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The American Soldier— An Expository Review

BY PAUL F. LAZARSFELD

PUBLICATION of *The American Soldier* constitutes an event of first importance in the world of social research. Although the studies on which the book is based were made in response to military needs, they contain a mine of information and insights for all persons concerned with human behavior. Many of the findings are of direct relevance to the industrial psychologist, the educator, and the public relations specialist, as well as to the social theoretician, the opinion researcher, and the military policy maker.

At the request of the QUARTERLY, Professor

Lazarsfeld has provided a brief guide to the first two of these four encyclopedic volumes, and has highlighted the significance of many of the findings reported therein. Contributions to such key concepts of sociology and psychology as the primary group, frame of reference, and the influence of role and position are discussed, and a bird's-eye view of the major experiments and findings is given, together with some of their major implications.

The author is Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, and President of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

I. AN IMPORTANT EVENT

DURING the war, the Army established and maintained under General Frederick Osborn a Research Branch of the War Department's Information and Education Division. In the course of its five-year existence, this agency undertook about 300 studies dealing with various phases of the soldier's life.

In 1945, at the conclusion of the war, the original materials, including over 600,000 interviews and all the declassified reports, were turned over to a research committee appointed by the Social Science Research Council. A grant from the Carnegie Corporation made it possible to devote four additional years to re-analysis of the data. This phase of the work as well as the original research was directed by Samuel A. Stouffer and an able group of collaborators. To the unique scope of the original inquiry was thus added an intensive analysis of the material. The results of both are without parallel in the history of the social sciences.

This body of work has now been published in four volumes. The first two deal with the attitudes of soldiers in training and in combat. A third volume reports the results of experiments in connection with army indoctrination. The fourth is devoted to a discussion of methodo-

logical procedures. The following pages will deal only with the first two volumes.* Volume IV will be available shortly.

Never before have so many aspects of human life been studied so systematically and comprehensively. The findings have major implications for the understanding of civilian as well as military life. It is true, of course, that civilians do not live through the dangers of combat, nor are they subject to rigid military discipline. But soldiers too have their ups and downs in mood and hopes. They must adjust to other people, perform their jobs, strive for success, and adjust to changing situations. Thus in many respects the problems and experiences of the two groups are similar.

In an introductory chapter, Stouffer states that the book is written for three audiences: the historian, the military man, and the social scientist. Actually, there is a fourth audience which in the long run may be more important than the other three. It is the educated layman who has an interest in social science. For the first time a comprehensive demonstration of the techniques and potentialities of attitude research is available to him. It is therefore important that this fourth audience be introduced to the Stouffer volumes, and the main purpose of the present review is to provide a guide for the non-technical reader who turns to these 1300 pages of fact and interpretation.

First, however, it will be helpful to consider the special role played by attitude surveys in contemporary social science. Although surveys are only one of the many techniques available, at the moment they undoubtedly constitute the most important and promising step forward that has been made in recent years.

THE NATURE OF ATTITUDE SURVEYS

The limitations of survey methods are obvious. They do not use experimental techniques; they rely primarily on what people say, and rarely include objective observations; they deal with aggregates of individuals rather than with integrated communities; they are restricted to contemporary problems—history can be studied only by the use of documents remaining from earlier periods.

In spite of these limitations survey methods provide one of the foundations upon which social science is being built. The finding of

* *Ed. note:* Volume III, *Experiments on Mass Communication*, is reviewed by Harold F. Gosnell elsewhere in this issue.

regularities is the beginning of any science, and surveys can make an important contribution in this respect. For it is necessary that we know what people usually do under many and different circumstances if we are to develop theories explaining their behavior. Furthermore, before we can devise an experiment we must know what problems are worthwhile; which should be investigated in greater detail. Here again surveys can be of service.

Finding regularities and determining criteria of significance are concerns the social sciences have in common with the natural sciences. But there are crucial differences between the two fields of inquiry. The world of social events is much less "visible" than the realm of nature. That bodies fall to the ground, that things are hot or cold, that iron becomes rusty, are all immediately obvious. It is much more difficult to realize that ideas of right and wrong vary in different cultures; that customs may serve a different function from the one which the people practising them believe they are serving; that the same person may show marked contrasts in his behavior as a member of a family and as a member of an occupational group. The mere description of human behavior, of its variation from group to group and of its changes in different situations, is a vast and difficult undertaking. It is this task of describing, sifting and ferreting out interrelationships which surveys perform for us. And yet this very function often leads to serious misunderstandings. For it is hard to find a form of human behavior that has not already been observed somewhere. Consequently, if a study reports a prevailing regularity, many readers respond to it by thinking "of course that is the way things are." Thus, from time to time, the argument is advanced that surveys only put into complicated form observations which are already obvious to everyone.

Understanding the origin of this point of view is of importance far beyond the limits of the present discussion. The reader may be helped in recognizing this attitude if he looks over a few statements which are typical of many survey findings and carefully observes his own reaction. A short list of these, with brief interpretive comments, will be given here in order to bring into sharper focus probable reactions of many readers.¹

¹ References are handled the following way. The first and the second volume are referred to by A and B respectively. Chapter numbers are given in Roman numerals. Page numbers are given in Arabic numerals. Charts and Tables are specifically marked by Chart and T respectively.

1. Better educated men showed more psycho-neurotic symptoms than those with less education. (The mental instability of the intellectual as compared to the more impassive psychology of the-man-in-the-street has often been commented on.) B, 439.
2. Men from rural backgrounds were usually in better spirits during their Army life than soldiers from city backgrounds. (After all, they are more accustomed to hardships.) A, 94.
3. Southern soldiers were better able to stand the climate in the hot South Sea Islands than Northern soldiers (of course, Southerners are more accustomed to hot weather). A, 175.
4. White privates were more eager to become non-coms than Negroes. (The lack of ambition among Negroes is almost proverbial.) A, 583.
5. Southern Negroes preferred Southern to Northern white officers. (Isn't it well known that Southern whites have a more fatherly attitude toward their "darkies"?) A, 581.
6. As long as the fighting continued, men were more eager to be returned to the States than they were after the German surrender. (You cannot blame people for not wanting to be killed.) B, 561.

We have in these examples a sample list of the simplest type of interrelationships which provide the "bricks" from which our empirical social science is being built. But why, since they are so obvious, is so much money and energy given to establish such findings? Would it not be wiser to take them for granted and proceed directly to a more sophisticated type of analysis? This might be so except for one interesting point about the list. *Every one of these statements is the direct opposite of what actually was found.* Poorly educated soldiers were more neurotic than those with high education; Southerners showed no greater ability than Northerners to adjust to a tropical climate; Negroes were more eager for promotion than whites; and so on. (The references following the above statements indicate where the evidence for the true findings can be located.)

If we had mentioned the actual results of the investigation first, the reader would have labelled these "obvious" also. Obviously something is wrong with the entire argument of "obviousness." It should really be turned on its head. Since every kind of human reaction is conceivable, it is of great importance to know which reactions actually occur most frequently and under what conditions; only then will a more advanced social science develop.

A PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ACOUSTICS

Such considerations are a necessary starting point for a discussion of *The American Soldier*. The volumes contain a large and reasoned inventory of the prevailing manner in which certain types of people respond to certain situations, surpassing anything that is available thus far in the literature of social science. For the most part, the findings can be applied productively to questions of general interest to the social investigator. Everyone who is concerned with a particular facet of human behavior is sure to find some pertinent material.

The presentation is organized around the main problems which the Army faced and in connection with which it needed the help of the Research Branch. But in all the chapters the reader feels the concern of the authors with basic themes of social relations. To bring out these themes will be the task of all of us whose work will be so greatly helped by *The American Soldier*. In the next section of this review a few of these which seem most pertinent to current discussions among social scientists will be considered. A final section gives an idea of how the book is organized and points to especially interesting results in the various chapters.

It has been said that many years may pass before an important book makes its mark on the thinking of a period. But why shouldn't such a process be speeded up? Use of the text in teaching is a major way in which scientific contributions can be disseminated. But there is a difficulty here. Social research techniques are fairly new; a great number of those who will be teaching sociology and political science in 1950 have not had experience in the kind of field work on which *The American Soldier* is based. It is only fair, therefore, that some of us point up the methodological contributions to analysis, organization, and reporting of findings which have been made in the two volumes. An effort in this direction is made by the present reviewer in another place.² Furthermore, the teaching of social research has been greatly handicapped thus far by the scarcity of published examples of good research. Many will welcome the abundance now provided by Stouffer and his associates, particularly if some additional commentary is provided.

In other respects more intensive work may be needed in order to

² *American Journal of Sociology*, November, 1949.

provide the volumes with their deserved social acoustics as quickly as possible. The present review is written from the point of view of a social psychologist. But the work has great implications for students and artisans in other fields as well. For the historian it sets new standards of reporting social facts. Historical literature is full of references to the way people felt at various times, and how different groups of the population reacted to various events. But how is this known? Imagine a historian writing now about the armies of the Civil War and compare his sources with those of the historian writing about the American Army in World War II a hundred years hence. Of course, the future historian will also use diaries, letters, newspaper reports, and so on. But what a difference it will make that these volumes will be available to him. Responsible historians should have enough methodological insight into their professional work and enough imagination to spell out what the proper contribution of *The American Soldier* will be. This should be done not only in regard to the specific topic but with more general awareness of what such data would mean to the historian if they were systematically collected in many areas of behavior and attitude.³

Other cooperative evaluations would be equally rewarding. For example, certain parts of the text deal with experiences of soldiers in combat. A number of remarkable novels written about World War II have treated the same topics in a literary context. What are the chief differences between an artistic creation and a cool, analytical dissection of the combat situation into its main elements and their interrelations? It would not be difficult to devise a number of experiments to compare the two forms of presentation in a variety of ways. Which of the two appears to give a truer picture to readers who were not in combat themselves, and which to those who were? Among the latter one might compare "naive" subjects with others who had some training in observation. How should we weigh the vividness of the unique event described by the artist against the generalized picture presented by the social scientists? These are problems which could be handled jointly by an experimental psychologist and a literary critic.

The present expository review, then, is written in the awareness

³ It is a fair estimate that the preparation of such a paper would require six months' time, and it would therefore be necessary for some foundation to make provision for freeing that much of a historian's time.

that it can only be a first contribution to the much broader evaluation called for by the publication of *The American Soldier*.

II. SOME BASIC THEMES

The present section is concerned with the contributions of the book to particular social science problems. Material relevant to these problems will be selected from various parts of the two volumes without regard for the particular contexts in which it is found. Thus the reviewer anticipates what is sure to become a favorite topic for Master's theses: "The Contributions of *The American Soldier* to the Problem of. . . ."

It is to be regretted that only brief references to the various findings will be possible. To appreciate the richness of the original material, the reader will have to refer to the indicated sections of the text, which, incidentally, is written in a vivid and fluent style.

THE PRIMARY GROUP

Sociologists have long been concerned with the ways in which people are influenced by their immediate surroundings. Face-to-face contacts have a strong impact on all of us. If we share most of our experiences with other human beings, we are also likely to share their attitudes and opinions. Such primary groups as the family, the fraternity, or the work group can be a source of psychological strength and security to the individual. Anxieties are created when people fall "out of step" with them.

The Stouffer volumes contribute to our understanding of at least three aspects of the role of primary groups:

- a) the way in which primary groups shape the thinking of the individual;
- b) the way in which they provide emotional support;
- c) how the loss of contact with such groups creates emotional disturbances in the individual.

a) *Primary groups shape attitudes of the individual.* An unusual research design made it possible for the investigators to gain information on this point. Prior to the invasion of France, there were three types of American troops in England. The "Green" Divisions were whole units which had come directly to England from the United States. The Veteran Divisions were those that had seen battle in the

Mediterranean and were then re-assembled in England in preparation for the invasion of France. Finally, there were the *replacements*—individual soldiers who had come straight from the United States but who were assigned to Veteran Divisions to take the places of battle casualties.

The authors realized that the replacements found themselves in a very special situation. If lack of combat experience were alone relevant they should have the same attitudes as the soldiers in the “Green” Divisions. If the replacements held different attitudes, however, this could be attributed to their close contact with experienced soldiers in the Veteran Divisions. Thus the story of these replacements becomes a case study in the impact of primary groups, in the importance of “environmental influences.” The new men who were placed in Veteran Divisions acquired the excessive pride of the “convert” with regard to their outfits, but they also developed feelings of inferiority about their own abilities. The replacement thus took a middle position between the rather cynical viewpoint of the veteran and the more battle-eager attitude of men who were assigned to the “Green” Divisions—becoming “already half a veteran without ever having been in combat” (B, 246).

This whole chapter (B, V) is remarkable because in it rather refined psychological processes are convincingly documented by statistical data. A child born into a Democratic family, a farm girl moving into the city, a young law student hired by a Wall Street firm—they are all “replacements.” Anyone who wants to study how they become fitted into the opinion climate of their new environment will find relevant ideas in *The American Soldier*.

b) *Primary groups provide emotional support.* “Sources of power and security from the group” are traced in B, pages 130 to 148. The context is a discussion of combat motivation. How were men able to stand the terrific strain of battle? Partly because of their peculiar relations with fellow soldiers. They wanted to keep their respect and in turn they did not want to let them down; they had their officers to tell them what to do when they became paralyzed with fear and the medical corpsman to help them if they were wounded. The whole complex of mutual interdependence is difficult to describe; the text makes skillful use of qualitative material and of general observations

of social psychologists.⁴ Some of the most convincing evidence comes from an argument in reverse: groups which had been in battle showed an especially high degree of loyalty and solidarity (B, 138, Chart VI and B, 258).

c) *Emotional disturbances from loss of contact with the group.* When men had become integrated into a primary group and then had to leave it, they showed marked signs of anxiety. Here again the most cogent material comes from the study of a special group—the returnees, soldiers who had come back to this country after service overseas (B, IX). They exhibited many nervous symptoms (T.2), were dissatisfied with their jobs (T.12), did not feel they really belonged in their present companies (T.24), and so on. Most interesting in the present context is the fact that these returnees preferred to serve if possible with other returnees and under returnee officers (T.3). They tried in this country to reenact the life in the primary groups they had left overseas.

The replacements, just *before* joining their new units and in the *early* stages of their contact with the veterans, also showed signs of great uneasiness, which are carefully traced in B, 275 ff. (“The career of a replacement.” See especially the table on page 281). Thus the people marginal to their primary groups (replacements before integration and returnees after leaving) provided the best semi-experimental cases for the study of the group’s emotional impact.⁵

The effects of primary groups, like any other effects, are notoriously difficult to investigate. At least the following four methods are available: the study of people who have been brought into new situations; repeated interviews (panel technique) with the same persons; comparison of present and past attitudes, the latter obtained from retrospection; experimental procedures. Stouffer repeatedly expresses regret that he could not make more use of panel and experimental methods. This is one of the points where service studies have their unavoidable limitations; the “front office” will always prefer the quicker and simpler methods even if the social scientist knows that with more time and effort he could get sounder results. Still the Research Branch was able

⁴ It is interesting to note the similarity of findings in E. Shils and M. Janowitz, “Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1948).

⁵ Educators will be interested also in some of the material on the relation between primary groups and problems of discipline as discussed in B VIII, Section 3.

repeatedly to use quite sophisticated procedures and the volumes are very outspoken indeed in regard to the limitations under which the Research Branch worked.

THE FRAME OF REFERENCE

It is a basic tenet of social science that all things men do are "determined from within and without." The impingement of a primary group on an individual is an example of the force "from without." But to a considerable degree it is possible for an individual to select the outside stimuli to which he will react and adjust. The past experiences of different people will cause them to notice, to fear, and to neglect different things. For this reason, no two members of even an intimate primary group will necessarily respond to situations in the same way. The manner in which such inner controls function and develop is summarized by the concept of a "frame of reference." Stouffer and his associates have devoted a great deal of attention to clarifying and documenting the importance of these inner controls.

For the purposes of preliminary orientation we can make the following distinctions, which rank the effects of frame of reference in an order of increasing complexity:

- a) selective perception,
- b) level of expectation,
- c) relative deprivation,
- d) role of uncertainty.

We shall now exemplify these concepts with some of Stouffer's data.

a) *Selective perception.* It is well known that people tend to see the world as they want to. Each delegate to the United Nations, for example, feels that his country's contribution to the war effort was greatest. American soldiers were no exception to this general tendency. Their ethnocentrism is shown in B, 627, where it is seen that 78 per cent of a large sample of soldiers said that the United States was doing more than its share in the war. Only 22 per cent conceded this role to Russia and 5 per cent credited England with it. In the same vein, both Negroes and whites claimed that their own race was doing more in the war than the other (A, 511).

Another interesting instance of selective perception arose when soldiers were asked how they felt when they saw Japanese prisoners

(B, 160, Chart V). Those who already were strongly anti-Japanese were reinforced in their hatred by the sight of the prisoners. More conciliatory respondents discovered that the Japanese prisoners were "men just like us." The two volumes are filled with such syndromes and halo effects. A systematic collection and interpretation of them would be another highly desirable "cross-cutting" assignment.

b) *Level of expectation.* The next group of findings illustrates the fact that individuals' attitudes are influenced by their expectations. The graphic presentation of one such case is quite impressive (B, 512, Chart V). It reports the answers given by Negro soldiers to the question: "Do you think that most Negroes are being given a fair chance to do as much as they want to help win the war?" The Negro soldiers in the sample (according to the table) were separated into Southerners and Northerners and were also classified according to the amount of formal education they had had. The Southern Negroes consistently gave more affirmative answers than the Northern Negroes. In both groups, the proportion of "yes" replies decreased steadily as the educational level became higher. Northern Negroes and well-educated Negroes are accustomed to better treatment and expect better opportunities. Therefore, they will respond with greater discontent to a situation that a Southern or a poorly educated Negro may readily accept.

An even more direct effect of the level of expectation is found in B, 500, T. 20. Among men returning to the United States some were promised, or believed they had been promised, that they would be stationed at a post near their homes. Others did not share this expectation. The results indicate a sharp difference in attitudes depending on whether or not the soldier had such an expectation. When compared with the men who had no such hopes, almost twice as many in the "expectant" group were dissatisfied with their stations.

The influence of expectations on attitudes leads to a seemingly paradoxical result. Promotions played an important role in the life of a soldier. (See A, 215 ff.) Men who were promoted had higher morale in general.⁶ Their own good fortune was reflected in their more favorable opinions of Army practices (A, 88, Chart I). Now, various Army units differed greatly with regard to promotion opportunities. It was much easier, for instance, to get promoted in the Air Force than in the Military Police. It is also true that opportunities varied

⁶ For an interesting exception see A 308.

with amount of education. Well-educated men had considerably higher promotion rates than poorly educated soldiers. The seeming paradox is that the greater the objective opportunities available, the less the subjective satisfaction felt by the soldiers. The proportion of men saying a soldier had a good chance to be promoted was greater in the Military Police than in the Army Air Force, and the more educated men experienced greater discontent than those with less education. (A VI, Chart IX)

The explanation given for this state of affairs is convincing. If a group of soldiers has a good chance of promotion, a high level of expectation is created in each member of the group. The expectations, however, are far greater than the opportunities that are available. As a result, the greater the average opportunity, the greater the average disappointment.

c) *Relative deprivation.* The notion of relative deprivation implies that people do not suffer in an "absolute" way; they compare their lot with that of other people of their kind. In answer to the question, "At the time you came into the Army, did you think you should have been deferred?", men indicated varied feelings. Such responses as, "No, I shouldn't have been deferred," or, "I volunteered," were taken as an index of personal commitment (A,III, 124,T.3). Unmarried men were more positive than married respondents in their replies. The proportion of positive answers decreased with an increase in age. It was also found that less educated soldiers were more discontented with being in the Army than others. (The table is a typical example of the remarkable consistency found in much of Stouffer's data). The text explains all three findings through the concept of "relative deprivation." Married men have more to lose when drawn away from civilian life. The same is true for older men, who were probably better established in civilian jobs than were younger ones. The role of education is not as immediately evident. The less educated men frequently came from a working class background. They had lived among factory workers—the occupational group most likely to have been deferred during the war. Thus the less educated soldier probably had more direct contacts with persons who had been deferred than did other men in the army. As a result he felt more frustration about having been drafted.

Conversely, the fact that "Negroes in Southern camps made no

worse general adjustment than those in Northern camps" is explained by the concept of "relative status" (A, 563 ff.). In the South the Negro soldier's basis of comparison was the still more badly treated Negro civilian. In Northern camps the comparison with the Negro war worker who made good money was more frustrating. The relative deprivation in the North counterbalanced the objectively worse treatment of Negro soldiers in Southern camps. (This is documented in A, X, Sect. 6).

The relations between officers and men also indicate the role of relative deprivation. A question used in many of the surveys was: "How many of the officers in your present outfit are of the kind who are willing to go through anything they make their men go through?" The favorable answers "all of them" or "most of them" were given most frequently by combat troops (A, VIII, Charts I and II). They were least frequently given by overseas troops who were outside of the combat zone. Troops that were stationed in the United States held a middle position. Stouffer offers the following explanation. The American soldier strongly resented the fact that his officers had rights and privileges of which he was deprived. As long as the soldiers were in the United States there were situations outside of camp where the traditional American equality of consumption came into play. Overseas, however, when troops were garrisoned in foreign countries, the opportunities for private enjoyment were scarce. Here the full impact of the privileges Army life granted officers was felt. In the front lines, on the other hand, the opportunities were scarce for everyone, including officers; general austerity prevented resentment.⁷

d) *Role of uncertainty.* The importance of a clear frame of reference is apparent when a situation is examined in which it has been "lost." Then uncertainty, with all its devastating psychological effects, develops. The morale of the Air Force was much higher than that of any other section of the Army (A, V, Sect. 2). One of the major reasons was the fact that Air Force personnel participated in a "tour of combat duty" (B, VIII, Sect. 1). It was the general practice in the Air Force for a flier who had completed a certain number of missions to be allowed to return home for a period of rest and recreation. No

⁷ The findings bring to mind many wartime studies which indicated the importance of fairness in shaping attitudes toward rationing. This discussion is particularly interesting because of the skillful integration of statistical data and qualitative comments. (A, 377 ff.)

matter how dangerous their tasks were, fliers knew that at the end of a certain period they would have temporary release from the ordeal. On the other hand, infantry men, particularly in the first years of the war, had no such goal. They felt ensnared in a series of interminable trials. This seems to have been one of the worst psychological handicaps of ground troops (B, 83). Corroborative evidence is provided in the chapter on returnees. These men were primarily interested in learning what the Army was going to do with them (B, 478, T. 7). The importance of certainty is also stressed in the works of industrial psychologists.⁸ The data in *The American Soldier* will add a great deal to our thinking on this point.

In addition to their substantive value, the great emphasis in the two volumes on the "frame of reference" will be beneficial for future studies. The concepts reviewed here were used mainly for *post hoc* interpretation of findings. In the future we will be better prepared to introduce directly questions on expectations, aspirations, and comparisons, and the basis for evidence will be firmer than before.^{8a}

ROLE AND POSITION

We are quite accustomed to the idea that people think differently, depending on their role and position in society. It is taken for granted that rich men will hold different ideas than poor men; that farmers' beliefs will contrast with those of city dwellers. But prior to these studies, no one knew how markedly a person's attitudes would change when he moved into a new situation. After all, class positions are relatively stable, and it may take years or even a lifetime's experience before a change in attitudes and values can be effected. The Army, however, gave rise to rapid changes in position. A man might be a

⁸ See Daniel Katz and Herbert Hyman, "Morale in War Industries," in *Readings in Social Psychology* (eds., Theodore Newcomb and Eugene Hartley), New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947, pp. 437-447.

^{8a} The explicit use of expectation as an empirical variable is altogether rare in the literature. One of the few published studies which provides a very good example is George Katona, "Effect of Income Changes on the Rate of Savings," printed in the *Review of Economics and Statistics*, Volume XXXI, No. 2, May 1949. There it is shown that the effect of past income changes on present saving habits varies according to what expectations people have about their future income. At different points in *The American Soldier* Stouffer expresses regrets that the role of such variables was not more stressed during the work of the Research Branch. Here, again, the service nature of the whole enterprise was not hospitable to more abstract considerations. Much material along this line can be expected from a study of social relations in housing projects to be published soon under the direction of Robert K. Merton. In it, also, much will be found on "reciprocal images" between Negroes and whites and the factors which account for them.

private one day and an officer the next. Obviously his role would change too. How much did this affect his outlook?

The American Soldier reports very large differences in the replies of officers and enlisted men to a vast range of topics. In order to give the full impact of the findings, even in a review, it is necessary that we quote some figures. The following table shows the proportion of *affirmative* answers given to a selection of questions by two groups: the enlisted men and the officers (A, 374 and 419).

TABLE 1

Question	Officers	Enlisted Men
"The Army places too much importance upon military courtesy."	23%	74%
"The harder a man works in the Army, the better chance he has of succeeding."	65	30
"If enlisted men have to observe curfew, officers should, too."	35	84
"Officers deserve extra rights and privileges because they have more responsibility than enlisted men."	67	23

The most vivid documentation of the extent to which different positions lead to different pictures of the world is provided by the next table. The soldiers were asked to respond to the statement: "An officer will lose the respect of his men if he pals around with them off duty." The proportion *disagreeing* with it are classified by rank:

Enlisted Men	82%
Second Lieutenants	54
First Lieutenants	39
Captains	27

The text provides convincing evidence that these differences are, at least in part, the result of a change in rank. It may of course be, and is certainly partially true, that men having conformist attitudes were more likely to be promoted. In some cases, however, soldiers were interviewed before and after their promotions. This allowed for the tracing of attitude changes in the same individuals. Furthermore, the use of cross-tabulations cuts down the danger that spurious background factors can account for these marked differences.⁹

⁹ The influence of position on opinion can also be traced in a comparison of regular Army men with selectees which was made prior to Pearl Harbor. (A, II, Chart III-V) and in a comparison of staff and line officers (A, VI, Chart XIII).

Here, then, is important material for a theory of class position. Men were rapidly, and often artificially, placed in one group rather than in another. How did this affect the way in which they saw and evaluated the situations in which they lived? A systematic combing of the two volumes for pertinent material would be very worthwhile. One would like to identify the attitudes which are strongly influenced by position, and those on which its effect is minor. In this way, the foundation for a more general theory may be laid. The studies themselves make a valuable contribution in this direction. In A, VIII, "barriers to understanding between officers and enlisted men" are discussed. An especially provocative analysis of officer candidates schools suggests that there a high anxiety situation was created. This situation changed the personality of the candidates to the extent that "many officers, themselves formerly enlisted men, seemed to fail as officers to carry over their enlisted experience and try to see the enlisted men's point of view in handling their men" (389-391).

In the development of this theme, special attention must be given to the role of the non-commissioned officer. His position in the military hierarchy was between the men and the commissioned officers. Correspondingly, his attitudes fell between the two extremes (A, VIII, T. 12 & 13). However, the non-coms had a tendency to side somewhat more with the men than with the officers. This may be partly attributed to the fact that their primary contacts were more with the men. They had also shared the actual experience of the men, whereas they had not personally experienced the role of the officer. The value of this material is further enhanced by data on the expectations of men and officers with regard to non-com behavior (A, VIII, Chart IV). The officers were primarily interested in the non-com's executive abilities. The enlisted men looked at him in terms of human relations. Thus the non-com really was under cross-pressure.

It seems that differences in role and position lead not only to differences in attitudes but to misunderstandings and mistaken judgment of one group by another. We learn, for example, that in every respect officers over-estimated the morale of their soldiers and under-rated their "gripes" (A, VIII, T. 5, 6 & 7). Sometimes self-deception about other people's feelings and the coloring of one's own attitude by self-interests combine to make for a rather complex and contradictory situation. In a survey made with flying personnel, the following ques-

tion was asked: "How do you feel about the promotion policy for enlisted men (officers) in combat crews?" Only 5 per cent of the officers were "very well satisfied" with their own promotion chances; 13 per cent of the enlisted men were "very well satisfied." (This reflects the fact mentioned before that the group which had objectively the better chances was always less satisfied.) Most interesting, however, is that 24 per cent of the officers felt that the men were very well satisfied. Thus they not only thought that what is not good enough for themselves is good enough for the men; they also were quite mistaken as to how the enlisted men really felt (A, VI, Chart XV).

This misjudgment of one group by another reappears in a variety of other contexts. In B, X, the problem of returnees—soldiers who have been overseas and are reassigned to units in the States—is treated. In a mixed unit, consisting of returnees and non-returnees, both groups were asked whether "men who haven't been overseas appreciate what returnees have done and been through." Seventy-eight per cent of the non-returnees were quite satisfied with the returnees' lot; they believed that all or most of the men appreciated the returnee. The returnees felt quite differently about the matter. Only 35 per cent gave answers which indicated satisfaction with the amount of appreciation they received (B, X, Chart V). A question on combat incentives of enlisted men was also answered quite differently by officers and the men themselves (B, III, Chart I).

There is, however, a limit to the importance of position. It seems to be reached under the impact of strong emotional experiences which are shared by two groups. A number of tables in B, III (T. 3, 4, & 9), classify respondents' answers in two ways: according to their rank and according to the length of time they had spent in battle. Almost always, the following trend is shown: As long as the men have little or no battle experience the difference between enlisted men and non-commissioned officers is very great. With increased battle experience the differences between them diminish until the two groups feel almost alike. The relative importance and interplay between integrating and dividing experiences is thus clearly shown to be a significant problem.

It should be apparent by now that the material furnished in *The American Soldier* is not of less value because it is directly concerned only with the Army. On the contrary, it is only because there was Army

research that we now have a type of information which, heretofore, civilian research could not provide.

OTHER THEMES

Many other topics found in the volumes could have been selected for our discussion here. There is ample material to demonstrate the importance of attitudes as determinants of and mediators between actual experiences and performances. The relation between statistical data and qualitative material could be traced through many chapters.¹⁰ In various parts of the volumes changes of attitudes as a result of combat, of overseas service, or of sheer length of time in the Army are discussed. What do these data contribute to a theory of opinion formation?

Special attention should be given to the very numerous findings on educational differences. The reluctance of the uneducated man to criticize (A, 124, 270, 445, 458), his hesitancy about making use of "channels of redress" (A, 74), his defeatism with regard to promotion (A, 252), his difficulty in appraising situations realistically (A, 153, 185 & B, 146), his fear of not grasping what he is supposed to do (A, 407), and his heightened feelings of uneasiness (A, 124, 129 & B, 420) are shown by data sometimes filled with pathos. These facts provide us with material for a "portrait of the underdog."¹¹

The use of the concept of personal adjustment in *The American Soldier* is an illustration of clarity of analysis, elaborately documented. Two important points are made. First, that the viewpoint from which adjustment, or morale, is analyzed must be explicitly specified. For example, the morale of a labor force in a factory would be considered high from the viewpoint of both labor and management if both cooperated enthusiastically to achieve a common goal (A, III, 82-85). A labor force on strike which manifested a spirited defiance of management also would be exhibiting high morale, but only from the viewpoint of labor. A non-union labor force which was highly efficient might be exhibiting high morale from the viewpoint of management, but not in the eyes of the organized labor movement. The Army

¹⁰ These two points will be elaborated in the paper on "techniques of survey analysis" mentioned in footnote 2.

¹¹ Earlier material on this point is summarized by G. Knupfer, "Portrait of the Underdog," *Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. II, No. 1 (1947). The new data corroborate many of the earlier findings but they are probably richer than all previously available information combined.

studies explicitly view personal adjustment from the standpoint of the Army management, at the same time often pointing out situations—goldbricking for example (A, VIII, 420)—where men were adjusting well to anti-management goals. The second point is that adjustment needs to be regarded as a profile of traits, not as a single unitary trait (A, III, 98-102). Although several traits may be positively related to actual success or failure in the Army, some types of soldiers may be consistently high on certain traits and low on others. In documenting differences among different types of men in adjustment profiles, the authors use a method of matched comparisons. One table alone (A, V, Table 9) is based on a study of the differences between 8,554 pairs of percentages, each percentage in turn being based on the responses of from forty to several hundred soldiers. Just as intelligence is now usefully thought of as a profile of several factors, so a concept like adjustment becomes useful in sorting out different kinds of men if it is analyzed as a set of components.

III. THE EPIC OF THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

We shall now turn to a description of the way in which the volumes are organized. Terms which have been discussed and tables which were mentioned before will not be repeated. We shall, however, occasionally point up results not introduced previously and pay some attention to their practical application.

THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY

The first chapter describes the history of the Research Branch and its mode of operation. In Section 2 (27-53) one finds a revealing discussion of what one might call the "philosophical basis" of its work. The Branch was organized in 1941, and when Pearl Harbor came one major survey had just been finished. Chapter II makes available a description of the pre-war Army. The differences between the selectees, who had come in as a result of the first draft, and the regular Army men are interesting, as is a comparison between the armies of the First and Second World Wars.

Chapters III, IV, and V of the first volume deal with adjustment in the Army. It was decided that adjustment would be represented by four major factors: personal *esprit*, commitment to war goals, satisfaction with status and job, and finally, approval or criticism of the

Army. Chapter III shows that those four factors are generally related, but their "profile" varies from group to group: educated soldiers, for instance, have better *esprit* and are more highly committed to the war, but are less satisfied with their jobs and more critical of the Army as compared with uneducated soldiers (102). Occasionally the four factors are combined to form one adjustment index, and it is interesting that this index is highly correlated with an over-all self-rating of the soldiers as to how they think they have adjusted to Army life (A, III, Chart II).

Chapter IV traces in greater detail the variation of adjustment according to background characteristics such as age, marital status, and education (T. 1). Skillful use is made of comparisons between special groups, such as soldiers who were in the guardhouse for going on leave without permission (A.W.O.L.) as well as those who had to be transferred to psychiatric wards. Section 4 of this chapter considers the possible role of early childhood experiences and their influence on subsequent adjustment in the Army (Chart VI). Section 5 makes use of repeated interviews conducted with the same soldiers. This "panel" study is woven in throughout the text and yields important contributions at several crucial points. In Chapter IV it is used to show that better adjusted soldiers had greater chances of being promoted at some later date.

Chapter V shows variations in adjustment by type of experience in the Army. It turns out that soldiers overseas did not feel worse off than soldiers at home. There were a number of compensating factors overseas which are discussed in Section 1. Section 2 introduces a fact which is used in many discussions all through the volumes: the Air Corps men were most satisfied and the Infantry men least satisfied with their lot. Section 3 shows by a variety of statistical devices that as time went on the personal *esprit* of the soldiers deteriorated, and they became more and more critical of the Army. The content of their criticism is discussed in considerable detail, and much quantitative material is used for purposes of exemplification. This case analysis (212 ff.) is a good example of how Research Branch materials could be used in determining Army policy.

Chapter VI deals with the promotion opportunities which existed in the Army. First, the whole promotion picture, in so far as the chances of becoming an officer are concerned, is described in considerable detail. Then, in Section 2, the enlisted man's desire for promotion is

analyzed carefully. As can well be understood, there was a general desire for promotion, but quite a number of soldiers were skeptical about the promotion chances they had. This attitude toward chances for promotion provides one of the most interesting blocks of data. Here information is obtained from a large sector of the population regarding their hopes for and frustrations with respect to "success." Four major findings as to what determines whether soldiers were or were not satisfied are documented (254 ff.). It is easy to see such analyses transferred to industrial situations or even to the sphere of personal experience. An intelligent generalization of this section should go far toward showing what surveys of the future might look like. A final section in Chapter VI deals with the factors which were related to actual promotion.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

Chapter VII describes job assignments and job satisfactions. While the layman thinks of the Army as a fighting outfit, the fact of the matter is that a majority of the soldiers in World War II had jobs very similar to those of civilian life. Only one-quarter of the men ever came near the battlefields; half had some kind of manual work, and one-quarter clerical work (312). Thus the findings as to how the men felt about their jobs, and how this feeling in turn affected their efficiency, are applicable to many other areas of industry and education. There is, for instance, a chart on page 291 in this chapter which shows how much better men liked their jobs when they chose them themselves. The data and discussion pertaining to this finding will certainly have a prominent place in any future textbook on industrial or educational psychology.

Chapter VIII is entitled, "Attitudes toward Leadership and Social Control." It is among the richest as far as psychological and sociological interpretation go and therefore has been referred to frequently in Section II of this review. It is probably no exaggeration to say that it could be used as an empirical companion-piece to a book like Chester Barnard's *Functions of the Executive*.

Chapter IX discusses the orientation of soldiers toward the war. In the first section an effort is made to describe and discuss the strange ideological background of the Second World War. The Pearl Harbor attack had made the war acceptable to the whole population, although

a large number of people were not especially concerned with its background and its aims. Variations in "identification with the war" are reported in Section 2, and the final section summarizes some of the educational efforts which the Army made to raise the soldier's feelings of personal commitment. (Some of these efforts are discussed in the third volume of the series, which is not included in this review.) It seems that for a variety of reasons such efforts were not too successful. The fact that the last war was fought in a detached manner has been repeatedly commented upon in the literature and is corroborated here as far as the soldiers themselves were concerned. The reasons for and implications of this phenomenon are still far from clear and will certainly be mulled over for some time to come.

The final chapter of Volume I assembles all material available on Negro soldiers. It contains more new data on Negro-white relations than is to be found in any single text in the vast literature of this field (with the exception of the review volumes in the Myrdal series). Using a variety of ingenious statistics the chapter first shows the extent of discrimination in the Army. Then the degree to which the Negro soldier interpreted ordinary experiences in racial terms is documented. As a result of these two factors Negro soldiers had a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward the war. To them the most popular slogan was that of the double "V," which stood for simultaneous victory on the battle front and on the race front at home. In this connection a rather complicated syndrome is presented and discussed: Negro soldiers who were more optimistic in regard to the future of their race in this country were also more willing to do their share in the war (528 ff.).

In general the Negroes seemed not to have been less well adjusted than the whites (see 535 ff.) although in some respects they had special problems to cope with. (See the discussion of venereal disease, 545 ff.). Section 6 of this chapter makes especially skillful use of camp locations, which provided something like an experimental situation. Southern and Northern Negroes were trained in both Southern and Northern camps. For a Southern Negro, for instance, a Southern camp had the advantage of being near home and the disadvantage of being in an unfavorable environment. The resulting cross-pressures are brilliantly documented and interpreted (555 ff.).

In two other sections attitudes of Negroes and whites toward racial segregation in the Army, and Negro soldiers' opinions regarding Army

leadership are brought into the picture. These data include many contributions which are of general importance for race relations but which cannot be discussed in detail here. The final section (9) contains a table which, even before these volumes appeared, had become widely known by word-of-mouth. Toward the end of the war some Negro platoons were inserted into white companies. The white soldiers who fought in these companies liked the experiment. The farther removed white soldiers were from the actual experiment the more did they persist in their distrust of such an innovation. Chart XVII on page 594 will certainly remain a classic of social research for a long time to come.

FEAR AND MORALE IN COMBAT

While Volume I covers mainly the soldier in training, Volume II deals with combat and its aftermath. Merely as a historical document this volume is obviously unique. Chapter I contains a large amount of material showing that soldiers having better attitudes during training also showed superior performance in actual battle. Section 3 of this chapter presents in great detail all of the indices which were used to prove the case and all the work the Research Branch went through in order to obtain the basic data. This section will be a godsend for teachers who need detailed material on more complicated research procedures. A more detailed discussion will be found elsewhere (see footnote 2).

Chapters II to IV deal with combat situations. The first in this block is especially valuable for some of its conceptual discussions. It is often assumed that the empirical research man just goes out and collects data as one might count pebbles on the seashore. Here it is shown how difficult it is to dissect terms like "combat situation" (77 ff.) or "active theater" (60 ff.) or "victory" (169 ff.) into their component elements so as to make them amenable to empirical study.

Chapter III singles out five major elements which seem to have made the majority of soldiers able to stand the terrific stress of battle: coercive authority, personal leadership, social relations with the primary group, convictions about the war, and finally, certain more individual elements like prayer and personal philosophies. On this last point there is a very interesting discussion (especially Tables 20-23) in regard to the differences between the soldiers who were helped by prayer and the others who were helped by the idea that they could not let the other fellow down. It seems that an objectively greater amount of stress

and danger did lead to more reliance on prayer. At the same time, the soldier who relied most on prayer had somewhat fewer personal resources for coping with the stresses which he underwent. Pages 172-185, which attempt to clarify the functioning of prayer and feelings of personal solidarity by a series of cross tabulations with other questions, are an especially good example of research sophistication, and will, it is hoped, be carefully studied by teachers and research practitioners.

The final chapter in this group reports on ways in which the Army tried to control fear in combat. Three major aspects are singled out. The general policy was to have it understood that everyone is afraid and that it is somewhat easier to cope with fear if it is openly admitted. The data show how willing the soldiers were to report their fear symptoms (T. 3) and to accept the fear of their fellow soldiers as something natural (T. 1 & 2). It is especially interesting that veterans did not hesitate to state how much their anxieties were increased by the actual battle experience (Chart I), something quite different from the old stereotype of the *miles gloriosus*. In several sections of the text it is shown that veterans were less willing to go into battle than were the new troops who had not yet experienced it.

A second aspect of the control of fear is discussed in connection with some experiments the Research Branch carried out to screen soldiers who might become psychologically unfit during battle. A carefully designed and observed jump from a mock-up tower introduced in the course of the training of parachutists was used as a screening test, the efficiency of which is discussed in detail. The exhaustive consideration of factors which can be involved in such an experiment makes this report especially valuable (215 ff.). A final question is whether danger situations introduced during the training period make for better performance in battle. The authors tend to the conclusion that they do.

Chapter V deals with combat replacements. These data were referred to extensively in our previous discussion of primary groups. A good summary of the main findings can be found on page 246. The chapter contains an interesting discussion of the role of question wording, especially in connection with Tables 2 and 4. It also employs a very instructive statistical device, in one case using information collected from veteran troops prior to the arrival of replacements (265 ff.), thus giving an example of a "panel study" based on rates instead of individual responses. Finally, Chart III indicates that after a certain amount of

combat the effectiveness of soldiers decreased so markedly that too long deployment in the front lines was of dubious advantage to the Army.

Somewhat more specifically geared to military problems is Chapter VI. It shows that front-line soldiers resented and envied the men who were in the rear echelons, farther away from the danger zone. As a compensation a kind of "pecking order" developed. The nearer a man was to the front-line the more informal privileges he had; he could express his social superiority to the man farther behind in a way which the latter was not entitled to return. It is noteworthy that, as far as the soldiers in the United States and civilians on the home front are concerned, the front-line men did not feel too resentful, although there was an increase in aggression with increased length of time in combat (Charts VII and VIII). This chapter contains a suggestive chart (X) giving combat soldiers' opinions on whether "the people back home are doing all they should to help win the war." The respondents feel much more confident about their own family members and close friends than about people in general. This finding should be a challenging lead for social psychologists especially because it is paralleled by another finding (B, 398). Soldiers were asked whether they thought it would be difficult to obtain jobs after the war. Again they were much more optimistic about their own personal chances than about the outlook for the veterans' labor market in general.

Chapters VII and VIII deal with men in the Air Corps, and in spite of apparent restriction to a specific military unit the findings have great general significance. The starting point of the discussion is a large amount of evidence that Air Corps morale was especially high. In Section 2 possible explanations of the fact that morale was highest in that part of the Army which had the most dangerous job are considered. It is shown that the following factors help to account for this situation: the Air Force picked its men very carefully; it gave them a great amount of status and prestige; the relationship between officers and men was very fortunate, especially because combat officers were not in charge of administrative and disciplinary matters; there were certain psychological satisfactions involved in the flying experience; the training was of obvious usefulness for post-war civilian jobs; and, finally, the Air Corps gave the men a lot of medical attention and was careful about their rest periods. (The great importance of the limited

tour of combat duty was mentioned previously.) The whole array of data shows how much can be done to overcome an objectively difficult situation by careful social engineering.

At another point (A, 309 ff.) tactful reference is made to the fact that the Army restricted this kind of effort to the Air Force because it was the newest and supposedly most important weapon. The Infantry was the most neglected part of the Army as far as social engineering went. At a rather late date it seems that the Army command became aware of this difficulty, and made an experiment with an "Infantry Badge" designed to raise the prestige of the Infantry and to impress upon the Infantryman the importance of his job. Data on the success of the whole enterprise are reported and should be carefully studied by educational and industrial sociologists.

Chapter VIII also shows the limitation of all these engineering efforts in the Air Corps. When the stress becomes too great, then nature, so to speak, takes its course. Charts V-XII show that, with an increasing number of missions, the fliers' willingness for combat decreased, and their anxieties and nervous symptoms increased. (See especially Charts X and XI). This chapter also contains one of those riddles which come up occasionally in social research and which show so clearly that survey findings are far from obvious. Flying personnel were distinguished according to the craft they served in: fighter pilots, light bomber pilots, medium bomber pilots, and heavy bomber pilots. The order indicated also furnished a sharp rank order in morale: Charts XVII and XVIII show that on a number of questions the fighter pilots had the highest, and the heavy bomber pilots the lowest morale, with the other two types of craft ranking in morale of personnel as they ranked in size of craft. Considerable efforts are made to explain this parallel, but none of the interpretations is completely conclusive.

Chapter IX is especially interesting as a provocative example of what social surveys may be able to do in the future. It deals with the general distribution of psychoneurotic symptoms in the Army. The first section weighs a variety of possible indices against each other and provides material for a discussion of scaling techniques. The second section then shows that by far the greatest increase of nervous symptoms came about as the result of combat experience. Transfer to over-seas posts and length of service in the Army seem not to have made too much difference. Table 17 provides an example of the way in which

retrospective information may be used. Soldiers whose nervous symptoms were very marked after combat were asked how they felt about many things prior to their battle experience. Their answers are very similar to those of a comparable group of soldiers who were interviewed before having seen combat.

THE END OF THE ROAD

The problem of returnees which is dealt with in Chapter X has been mentioned before. The men who had served overseas and come back to an Army which was still in training formed an interesting example of an artificial "sub-culture." Some readers will want to give special attention to the great difficulty the Army and the returnees had in solving the problem of job adjustment in this country (486-496). The discussion reads almost like a description of displaced persons in a new country, or a chapter in a textbook on social disorganization. (It is important to realize that it was a question of finding jobs in the Army for the returnees. This turns out to be quite different from the post-war problem of finding jobs for discharged soldiers in civilian life, as shown in B, XIII, Section 3.)

Chapter XI is a brief record of a device which was well known at the time through the press. After V-E Day the Army instituted a point system on the basis of which it was decided in what order soldiers would be discharged. The research behind the development of the point system and its general success when actually used are described. It is especially interesting to read about various efforts to adapt the whole procedure to the changing situation in the closing months of the war. A memorandum from the Research Branch to General Marshall is quoted (534 and 540 ff.) which gives valuable insight into the relation between policy makers and research staffs.

This relationship between policy and research is brought out even more clearly in Chapter XII, which deals with the reaction of soldiers to the end of the war. All material is grouped around a rather unique document. It appears that in the summer of 1944 the Research Branch submitted a memorandum to the Army "forecasting the problems which would arise as an aftermath of hostilities." The predictions were based partly on previous surveys of the Research Branch and partly upon general sociological considerations. It is reproduced in full (551-60) and then compared with the actual course of events as far as they

can be established by data collected in 1945. The predictions were right in the majority of cases, wrong at other points; not enough space is available in this review to go into details. There is no doubt, however, that with this procedure an important pattern has been set. Historians and political scientists try to understand and explain events after they have occurred. Undoubtedly analysis will be much keener if a prediction has first been made. For a variety of explanations of the same event will usually sound equally plausible. On the other hand, a prediction is, so to speak, a choice of the most convincing explanation in reverse. The actual course of events then forces an "explanation of the second order." Why were some predictions right and some wrong? The present chapter contains such an analysis, and the interspersed summaries will clearly show the merits of this remarkable innovation.

In the final chapter, the assembled data throw light on the soldiers' reabsorption into civilian life. A first section shows that soldiers were not too worried about their civilian future, although a considerable number felt they had been hurt rather than helped by their Army experience. Their attitudes towards a number of topics important for civilian society are discussed. Their prejudices were not much different from the civilian average. They in no way wanted to "take over the country" (615, 624). They showed very little concern with general social problems, and little desire for a "better society" (621 ff.). Some valuable data are provided on the way in which contact with other countries affected their attitudes toward foreign people. Finally, two studies of discharged soldiers were made, and the results indicated that most of them adjusted well and carried out the job plans which they had formed prior to entering the Army, or while they were in it.

As he approaches the last pages of these two volumes, the reader develops a feeling of frustration. Here was gripping and seemingly inexhaustible reading material which suddenly comes to an end, like a novel of which only the first chapters are available. Why was a war necessary to give us the first systematic analysis of life as it really is experienced by a large sector of the population? As Stouffer is about to turn out the lights he remarks, "What happened afterwards is a story which must be told someday from data other than that assembled by the Research Branch."

Where, O Lord, will they be coming from?