGill	NK	NK	1904-16
		--- +++ ---		
McCrimmon, A.L. ²⁰	McM	Bap		1906-30
Balcom, A.B.	Acadia	Bap		1913-30
Dean, S.W.	VicU(TO)	Meth	C	1915-1919
Macmillan, J.W.	Man	Meth	C	1915-19
	VicU(TO)			1919-30
Boggs, T.H.	UBC	NK		1917-21
Murchie, R.W.	ManAgC	Bap	C	1918-30
Logan, H.A.	Bran/UWO	Bap		1919-21
Michell, H.H.	McM	NK		1920-26
Jones, R.F.	Man	NK		1921-30
Beckett, S.E.	UBC	NK		1921-28
Brown, W.J.	UWO	Ang		1921-30
Line, J.	MtA	Meth	C	1922-26
Dawson, C.A.	McGill	Bap	C	1922-30
Munro, H.F.	Dal	NK		1922-24
Prince, S.H.	Dal	Ang	C	1924-30
Riddell, J.H.	Wes/UnC	Meth	C	before 1926
Guy, N.M.	MtA	Meth	C	1926-30
Taylor, K.W.	McM	Bap		1926-30
Hughes, E.C.	McGill	Meth		1928-30

²⁰ Curiously, though a devout Baptist, principal of McMaster University when it was a Baptist denominational college, and a popular preacher who took training in theology and divinity, McCrimmon never sought ordination.

TOTAL = 24

NK = Not Known

Data taken from respective university calendars.

1. Courses with some sociological content or component, but not titled sociology; that is, courses which made explicit mention of “sociological themes,” a “sociological orientation,” or used a sociological textbook, were taught at four universities – Mount Allison (1895), McMaster (1896), Acadia (1898), and McGill (1904) – before the first course titled “sociology” was taught at McMaster in 1906. A good example is a course description for an untitled “Honour course” required of third-year economics students and taught by John Freeman Tufts at Acadia in 1899:

The work in this course will be along sociological lines as represented by the following works or their equivalents: Kidd, *Social Evolution*; Fairbanks, *Introduction to Sociology*; Schaffle, *Quintessence of Socialism* (*Acadia University Calendar 1899- 1900*: 20).

2. Courses titled sociology were taught in at a dozen or more universities, church colleges, schools of theology and the like before 1930, in half the cases before 1920.

a. pre-1920: McMaster (1906), Acadia (1908), Mount Allison (1916), Victoria University (Toronto) (1916), Manitoba Agricultural College (1918), Brandon College (1919);

b. 1920-1930: Western (1921), UBC (1921), McGill (1922), Dalhousie (1922), University of Manitoba (1923), Manitoba College (1926).

The course, “Sociology 1,” prescribed for first-year divinity students at Victoria University (Toronto) and taught by John Walker Macmillan beginning in 1919-20, is an especially good example. During the first term of this two-term introductory course students studied “The Social Gospel of the New Testament and Its Application to Modern Life” two hours per week. In the second term they studied “Applied Christianity: Relief, criminology, industrial accidents, child welfare, etc” two hours per week (*Victoria University Calendar 1919-20*: 23).

Of the twelve universities, at least eight were denominationally based religious schools and it appears as if the social gospel was a significant influence on the sociology taught at ten of these places.

3. In the case of the courses titled “sociology”:

- a. Fewer than half had a Christian title or obvious Christian orientation (aside from the use of Christian texts or texts written by known Christians);
- b. all five of those which listed textbooks as part of the course description listed scientific sociological texts, usually American (80% of texts listed were American);
- c. all six of those which provided detailed course descriptions focused on “social problems” and all six examined various ‘progressive’ policies and practices, including socialism, as possible solutions to social problems.
- d. only one of the six had an ‘applied’ social service component (i.e. required students to work, e.g., in a settlement house).

An especially good example is the introductory sociology course at McMaster University taught by Abraham Lincoln McCrimmon beginning in 1906:

Sociology: A discussion by means of lectures and essays of the general theory of society and its laws; the evolution of the social consciousness; an examination of the groupings, organs and functions of society; a study of social dynamics and technology. This general work will be followed by a more particular examination of some of the institutions of society, such as the family, the state or the school; and some of the different classes of society, such as the operative, the capitalistic, the professional; of methods of social amelioration respecting the dependent, defective and criminal classes. Course texts: Small, A.W. *General Sociology*; Giddings, F.H. *Principles of Sociology*; Small, A.W. and G. Vincent, *Introduction to the Study of Society*; Ross, E.A. *Foundations of Sociology*; Henderson, C.R. *Social Settlements*

and *An Introduction to the Study of Dependent, Defective and Delinquent Classes*; Brooks, G.J. *Social Unrest: Studies in Labor and Socialist Movements*; Gilman, N.P. *A Dividend to Labor*; Webb, S. and B. Webb *Industrial Democracy*; Howard, G.E. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions, chiefly in England and the United States*; Ward, L.F. *Outlines of Sociology* (*McMaster University Calendar 1906-07*: 52-3).

4. In addition to offering the first course titled sociology, McMaster University achieved a number of other ‘firsts’ in the establishment of sociology in Canada. McMaster hired the first professor with sociology in his job title (McCrimmon was hired as Professor of “Political Economy, Sociology and Education”); established the first sociology graduate program (1907); and was the first to have two faculty appointments in sociology (H. Humfrey Michell joined McCrimmon in 1920).²¹
5. At least 24 people taught some version or other of ‘sociology’ for at least two years during the period 1900-30 (average 9 years). Nine of them were appointed to a position that had “sociology” in the job title, but none was hired to teach sociology exclusively. Most of them were trained in and had a primary responsibility to teach political economy, economics, political science, theology, or philosophy.
6. Of the 24, all were male and 23 were Canadian. Ten of the 18 for whom I have data were Protestant clergymen, and one (McCrimmon) took some of the training without being ordained.

²¹ In 1912-13, McCrimmon hired W.J.A. Donald as a “lecturer in political economy” (*McMaster University Calendar 1912-13*: 15). The following year, Donald became “lecturer in political economy and sociology” (*McMaster University Calendar 1913-14*: 15) but it is not clear from the calendar listings for the next couple years if Donald taught sociology. Donald left in 1918 (*McMaster University Calendar 1918-19*: 15) and was replaced by Duncan Alexander McGibbon, but McGibbon, though listed as lecturer in political economy and sociology, was an economist and did not teach sociology. H. Humfrey Michell was hired in 1919-20 and taught sociology courses until 1927-28 (*McMaster University Calendar 1919-20*: 19, 82-3; (McMaster University Archives, Box 403, McMaster University Annual Reports 1924/25-1930-31’ file: “McMaster University, Chancellor’s Report 1921-22”; “Enrolment of Students in Department of Political Economy” [signed H. Michell]) at which time Kenneth W. Taylor assumed these duties (McMaster University Archives, Box 403, McMaster University Annual Reports 1924/25-1930-31’ file: “McMaster University, Chancellor’s Report 1927-28”; “Enrolment of Students in Department of Political Economy” [signed K.W. Taylor]).

By denomination (of 18 confirmed), 7 were Methodists, 7 were Baptists, 2 were Presbyterians, and 2 were Anglicans. This denominational distribution is what one would expect. The conventional understanding is that, in Canada, at least, it was the Methodists and Baptists who were innovators in establishing sociology in the universities (Shore 1987: 75; Valverde 1991: 45; Christie and Gauvreau 1996: 82-3, 89).

7. All 24 held graduate degrees. Twelve of the 13 for whom I have data regarding their undergraduate degrees studied at denominational colleges. Nine of the 25 held a PhD, 6 held a DD or DST. Only 2 of the PhDs were in sociology (Dawson and Hughes at McGill, both with Chicago PhDs). Most were in philosophy, theology, economics, or political economy. Of those who held PhDs, four had graduated from Chicago and one from Yale, both of which were American centres of the social gospel. Two graduated from Edinburgh, one from Columbia, and one from Glasgow. All of the DDs and DSTs were from Canadian universities (Mount Allison, Wesley and Victoria), all of which had a social gospel orientation.

8. By 1927-28, six universities (Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, Victoria University, McGill and McMaster) offered a slate of three or more sociology courses. McGill offered by far the most: 13, including courses dealing with pathology, social progress, and delinquency, but none had a social gospel orientation. Next was Victoria University which offered a slate of five courses, three of which were obviously social gospel-oriented: introductory sociology and two courses dealing with the modern relevance of the social teachings of the Bible. The most frequently offered courses, other than introductory sociology, were social problems/applied sociology (five universities), and courses related to the modern relevance of the social teachings of the Bible (three universities).

VI. Conclusions

Multiple conclusions could be drawn from these data. I will mention just three.

1. The most obvious conclusion is that there was much more sociology taught in Canadian universities before 1930 than we have heretofore appreciated. Most of it was a form of Christian sociology taught in Canada's denominational colleges and theology schools. Though driven by overt moral purposes – Christian values – it was 'scientific' in form.
2. I deliberately chose not to use the term "social gospel" sociology in drawing my first conclusion. The information I have unearthed to date suggests that, as currently employed, the term social gospel sociology is in some respects a misnomer. Most of the sociology incorporated into the curricula of Canada's Protestant universities seems to have been *progressive evangelical sociology*, taught and practised by Protestants of all denominations who, while somewhat progressive on political, social and economic issues, nonetheless held fast to the traditional belief that *the mass salvation of individual souls via evangelism was at least as important as, if not more important than, institutional change*. So, strictly speaking, they did not adopt the social gospel. The most we can say is that they adopted some of the economic and social ideas of the social gospel, in particular the view that some degree of institutional change was essential. Interestingly, the specific policies and ideas they drew on were rooted largely in the writings of secular thinkers: British New Liberals and American progressives.²²

The sociology these individuals framed, taught, and practised was laden with Christian morality and progressive economic and political ideas but simultaneously scientific and practical. It was intended to help them understand the problems of the secular world and use that understanding to foster the creation of a Christian environment that would facilitate the salvation

²² On the British New Liberals, see Clarke (1978), Freedman (1978), Collini (1979), and Allett (1981). On the influence of the British New Liberals in Canada, see Ferguson (1993). Re the influence of American progressivism on sociology in the US and its links to social work, etc, see the essays by Calhoun, Lengermann and Niebrugge, Turner, Sica, Camic and Calhoun in Calhoun, ed. (2007).

of individual souls.

The sociology of S.D. Chown offers a good illustration. At some point not long after he became moderator of the Methodist Church in 1910, Chown delivered a set of four lectures on sociology at Victoria University: “The Importance of the Study of Sociology,” “The Relation of Sociology to the Kingdom of Heaven,” “Socialism and the Social Teachings of Jesus,” and “The Problem of Political Purity.”²³ Gauvreau has argued that the “sociology” Chown outlined in these lectures was just a rewording of the traditional evangelical creed, a form of “historical theology” nothing like the scientific, secular sociology championed by American proponents of the discipline (1991: 253). Gauvreau claims further that it was this type of sociology that Chown proposed should be incorporated into the curricula of Canada’s denominational colleges (1991:253). But I would dispute one aspect of Gauvreau’s reading of Chown and my research shows unequivocally that – whatever type of sociology Chown favoured – the sociology taught in Canada’s Protestant church colleges drew heavily on the modern, increasingly scientific version of the discipline presented in American textbooks.²⁴ With Gauvreau, I would argue that, in the lectures in question (and other similar addresses), the clear message imparted to students was that the good Christian could not remain cocooned in a private sphere of personal purity. The Bible imposed an absolute moral/spiritual obligation – what Chown referred to as a “call to duty” (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 380:13) – to engage in social and political activities aimed at the Christianization of the entire society. As Chown put it in “Socialism and the Social Teachings of Jesus”: “Christianity

²³ It is not clear when Chown delivered these lectures. Gauvreau states they were delivered at Victoria University and Wesley College in 1914 (1991: 360 n. 91, n. 92). According to Valverde (1991: 54, 175 n. 6), he presented them at Victoria University as early as 1907-8. Certainly, some of these lectures were delivered more than once. For example, the Chown Papers show that he delivered the “Socialism and the Social Teachings of Jesus” at least three times: at Victoria University as part of the “Sociological Course” (date unclear; UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 381; Gauvreau 1991: 360 n. 91, n.92), in September 1910 at the Conference of the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 11, file 293), and at an unnamed venue in Vancouver in February, 1914 (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 11, file: 300).

²⁴ Over 70% of the textbooks listed in the sociology course descriptions during the period 1900-1930 were mainstream American sociology texts.

regards the improvement of the individual as the point of departure. *Christianity does not teach, however, that the individual may find in himself and in his relation to God only, sufficient means of self-development. He finds himself only in the social service of the world*" (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 381: 11; emphasis added). Explicit in this message was the idea that devout Protestants, clergymen above all, had to understand the economic and social problems of Canadian society and could do so only by using two kinds or, perhaps better, two aspects of "sociology." As Gauvreau points out, the first and most important aspect of Chown's sociology was what he called the "sociology" of the Bible, especially the "sociology" of the Old Testament prophets (UCA, S.D. Chown Papers, Box 13, files 379-382; see also Box 11, files 294 and 300 and Box 13, files 365 and 378). This was largely a reiteration of the moral teachings of Scripture, combined with a plea for Christians, especially clergy, to take up the social task (Gauvreau 1991: 252-3). "It is fatal to the Church to permit the idea to remain that the end of a theological education is the production of lecturers upon religious or moral topics. Ministers are in the best sense of the term men of affairs, [The Church] must train them to bring things to pass. In a word, she must qualify them for moral leadership in the great world about them which is to be transformed into the Kingdom of God.... In no way can this be done with completeness except through the study of sociology" (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 379: 8-9; see also Box 13, file 377: 5). But the second aspect of sociology – alluded to by Chown, but never described in any detail – was modern and 'scientific.' Clergy and lay Protestants alike were to familiarize themselves not just with the abstract sociological teachings of the Bible, but also with actual social conditions in Canada. Only in this way could they work *knowledgeably* toward Christianizing the social order. In the final paragraph of his lecture "The Relation of Sociology to the Kingdom of Heaven," Chown writes: "We have spoken of the sociological material within the Bible. In the literature of today it is most abundant, but *the best study is in actual contact with the problem in the various forms in which life presents*

itself today” (UCA, S.D. Chown Papers, Box 13, file: 380: 14; emphasis added).²⁵ If the two aspects or types of sociology were combined, Chown said, they would transform Canada in line with Jesus’ view of human society. He was most explicit on this point in the second lecture of the series, “The Relation of Sociology to the Kingdom of Heaven,” where he wrote: “A perfect sociology, perfectly applied, will realize the Kingdom of God on Earth” (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file: 380: 1, 12).²⁶ Chown concludes this second lecture by recommending five texts which, in his view, allow someone to become knowledgeable about social conditions. Three are clearly religious: *Ethics of Jesus* (1910) by Henry Churchill King, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* (1900) by Professor Francis G. Peabody of Harvard University, and *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) by Walter Rauschenbusch. Each is written by a prominent American progressive Protestant, but the appearance on the list of the Rauschenbusch volume is especially noteworthy because it is perhaps the classic text of the American social gospel. The other two sources Chown recommends, *Orthodox Socialism: A Criticism* (1907) by J.E. le Rossignol, and *Socialism: A Summary and Interpretation of Socialist Principles* (1906) by John Spargo, are secular texts. The choices reveal Chown’s open mindedness and commitment to progressive political and economic ideas. le Rossignol’s volume dismisses modern socialism as well-intentioned but no more than an “unscientific” and untenable “faith,” a “religion without a god; ... its prophet ... Karl Marx; its book ... *Capital*” (1907: 5-6). Spargo’s book, which Chown draws on in a positive way in the subsequent lecture, “Socialism and the Social Teachings of Jesus,” and

²⁵ In his lecture, “The Preacher’s Study of Sociology,” Chown made many of these same points, including the claim that: “A minister without a working knowledge of social problems is seriously out of joint with the times Sociology has a supreme claim upon the minister, for it is undoubtedly the crowning science.... Our plea then, [is] that for the sake of the truest culture, for the completion of the science of theology, to get in touch with the forces now moulding the culture, and to produce great spiritual leaders in social movements, the church of Christ must make ample provision for the study of Sociology” (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 378: 8-9).

²⁶ He uses the identical phrase in other lectures, for example, in a talk entitled “The Prophets as Preachers to their own Times: with their Influence on the Social Ethics of Christendom” (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 366: 9).

other places,²⁷ is a defence of Marxian socialism written, as the author Spargo notes, in a “wholly affirmative ... tone and, ... frankly, from the standpoint of a convinced socialist” (1906: vii; cited UCA, Chown Papers, Box 13, file 380: 14).

3. The sociology developed by the Christian sociologists of the time seems to us an anachronism, so laden with Christian moralism as to scarcely merit the use of the term “sociology” to describe it.

Canada’s first university-based sociologists did not compartmentalize their religious beliefs and activities separately from their disciplinary endeavours as sociologists. A.L. McCrimmon’s course description, cited above, stressed the secular orientation and method of sociology, but the purpose of the discipline as a part of his intellectual worldview, one he saw as important to transfer to students, was spiritual – a combination of faith and works:

Have we been so individualistic in our thinking that we have been satisfied with an individual surrender to Christ, an abstract relationship with God ...? This is certainly one aspect of our salvation, but is it all? ... Has not this individualistic view tended to selfish spirituality, to a shortening of responsibility, to a neglect of the conditions of life, to an individualistic view of the Kingdom of God ...? Has not such a view led to a number of antitheses and antagonisms which should never have arisen or never been perpetuated, the antagonisms of Science and Religion, of body and soul, of individual and society, of the Christian and God’s world? (McCrimmon, 1915: 2).

The more or less complete separation of sociology and religion – along with the concomitant rise to hegemony of the doctrine of value freedom that accompanied the scientization and professionalization of the discipline – did not occur in Canada until after World War II. Nonetheless,

²⁷ For example, in an address to the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada in 1910, he refers to Spargo’s socialism as “a kind of socialism with which the church may heartily ally itself” (UCA, Chown Papers, Box 11, file 293: 7; see also Box 13, file 381: 19).

with one crucial difference, much of what Protestant clerics argued regarding the nature and purpose of the discipline between 1900 and 1930 – that it should be ‘scientific,’ morally laden, oriented to the solution of social problems, and aimed at the creation of social justice – is as topical and relevant now as it was then. Minus the Christian ‘bit,’ their answers to the questions “sociology for whom?” and “sociology for what” make the sociology they championed more or less isomorphic with the kind of public sociology that Berkeley sociologist Michael Burawoy has been advocating – with both considerable success and against a great deal of resistance – for the past eight or nine years (see, e.g., 2004, 2005abc). Indeed, we might think of this early group of earnest Protestant ministers as Canada’s first public sociologists in Burawoy’s sense of the term. So, after more than a century, we have in some respects come full circle.²⁸ I, for one, do not see this as a bad thing.

²⁸ Calhoun makes a similar point with relation to American sociology in his introductory essay in *Sociology in America: A History* (2007; see also Burawoy 2005c).

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