Critical Theory on Morningside Heights*
From Frankfurt Mandarins to Columbia Sociologists

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The Frankfurt School's first years on Morningside Heights progressed very smoothly. Based on the group's activities and accomplishments, it is clear that its members had not misrepresented themselves to Columbia's sociologists and administrators. The emphasis that had been placed on scientific social research had not been an empty marketing scheme. Members of the Institute for Social Research were heavily engaged in social research throughout the 1930s. This was never more true than during the first five years on Morningside Heights. Although members of the Horkheimer Circle later played up stories of their anonymity and isolation at Columbia, evidence suggests that such claims were greatly exaggerated.

Although little was accomplished during 1934 due to the logistics of moving across the Atlantic, the Horkheimer Circle renewed its many research projects in 1935. Throughout the mid- to late 1930s, the institute completed many of the major studies initiated in Europe by Erich Fromm. The first order of business was the study on authority and the family, which "attempted to analyze the actual role of the family in Western Europe in educating the individual for the acceptance or rejection of authority in society."1 In March 1936, Horkheimer reported to Columbia's president that Studien über

* This article, the second in a two-part series entitled "Critical Theory on Morningside Heights," provides a detailed history of the Frankfurt School's fifteen years at Columbia University—the collaborations of its members with Columbia sociologists, the courses they taught, and their writings for an American audience. Part 1, "The Frankfurt School's Invitation from Columbia University," concentrated on the history and ambitions of Columbia's sociology department and how the Institute for Social Research figured in their long-term goals and plans.
"Autorität und Familie" was completed and ready for publication. The other project carried over from Europe was the study of the German working class. Fromm remained the principle architect of and caretaker for the project, which had been abandoned by nearly all of the institute’s other members shortly after the move to Geneva. The data, consisting of 750 questionnaires had not been properly organized and had not even begun to be analyzed, but Fromm convinced Horkheimer that something could be salvaged. From 1935 until his 1939 departure from the Institute for Social Research, Fromm painstakingly subjected the workers’ questionnaires to intense psychoanalytic scrutiny and would have published his findings had he not left the group.

Two new, extensive studies were also formulated and directed by Fromm during the late 1930s. One, conceived as an American accompaniment to Studien über Autorität und Familie, focused on unemployment and family life in Newark. Since the majority of the institute’s members spent most of the 1930s preparing theoretical work for the Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, Fromm turned to Columbia’s faculty and students for help, as well as bringing in Paul Lazarsfeld to assist with the study’s direction. Based on his experience with the previous two European projects, Fromm provided the research team with expert guidance in creating the interview protocols and in analyzing the case studies. Despite his significant involvement with the project, the actual task of writing up the results was passed on to Mirra Komarovsky, who published the study as The Unemployed Man and his Family. Although no individual member of the Horkheimer Circle was credited with the project, all of those familiar with it understood the institute’s involvement and credited the Institute for Social Research with publishing the work.

The second original study suffered a similar fate. Begun as a project under the direction of Fromm, the analysis of post-adolescent attitudes regarding authority was never completed nor credited to the Institute for Social Research. The study took place at Sarah Lawrence and was conducted in conjunction with the college’s reevaluation of the purposes and functions of education. Fromm offered to teach the Sarah Lawrence researchers to organize and produce case studies and other projective tests. While much of the project concentrated on establishing new goals for collegiate educa-
tion that would help develop the “whole student,” it also uncovered attitudes regarding authority by examining student-teacher relationships. As Horkheimer explained to President Butler in March 1937,

[the object of our study of the attitude of students in a women’s college in New York towards the authority of teachers and of the college, is the fixation of definite types of attitude and the accomplishment of an understanding of the relations between this typical attitude, on the one hand, and the social and cultural situation and the family background of the student, on the other, and further, of the relations between this attitude and a distinctive characterological structure.]

Due to substantial commitments of time and finances to both the Newark unemployment study and the German workers project, the Sarah Lawrence project moved slowly for Fromm. Based on his angry reaction to a book published by one of the project’s leaders at Sarah Lawrence, it’s clear that Fromm had planned to write up his findings eventually. Ruth Munroe’s Teaching the Individual was a terrible blow because it reported many of the discoveries that Fromm had planned to disclose in a monograph of his own. Fromm mailed an angry letter to Sarah Lawrence inquiring about the development and was told by Beatrice Doerschuk, the college’s director of education:

May I assure you, as I believe Mrs. Lynd has already done orally, that in the report Miss Munroe is making we have every wish to maintain the cooperative relationship with you and your material as it has stood the past three years, without encroachment upon the purposes of your own study. Her report is one we have had in mind for several years as one of perhaps several analyses of the educational implications of teacher-student relationships. The intention is a practical one: to be of use to teachers, on the basis of our own experience in working out procedures in education. We are greatly indebted to you both for focusing our attention upon this particular aspect of the problem and for new insights about the relationships involved. It is our intention and desire to give full recognition for this, as also for insight and stimulus gained from several other sources. I believe, however, that our intent in the present study is different from yours. I have conceived the studies as independent enterprises. I need hardly say that we shall be glad to have you use our records in any way for your own study. It was not our intention to use nor would the time permit such an analysis and treatment of the experimental material, tests, experiments, or “quantification of the qualitative statements”, as Mr. Stone tells us he discussed with you. This material was gathered specifically for you and we still assume as always that it is material for your study.

Despite these assurances, the published study did make use of Fromm’s ideas and findings on authority. Munroe simply invented a new
name for Fromm’s “authoritarian character” calling her type the “rigid student.” 10 Although she did not use the concept for the same purposes that Fromm had in mind, he decided not to publish his findings.

Despite all of Fromm’s efforts throughout the 1930s, the Horkheimer Circle was only credited with one completed study by those unfamiliar with all of the group’s behind-the-scenes collaborations. As anticipated by sociologists at Columbia, the Horkheimer Circle did bring many new social research projects to Morningside Heights, and most of these involved complex quantitative methods. However, the effect that the institute’s inability to publish the research findings had remains murky. It has always been crucial for scholars to publish. That was as true then as it is now. Clearly, by the 1940s, the institute’s lack of research publications became a problem, but there were other contributing factors to the Horkheimer Circle’s decline, such as the departure of Erich Fromm.

When it came to relations with members of the Columbia sociology department, the Horkheimer Circle was generally guarded. They seemed uncomfortable about disclosing any details about the institute’s finances. Considering that its leaders lived comfortably during the Depression in America while so many US citizens and scholars struggled to make ends meet, the group’s secretiveness is understandable. Still, the way inquiries into the institute’s background were handled left many members of the department puzzled and suspicious. As Theodore Abel recorded in his journal,

[w]ent up to Columbia for lunch with Horkheimer and Pollock of the Institute for Social Research. They have beautiful quarters and a magnificent library. We talked about the founding of the Institute with the money of an Argentine German, who’s name is not even remembered by these directors, who are sitting pretty on account of the endowment which they exchanged into gold francs before Hitler came to power. 11

The other reason for the group’s occasionally reclusive tendencies was concern about the reception of their political beliefs. Herbert Marcuse, during the last years of his life, recalled that members were forbidden to engage in any type of political activity. As he explained in an interview with Jürgen Habermas:

Habermas: Did the Institute ever establish, shall we say, relationships with local, more strictly political groups in emigration?
Marcuse: That was strictly forbidden. From the beginning Horkheimer had insisted that we were guests of Columbia University,
philosophers and scholars. Any organizational ties could have shaken
the Institute’s precarious administrative foundation. Such ties were out
of the question.12

Although it is easy to mistake these concerns as paranoia, one must
remember the political circumstances facing a group of German-
Jewish émigrés during the 1930s and 1940s. The institute was a fre-
quent target of government investigations, and its members knew
this. During the early years at Columbia, the offices on 117th Street
were visited by German-speaking, New York police detectives
searching for Nazi sympathizers within the German community.13
Later the institute was frequently monitored by the FBI as a result of
anonymous accusations regarding Communist sympathies among
the group’s members.14 The sheer bulk of the FBI files on this matter
suggests that Horkheimer had good reason to forbid political activ-
ity. Even though institute members followed the director’s instruc-
tions, the group was still the target of numerous investigations.
Harsher repercussions surely would have resulted had Horkheimer’s
warnings been ignored.

Despite this hesitancy, the Horkheimer Circle did mingle with the
faculty on Morningside Heights. It is not surprising that Robert Lynd
became one of the group’s closest friends during the first years in
New York. He had much in common with the Institute for Social
Research and was probably responsible for their invitation to
Columbia. Once Horkheimer had finished negotiating the institute’s
arrangements with the university, Lynd was the first to congratulate
him. As Lynd wrote,

I want to express my delight that the arrangement for the 117th Street
house has gone through and that your Society is to be part of the
Columbia family. You will find the atmosphere here of the freest, an
easy scientific camaraderie that will interfere at no point with your
work and yet will stand ready to assist at any time that you need such
assistance.15

Horkheimer reciprocated Lynd’s warmth and did not recoil from the
offers of assistance and cooperation. In the director’s mind, Lynd
was an important friend that needed to be included in the institute’s
activities. As Horkheimer explained to Friedrich Pollock,

I am sending you the enclosed copy of writings by Lynd, the author of
Middletown. You see that the present atmosphere for us is really posi-
tive and extraordinarily friendly. I had negotiated with Lynd, like I wrote to you earlier, and he is especially interested in our work. He already offered his and his wife’s help with our academic work. I think that later we should offer him entry into our established Society here.\textsuperscript{16}

Lynd and his wife, however, were not simply a source of support for the Horkheimer Circle. They also helped the institute develop important contacts with other social scientists. One excellent example was Lynd’s reintroduction of Lazarsfeld to the Institute for Social Research.\textsuperscript{17} Lazarsfeld, who had worked with Lynd since the time of his arrival as a Rockefeller Fellow in 1933, continued to maintain close contact. Once the members of the institute arrived, Lynd quickly recognized how valuable collaboration between both parties might be. As early as 1935, Lynd notified Horkheimer:

I gather that Paul Lazarsfeld may stay in this country next year at the University of Pittsburgh. If he does, it occurs to me that it might be useful to you to make some arrangement with him for a few days a month of his time to advise with the Institute regarding its program. This note is an impertinence on my part, but I am truly fond of Lazarsfeld and regard him highly.\textsuperscript{18}

Lynd’s foresight proved to be correct. Fruitful collaborations did result from the introduction. Members of the Horkheimer Circle were active in Lazarsfeld’s radio research projects for many years, and Lazarsfeld provided invaluable assistance to Horkheimer’s colleagues on projects as varied as the Newark unemployment study and projects on antisemitism. Were it not for Lynd’s role, the institute might never have developed significant contacts in America such as this. Without his early support, the Institute for Social Research might likely have been as alienated in the United States as they later claimed to have been.

Another early faculty friend of the Frankfurt School was Samuel Lindsay, Columbia’s famous social economist. Although nearing the end of an extraordinary career in the social sciences, Lindsay became involved with the institute’s studies on the family. Lindsay had always had a keen interest in social legislation and social work. During his first years at Columbia, he worked together with Franklin Giddings in the more academic pursuit of sociology, but he also oversaw the training of social workers at Columbia, even functioning as director of the New York School of Philanthropy for five years. When the Horkheimer Circle arrived at Columbia and began con-
sidering a parallel study of American families to complement their work in Europe, Lindsay offered his assistance. Although never seeking formal acknowledgment, he worked closely with the research teams in Newark, devoting his time and energy to the unemployment study that was eventually authored and published by Mirra Komarovsky. His intellectual contributions are impossible to determine, but his personal papers suggest that he was consulted in probably all aspects of the project.19

The other members of Columbia’s sociology department had more limited contact with members of the Horkheimer Circle. During the institute’s first five years on Morningside Heights, the department’s other members largely remained outside of the institute’s orbit, instead pursuing their own interests. Robert MacIver wrote a sociology textbook and later a critical study of Marxism’s social and political implications.20 He possessed neither the time nor the inclination to be involved with the Horkheimer Circle’s research. Similarly, Theodore Abel, who shared MacIver’s preference for political theory, spent this time struggling to find a topic for his first major sociological monograph. Robert Chaddock and Frank Ross, functioning more as statisticians than as sociologists, continued to provide undergraduates and graduate students with the fundamental tools necessary for quantitative research. William Casey, meanwhile, concentrated on teaching undergraduates and popularizing sociology. Even though none of these figures became closely involved with the Horkheimer group and its work, all of them developed social contacts with members of the Institute for Social Research through office visits or faculty club luncheons.

More substantial and intellectual contacts with department members were developed through monthly, Sunday-night seminars at MacIver’s home. Although the structure was casual and friendly, the Sunday gatherings represented an important bond that held the department together and enabled its members to share ideas with one another. As MacIver later recalled,

I particularly enjoyed a Sunday evening symposium held at our apartment on Riverside Drive to which I invited a group of advanced students and department members. I arranged for someone, not infrequently a visiting professor, a behaviorist or positivist, or, say, a classical authoritarian such as Mortimer Adler, to introduce a contro-
versial subject. And then the discussion would become fast and furious, and at times rather heated, into the midnight hours.\textsuperscript{21}

From the time of their arrival on Morningside Heights, members of the Horkheimer Circle participated regularly in these department seminars.\textsuperscript{22} Horkheimer clearly understood the importance of these gatherings. The discussions were often fruitful, and the participation of institute members helped the group maintain a presence within the department. In fact, it was not unusual for members of the Horkheimer Circle to lead these discussions, especially when they dealt with topics in which the Institute for Social Research excelled.\textsuperscript{23} Because of the important contacts afforded by these occasions, Horkheimer insisted that new members of the institute attend the Sunday seminars.\textsuperscript{24} These meetings remained an essential ritual for members of the Horkheimer Circle for the duration of their stay in the United States. Even during the 1940s, after much of the institute had relocated to California, the members remaining in New York still found it essential to have at least one representative from the group attending these seminars.\textsuperscript{25}

Of all the Horkheimer Circle’s members, Fromm became the most visible and popular at Columbia during his first years in America.\textsuperscript{26} He was less guarded than his colleagues, and he was in a position, as the group’s functional director of social research projects, to develop strong contacts with US social scientists.\textsuperscript{27} The more Fromm encouraged collaborative efforts with American researchers, the more he became a recognizable figure in the field. His closest friend and colleague in New York was Robert Lynd. As noted previously, Lynd was extremely supportive of the institute during its first years. Because he was primarily interested in its research techniques and studies of the family, Lynd most frequently dealt with Fromm. He respected Fromm’s abilities as a researcher and was fascinated by his skills as a psychoanalyst.\textsuperscript{28} In particular, Lynd sought to learn more about how Fromm seemed to incorporate the two disciplines so effortlessly. As a result of his own enthusiasm for Fromm and the Horkheimer Circle’s empirical research, Lynd began introducing Fromm to others on the Columbia campus who might benefit from his unique abilities and expertise.\textsuperscript{29} As this practice continued, Fromm’s reputation on Morningside Heights grew. By the time a temporary lectureship was available to a member of the Institute for Social
Research, the sociology department’s logical choice was Fromm. In the eyes of Columbia’s faculty, he was the central figure guiding the Horkheimer Circle’s most significant work.

The Horkheimer Circle’s activities on the Columbia campus, however, were not limited to the university faculty’s involvement. Institute members also served as teachers during the group’s initial five years in America. While no member was offered a position on the sociology department’s staff roster during that time, the group did teach in the extension school and offered casual evening seminars that were open to faculty members and graduate students. While none of these pedagogic activities compared to the offerings of an institution like the “University in Exile,” the Horkheimer Circle did become a recognizable part of New York’s intellectual milieu. As Daniel Bell explained years after he studied sociology at Columbia, the institute was more self-contained than the New School for Social Research and consequently had less resonance among students. Nevertheless, Horkheimer and his colleagues were generally known to those students possessing strong interests in European social theory. For graduate students such as Bell, the Institute for Social Research represented a component of Columbia’s unique collection of European-trained sociologists.

The institute’s more formal and official contributions to Columbia’s curriculum were the extension courses entitled “Authoritarian Doctrines and Modern European Institutions” (numbered Sociology U201 and U202). The courses met once a week for nearly two hours and collectively spanned the duration of an entire academic year. Arranged with the help of Robert MacIver, the courses were first offered in 1936/37. Although the enrollment was not always high enough to warrant the teaching of these courses, the pairing was listed in every subsequent extension course catalog until 1949. Horkheimer was the principle instructor for the courses, but all members of the institute gave lectures in their fields of specialization. This meant that Horkheimer presented the initial introductory lectures on the topic of authority, its importance in the modern world, and the institute’s general approach to the concept of authority. The course then began to examine authority by critically dissecting it. Marcuse gave a series of lectures on the changing forms of authority throughout the history of Western Europe; Lazarsfeld devoted a
Thomas Wheatland

group of lectures to empirical research and its methods for examining authority; Pollock presented lectures on the relationship between different economic systems and authority; Julian Gumperz, in a similar vein, examined American economic institutions in an attempt to differentiate them from their European counterparts, thereby enabling a comparison of different attitudes toward authority; Fromm explained the authoritarian character pattern, locating it firmly within Freudian theory; Franz Neumann developed his theories about authority and the development of the totalitarian state; and finally Leo Lowenthal drew from his experience as a school teacher in lectures on authority and education, and then on the role of authority in recent literature.36

The courses must have presented a challenge for the students. Horkheimer openly admitted the language barrier that still existed for members of his circle, and students like Daniel Bell confirm that this did present a real problem.57 In addition, Horkheimer alerted his young listeners to the fact that the German academic style would be unfamiliar and awkward for many.38 However, Horkheimer also pointed to an even more serious difficulty—the fact that his circle presented an approach to social research that would be unfamiliar to American trained students of the social sciences. Horkheimer criticized the empirical research of his contemporaries in typical Hegelian fashion:

We do not maintain that we are able at the outset to formulate principles which give a definite insight into the very essence of things. We do not claim to have at our disposal such simple definitions that any further treatment of the subject would merely be in the way of differentiation, application or amendment. If this were true, I should only have to give in my next lectures definitions of authority, of society, the family, etc., later to illustrate these definitions by means of specific cases and to show their interrelation, and on your part you could look forward, after a few lectures, to taking home definite insights and preserving the finished product forever after. We are of the opinion, however, that clarity comes at the end, not at the beginning. In the beginning, naturally, we must make use of abstract definitions, but such definitions, when tested by reality, always remain isolated notions, distorted and untrue. Such untrue statements, which are necessary in all abstract definitions, are only overcome by slow and progressive proximity to concrete objects and by keeping a watchful eye for the essential.39

In addition to the challenges posed by the clash of two languages and intellectual cultures, the Horkheimer Circle’s students also had
to struggle with the complexities of Critical Theory. For the Americans (and émigrés) in attendance, this must have been a perplexing encounter, since the intellectual underpinnings of the Horkheimer Circle’s approach would have been largely unknown to US students of sociology.

The lectures, however, do illustrate that institute members were not entirely timid in their dealings with Americans. Participation in politics may have been forbidden, but their radical approach to social science was presented in an unadulterated form. While it is impossible to adequately summarize the circle’s extension lectures, the main point that was emphasized and continually reemphasized throughout the courses was that forms of authority had been transformed by historical changes. While modern man was no longer subjected to naked coercion by the elite of a community, he deferred to a more invisible and insidious form of authority. Perhaps Horkheimer expressed the point most clearly in his second lecture, when he explained:

In former times the needs and wishes of society were voiced through certain privileged personages and corporations. Today these needs make themselves known through economic and social conditions, through the “language of facts,” as it were ... All is regulated indirectly by market conditions and the whole structure of the economy. Authority is no longer an immediate relationship, but a Sachverhältnis, a relation mediated through objective facts, and the dependence on impersonal facts has taken the place of dependence on persons ... All the secondary emanations of authority, which have been mentioned before, namely, newspapers, advertising, radio, etc., are but the amplification and intensification of the “language of facts.” These factors of modern life are surface phenomena only and presuppose a highly developed veneration of facts. The resignation to the higher will of God or of his representatives on earth, has been replaced by resignation to the exigencies of life. 40

What Horkheimer referred to at Columbia as the “language of facts,” slowly evolved with Adorno’s influence into the notion of instrumental reason subsequently forming the basis for the famed Dialektik der Aufklärung. Reason, blunted by the realities of modern civilization, had lost the ability to view the world critically. The exigencies of modern life forced the new “language of facts” to become the basis for a “means-ends” rationality that was incapable of breaking the continuous cycles of social injustice and domination.
Little is known about the students who enrolled in these courses. No substantive correspondence exists between any of these students and members of the Institute for Social Research, and consequently we can formulate few concrete ideas about the reception of these courses. Partial class lists from the first four years of the courses still exist among the papers of Max Horkheimer, and they show a varied student population.\textsuperscript{41} One is immediately struck by the large number of women enrolled, as well as the number of foreign students. Many enrolled because of personal acquaintances with members of the institute, and in other cases students were simply curious about the subject matter and the institute’s reputation, which both became increasingly important as the dangers and realities of fascism became more obvious.

While the Columbia University extension courses were intended to meet the Horkheimer Circle’s professional obligations, the Tuesday evening seminars were directed toward satisfying the group’s own intellectual needs. Instead of tailoring the presentations for the audience of faculty members and graduate students, members presented their ideas for one another.\textsuperscript{42} Typically members would present papers at each of these weekly gatherings. At times these were part of broader collective investigations of topics prearranged by Horkheimer.\textsuperscript{43} On most occasions, however, the presentations came from articles that were in production for the \textit{Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung} or that dealt with some aspect of a larger project being carried out by a member of the group.\textsuperscript{44} Nonmembers attending these seminars were welcome to comment, but it was understood by all participants that the occasions were primarily for members of the Horkheimer Circle. As Daniel Bell recalled, the institute resembled the type of authoritarian family that occupied the imaginations of so many institute members.\textsuperscript{45} The group assembled around a long rectangular table during the seminars, while visitors looked on from locations around the perimeter of the institute’s library. Horkheimer, as paternal authority figure, occupied the table’s center seat and never smiled. To his left sat Theodor W. Adorno, who—unable to contain his intellect or excitement—flitted about the room like a hummingbird constantly conversing with people. On Horkheimer’s right sat Friedrich Pollock in a state of perpetual solemnity. Herbert Marcuse and Franz L. Neumann, two of the wittiest and most per-
sonable members of the group, were assigned the next pair of seats beside Adorno and Pollock. Leo Lowenthal and Henryk Grossman occupied the last two interior spaces at the table, and Otto Kirchheimer and Arkady Gurland sat at the ends of the table, occupying the most hazardous position at the seminars. After each paper, institute members would address it in turn. Horkheimer would speak first, followed by Pollock, then Adorno, and so it would proceed until the floor was turned over to Kirchheimer and Gurland. Since both were always the last to speak, their comments often seemed unoriginal or wildly speculative, formulated in a desperate attempt to say something new. As Bell recalls, both received the frequent derision of their colleagues.46 Especially for graduate students interested in European social theory, the Tuesday seminar was a significant event at Columbia. Although largely limited to a small group, it provided an important contact with the European traditions begun by Marx, Freud, and Max Weber. For members of the Horkheimer Circle, it provided another source of contact with Columbia faculty and students.

**Changing Fortunes: The Departure of Erich Fromm**

The Horkheimer Circle’s mutually beneficial relationship with Columbia University began to unravel when tensions grew between Fromm and the institute’s leaders. The circle’s endowment was greatly depleted by the end of the 1930s. During the initial years in America, institute members, particularly Horkheimer and Pollock, lived comfortably. The institute employed a large staff, including translators and permanent secretaries, and it still had enough money left over to generously support other European refugees dislocated by Nazism.47 Starting in 1937, however, the Société Internationale de Recherches Sociales began suffering a series of terrible losses. Poor investments in the stock market, combined with several disastrous real estate deals, caused the group’s assets to shrink, thereby forcing the directors to draw from the endowment’s capital.48 According to the institute’s by-laws, however, dipping into principal was improper. Horkheimer needed to find a real solution to the group’s financial setbacks. His desperation only increased as he also began
entertaining thoughts of the grand project on dialectics that eventually became *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*. If he did not find a way to cut back on the institute’s expenses, his own future and work would suffer. He could potentially lose everything. The director briefly considered altering the institute’s legal structure by changing it to a private foundation, but he instead opted to cut salaries and personnel. The first salary subject to these decreases was that of Fromm.

Subtle tensions had existed between Fromm and the institute’s other members for a long time. Basic differences had arisen as a result of Fromm’s revisions of Freud. While theoretical disputes obviously played a role in the deteriorating relations between both parties, personal and financial issues became the major causes of the eventual split. Fromm was extremely outgoing and never hesitated to network with other scholars, and these personality traits enabled him to become the institute’s best known member during the early years at Columbia. Horkheimer, instead of enjoying the notoriety Fromm brought to the group, remained extremely suspicious of his associate. This attitude came across most clearly in a letter written during the initial months in America, in which Horkheimer complained:

[Fromm] does not particularly appeal to me. He has productive ideas, but he wants to be on good terms with too many people at once, and doesn’t want to miss anything. It is quite pleasant to talk to him, but my impression is that it is quite pleasant for very many people.

Horkheimer’s fears regarding the personal loyalty of his associates prevented him from appreciating Fromm, and he failed to recognize the tremendous benefits that his colleague’s work and personality brought to the institute’s situation in America. While this personality conflict did not cause the final break with Fromm, it did play a role in Horkheimer’s decision to cut Fromm’s salary. The other factor that contributed to this critical decision was the fact that Fromm had a lucrative private practice in New York City. Of all the circle’s members, Fromm was the only one who would not suffer tremendously from the elimination of his institute salary.

In May 1939, Horkheimer and Pollock informed Fromm about the institute’s dire financial straits and insisted that they would not be able to pay his salary after October of that year. Fromm was asked to voluntarily agree to the arrangement based on his ability to
survive solely on his psychoanalytic practice. Instead of deferring to Horkheimer’s decision, Fromm fought back in anger. He had passed up high-paying positions out of loyalty to the institute and had scaled back his practice in an attempt to devote more time to the group’s empirical studies. Horkheimer, apparently fearful of the legal allegations, proposed sweeping the plan under the rug and offered to resume salary payments. Fromm, however, insisted that relations were irreparably damaged. Although he was sent salary checks for November and December, Fromm returned them to the institute and demanded the severance package. The eventual settlement to Fromm, which clearly escalated due to Horkheimer and Pollock’s mishandling of the dispute, was $20,000.

In addition to departing with this large sum of money, Fromm’s exodus also resulted in the evaporation of the group’s empirical research projects. In a series of miscalculations, Horkheimer surrendered the enormous severance package, as well as the German workers’ project and the Sarah Lawrence study. No other institute members had been involved with these projects. Their activities tended to focus on publications for the Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung. Instead of tackling sociological questions, nearly all of these writings focused on either philosophy or culture (in a thoroughly German sense of Kultur and the legacy of Bildung). With Fromm’s departure, the institute could be seen for what it really was—a collection of social philosophers. The only reason Columbia’s social scientists had mistaken the Institute for Social Research for a group of empirical researchers was due to the work of Erich Fromm. Now that he was gone, the institute had little to offer the university.

Former Columbia friends of the Horkheimer Circle were enraged by the development. In particular, Robert Lynd became disgusted with the institute, while maintaining close and cordial relations with Fromm. Lynd was irate not only because a productive, talented member of the group had been callously cast aside, but also because
of the loss this represented for both the Horkheimer Circle and Columbia. It clearly signaled an elimination of empirical research for the sociology department. Members of the circle clearly sensed his disappointment and disfavor. While they had been accustomed to relying on Lynd as a close friend, institute members began to fear him as a possible enemy. In a paranoid fashion, they suspected a united front formed among Fromm and other former associates of the circle (such as Karl Wittfogel and Julian Gumperz). Mutual friends of both parties insist that no such conspiracy ever existed; nevertheless, Horkheimer remained convinced of nefarious dealings behind closed doors.

It is certainly plausible to suspect that Lynd was aware of various grievances between former associates and the institute. Furthermore, his personality would have provided some justification for Horkheimer’s suspicions. Lynd’s impatience and temper were well-known among his associates and friends. As his wife recalled,

he was impatient about a lot of things. He was impatient about Paul’s [Lazarsfeld] double dealing. He was impatient about people pussy-footing when they might speak out. He was impatient about somebody who was going to meet us at the 8:15 train, to climb the Rampapos and missed the train. All kinds of things. He got so angry and impatient with people who wouldn’t do things his way.64

While it is possible that Lynd took Fromm’s departure very personally, he was equally (if not more) frustrated with the institute’s failure of nerve. All attempts at empirical social research had been abandoned with Fromm’s departure. Lynd had supported Columbia’s offer of the 117th Street house to Horkheimer’s group based on his assessment of the institute as it had been characterized by Julian Gumperz. After Fromm’s departure, such a characterization was no longer true.

Compounding the situation, and undoubtedly further angering Lynd, was the fact that the Horkheimer Circle refused to publish their theoretical work for a US audience. As Marcuse, recounting an important conversation with Lynd, explained,

[Lynd] immediately took off on a nearly one-hour speech about the Institute. Basically the same old story: that we had wasted a great opportunity. That we had never achieved a true collaboration in which we might have confronted our European experiences with conditions in America, for example to analyze monopoly capitalism, fas~
cist tendencies and so forth ... He said he had the greatest respect for your [Horkheimer’s] theoretical undertakings and had, even back then, encouraged you to publish them, but that you were always apprehensive about being viewed as a Marxist and therefore had always presented your thoughts in an incomprehensible, garbled manner ... Every time I tried to get him to be more concrete he countered that it really didn’t matter what we actually studied and wrote about if we would just be truly collaborative in our work. He also said we shouldn’t always wait for American aid and impetus but rather should first create something on our own, by our own efforts. Even though he said all this in the friendliest manner and in a tone of genuine concern, I felt his enmity was not to be overcome, indeed not even neutralized. Irrational hatred is doubtless involved.62

By 1941, when Marcuse reported this encounter, Lynd had to encourage the institute’s publication of theoretical work. While previously he had pushed members to pursue quantitative research methods, he scaled back his expectations and hoped for “grand and vital theoretical perspectives.”63 He no longer worried about the group’s inability to carry out empirical research because he had already found a replacement for the Institute for Social Research.

Lazarsfeld’s Office of Radio Research replaced the Horkheimer Circle at Columbia University. With Lynd’s recommendation, Lazarsfeld had been offered the directorship of a Rockefeller-funded project on radio research during the summer of 1937 by Hadley Cantril of Princeton University. His research team, having grown out of a previous group at the University of Newark, soon became extremely well-known within the field of American social science. Lynd, who had been a long-time admirer of Lazarsfeld and his research efforts, volunteered to serve on the advisory board for the Rockefeller Foundation. During the spring and summer of 1939, as relations between Horkheimer and Fromm soured, Lynd became entwined in an equally serious dispute regarding the future of the Princeton Radio Project. The renewal of the Rockefeller grant was approaching, and Cantril sought greater involvement in the project’s administration. Essentially, the direction of radio research would have transferred to Cantril if the project remained at Princeton.64 Lynd rescued Lazarsfeld’s job by moving the Office of Radio Research from Princeton to Columbia. By the fall of 1939, Lynd had gathered enough support from his colleagues at the Rockefeller Foundation to approach Princeton’s President Harold W. Dodds.65
Thomas Wheatland

The result was the turnover of the radio project to Columbia University. The new Columbia Office of Radio Research, which later evolved into the Bureau of Applied Social Research, met the sociology department’s new needs in the wake of Fromm’s departure. In Lazarsfeld and his research team, they found a new self-supporting proponent of quantitative methods in social research. Again, Columbia risked nothing but office space. As with the institute, the bills were paid by someone else, and yet the sociology department could involve its faculty and graduate students in Lazarsfeld’s projects. While Columbia’s sociologists grew disappointed with the institute’s lack of productivity and collaboration, they got more than they bargained for from the Office of Radio Research (and later the Bureau of Applied Social Research). As Lazarsfeld recalled,

I think that the difficulties [with the Columbia people] were in no way that anyone was opposed to social research—they appeared to want research. But it is conceivable to say that what they hadn’t realized is that what had happened was—I wouldn’t say a collision, but a convergence, of two existing units. I think this is probably the way to put it, as a problem from his side (Maclver’s). The programs Maclver and Lynd and everyone pictured were, (after all I know now what with being head of department),—they hire a man who has experience and is interested in empirical research, and let him build that up. That’s how it would happen now—if Rockefeller wanted empirical research, that would be their picture, that someone can build it up. That wasn’t the case. Here was an existing organization with its own people, its own tradition. Now what happened is: the two now have to live together. So much difficulty, of which you certainly were aware as a student, came from this misunderstanding: that Maclver definitely wanted empirical research and called a man in to build it up, but what they really got is a rather strong social system which was transformed into his social system. And at this point, I think he didn’t frankly like it … it was like somebody who was invited to dinner and brings all his relatives with him: that is somewhat disconcerting.66

As Lazarsfeld grew to realize, Columbia had high expectations for whichever research organization they sponsored on the Columbia campus. Despite the difficulties, Lazarsfeld turned Columbia’s dreams into a reality, and the Bureau of Applied Research remains an important part of the university community. The Institute for Social Research, however, was unable to achieve its expected potential. Although they later made a major contribution to American social science with their innovative *Studies in Prejudice*, their fame came too late to make a difference at Columbia.
The Failures of the 1940s

Fromm’s departure, and the consequent elimination of social research at the institute, never could have happened at a good time. The effects would have been devastating at any point during the group’s exile in the United States. The state of the group’s finances, however, exacerbated the problem. Economic insecurity created desperation and eventually pulled the group apart.

Initially, Horkheimer attempted simply to replace the loss of Fromm’s research studies by developing new projects. Concerned by the political developments in Europe, Horkheimer’s first proposal was for a study of antisemitism. As early as the spring of 1939, institute members were already seeking Lynd’s support and involvement with this possible endeavor. The institute planned to draw from previous discussions and thought regarding human rights and the parallels between antisemitism and the persecution of aristocrats during the French Revolution. The study would first examine the representative texts of contemporary European antisemitism, grounding them in their historical context. Drawing on these findings, they would then design a set of experiments that would identify the basic features of the antisemitic mind, thereby enabling social scientists to monitor latent anti-Jewish sentiments among various demographic populations. Although Lynd liked the basic concept, he was unwilling to make the necessary time commitment. Horkheimer also approached other American friends of his group and must have received similar responses. The institute’s inner circle came to realize that the chances of receiving grant support were slim. By 1940 the antisemitism proposal was postponed, and the Frankfurt School shifted its attention to German culture.

The Horkheimer Circle was passionate about its ideas regarding its homeland and the rise of Nazism there. At first, the German project was intended to be largely historical. Designed in the spirit of the Flaschenpost (or message in a bottle) by which the institute imagined its writings to be intended for future generations, the original aim was to explore the various aspects of German culture prior to the Nazi seizure of power as both a cautionary tale and a salvage mission. By focusing on the culture of the prefascist period, forbidden and outlawed cultural products could be preserved and linked
to the nation’s earlier artistic traditions. As Horkheimer approached American scholars to seek advice and support for the project, he came to recognize that a reorientation was necessary. Consequently, the project began to shift toward a study of the origins of National Socialism.\textsuperscript{71} The institute lined up American sponsors, as well as a co-director, for the project, and valuable time and resources were devoted to a campaign to secure external funding. Other émigrés, however, were pursuing similar studies, and the institute’s efforts resulted in bitter failure.\textsuperscript{72} A team of rivals from the New School earned the available grants. They had pondered the issue longer and devoted more energy to adapting to US academic standards. Although Horkheimer and the inner circle of the institute interpreted the result in a traditionally paranoid fashion—the fallout of old Frankfurt rivalries and the betrayal of former members and supporters—the New School won the funding for their research fairly.

By the summer of 1941, the Horkheimer Circle’s schemes for alleviating their financial burdens through the external funding of social research projects had failed. Although creative independence and autonomy had remained the group’s primary objectives throughout its previous history, these goals increasingly became viewed as luxuries that could no longer be afforded. The lack of serious empirical studies made a tighter relationship with Columbia unlikely; nevertheless, the Horkheimer Circle began to explore this possibility. Horkheimer began drafting a plan that would lay out the first steps toward a closer relationship with the university during the early spring of 1941.\textsuperscript{73} This called for at least one group member to be appointed as a permanent member of the sociology department’s faculty. The department could select whomever it deemed fit for the position, and the institute would reimburse the university for the cost of the salary. Additionally, the institute offered its intellectual services and resources to the university in return for recognition as a formal university affiliate and faculty privileges. Although this initial relationship clearly benefited Columbia, there were possible future benefits to the institute. If the Horkheimer Circle sufficiently pleased Columbia, it might be able to expect future financial support. Furthermore if the tighter relationship yielded no assistance, the institute would at least have Columbia’s name behind it in other dealings with American scholars and academic institutions in future searches for grant support.

76
Negotiations between the Institute for Social Research and Columbia’s sociology department took place during the spring and summer of 1941, and they seem to have included talks about multiple lectureships, which would have enabled more than one associate to join the university’s faculty. However, two significant obstacles stood in the way. The first was the pervasive antisemitism on Morningside Heights. An undisclosed quota system limited the number of Jewish faculty members. Since nothing could combat this obstacle, the institute concentrated on the other. This second challenge was far more complex and serious. By 1939, Columbia’s sociology department was embroiled in a civil war between its two principal figures, Robert MacIver and Robert Lynd. The tensions arose from MacIver’s review of Lynd’s book Knowledge for What? In the book, Lynd bemoaned US social science and its drift toward positivism and specialization. The pursuit of the social totality was being sacrificed to narrower approaches, he argued. As MacIver viewed it, Lynd’s book called for a more progressive, utilitarian approach to sociology that would be capable of training public service professionals to solve the problems facing modern society. MacIver attacked Lynd’s ignorance regarding the epistemology of social theory and criticized his restricted view of the discipline. Lynd criticized the neutral and disinterested observer of social phenomena and seemed to advocate for a radical orientation. MacIver, by contrast, argued in favor of pursuing knowledge for its own sake. He accused Lynd of a sociological pragmatism and a political bias that equally endangered the kind of grand theoretical view of society that Lynd claimed to favor. While Lynd attempted to defend himself in the scholarly journals, the department became split into factions supporting each combatant. Abel and Casey rushed to MacIver’s defense, while the other members of the department allied themselves with Lynd. The Horkheimer Circle carefully monitored the situation, attempting to court both sides while simultaneously antagonizing neither of them. MacIver, who no longer had enough support to remain chairperson of the department, resigned. Perhaps motivated by revenge, he became the institute’s strongest supporter at Columbia and told members of the Horkheimer Circle that he wanted them to become the university’s social research institute. By supporting the Horkheimer Circle, MacIver created com-
petition for Paul Lazarsfeld (who was being groomed by Lynd for the position), and he threatened to accomplish the task that Lynd was hired to fulfill. As MacIver’s support of the Horkheimer Circle increased, Lynd’s dissatisfaction with the group escalated.

Despite these considerable obstacles, the proposal was brought before the Faculty of Political Science’s Committee on Instruction. Horkheimer, elated by the progress, became convinced that the group’s future lay with Columbia. Pollock believed the twin keys to the proposal’s success were patching up relations with Lynd and allowing Neumann to act as the group’s primary representative on campus.

By the fall, however, emotions were dampened by fears of treachery. As Neumann moved ahead with the institute’s plans for incorporation, Horkheimer and Pollock feared that their colleague was increasingly promoting his own career at the expense of the institute. In particular, they feared that Neumann would be the department’s first choice for the potential lectureship. In January 1942, these fears were realized when Neumann was offered the position in the sociology department. The institute leaders took this defeat quite personally and consequently adopted a more radical solution to the economic crisis. They decided to begin downsizing the institute and its staff.

The major triumph of the 1940s was the project on antisemitism that resulted in the book Studies in Prejudice. Before Neumann’s departure from the Horkheimer Circle, he had managed to convince the American Jewish Committee (AJC) of the study’s merits. The AJC’s generosity dramatically changed the institute’s finances, but it still did not change the strategy adopted by the group’s leaders. Although recently dismissed institute members participated actively in the new work, Horkheimer insisted that the financial commitments remain temporary. He did not wish to repeat the process of eliminating associates. The project’s tremendous success brought greater visibility for the Horkheimer Circle and led to renewed talks about incorporating the institute into Columbia University.

In the spring of 1945, following the war’s conclusion, the Faculty of Political Science’s Committee on Instruction sought to clarify the relationship between Columbia and the Institute for Social Research. The investigation, led by Arthur MacMahon, lasted over a year and resulted in a final arrangement between the two parties.
stances differed significantly from those surrounding earlier discussions in 1941 and 1942.

The first issue affecting MacMahon’s evaluation was the state of the institute. According to Horkheimer’s grand design, the members were scattered throughout the country. Some spent the war on the west coast, completing the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, overseeing the entire antisemitism project, and working on the *Authoritarian Personality*. Other members worked for the Office of Strategic Services and remained only partly involved with the AJC studies. Only a tiny group remained in New York, and they split much of their time between the *Studies in Prejudice* and Paul Lazarsfeld’s Office of Radio Research. Columbia’s sociologists, perplexed by these unexpected and unannounced developments, struggled to balance their ethical views regarding Columbia’s obligations to the institute and the administrative needs of the university. At the end of 1943, the Navy, clamoring for space on Morningside Heights, set their sights on the institute’s offices on 117th Street. The administration, puzzled by the lack of activity occurring at the Institute for Social Research, felt tempted to evict them, but Pollock, with the aid of faculty allies, managed to free up enough space in the building to satisfy the Navy’s needs.

The other development affecting MacMahon’s evaluation was the creation of Lazarsfeld’s Bureau of Applied Social Research. In November 1944, the sociology department met with Lazarsfeld in the hopes of establishing a more formal relationship with him and his associates. Lazarsfeld was given a position on the university’s faculty, and the bureau was established to meet the needs of the sociology department—in fact, the very same needs that had faced the department since the 1920s. Once Lazarsfeld joined the Faculty of Political Science, relationships with Horkheimer and the institute were no longer pressing. A compelling need no longer existed for affiliation with the Horkheimer Circle.

During the lengthy evaluation process of 1945/46, Lazarsfeld became the institute’s strongest supporter on the Columbia faculty. Although he pointed out the “idiocy of the Institute group” for not publishing more in English, he did credit them with publications that were easily ignored by other faculty members. In particular, he described his own role in the Newark unemployment study and
Thomas Wheatland

explained how the main thrust behind the project was the Horkheimer Circle and not Mirra Komarovsky. Although Lazarsfeld did the group a great service by defending them in front of the department, his motives may not have been completely selfless. He hoped to benefit from a relationship with the group, which he wanted to see split into theoretical and empirical branches. Lazarsfeld only encouraged Columbia to affiliate itself with the empirical group. The bureau would facilitate this incorporation by housing the group’s empirical branch (composed of Lowenthal, Massing, Marcuse, Neumann, and Pollock) as a separate division. Some members and financial resources would join in studies of mass culture, while other personnel and resources would be devoted to Lazarsfeld’s industrial sociology team. Yearly payments of $30,000 would be required from the Horkheimer Circle’s endowment. Of the total sum, $4,000 would go to the bureau’s budget to pay the overhead, while the remaining amount would pay the staff salaries. No provisions, however, were made for Horkheimer or the theoretical wing of the Institute for Social Research.

As a result of Lazarsfeld’s interventions, the MacMahon committee produced a positive report on the Horkheimer Circle. After summarizing the group’s specific contributions to the study of National Socialism, Chinese society, the family, prejudice, philosophy, and the arts, Columbia’s sociologists made their general evaluation of the Institute for Social Research. They concluded their report by stating:

The books and articles published under the auspices of the Institute rank high from the point of view of originality, thoroughness and logical clarity. Some of the studies that were mentioned are undoubtedly lasting contributions to the social sciences. Many of the articles are monographs in which the authors have either opened up new perspectives of study or achieved a penetrating and many-sided analysis of their subject matter. Throughout the publications show awareness of the requirements of modern developments in methodology. In initiating large-scale research projects and in opening up new fields of study the Institute during the ten year period of its association with Columbia University has been an important factor in promoting the growth of the social sciences in the United States.

The MacMahon committee, recognizing that the final decision lay with the two primary parties involved, authorized Lazarsfeld to negotiate with Horkheimer on the university’s behalf. The issue
had become a matter to be settled between the Bureau of Applied Social Research and the Institute for Social Research. Columbia, in a decision consistent with its original aims, would only accept an affiliation with the Horkheimer Circle that promoted empirical research and quantitative methods. Horkheimer must have quickly realized that he had no room to negotiate, because he broke off his talks with Lazarsfeld at the beginning of June. It would have been unimaginable for Horkheimer to hand over so much control of his institute. Citing theoretical tasks that lay before the institute, Horkheimer respectfully thanked Columbia and declined their offer.104

The institute, following Horkheimer’s decision, vacated their offices at Columbia but did not yet leave Morningside Heights. Lowenthal and Marcuse taught occasional courses at Columbia during the late 1940s; Neumann was eventually hired by the department of government in 1949; and the institute maintained a residential apartment at 90 Morningside Drive that was frequently occupied by Alice and Joseph Maier. Relations between Columbia and the institute’s leaders became cool but casual. Horkheimer still sought the occasional recommendation or contact from his former colleagues in the sociology department,105 but he concentrated on the completion of the Studies in Prejudice. When he received an offer to return the institute to Frankfurt in 1949, he did not hesitate. The remaining core of Horkheimer, Pollock, and Adorno returned to the University of Frankfurt, leaving behind most of the group’s former members. With the exception of Neumann, and later Kirchheimer, the group members who remained in the United States eventually left Columbia for teaching positions at other American universities, such as Brandeis, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California San Diego. By the 1960s, no traces of the Horkheimer Circle could be found at Columbia, except those buried deep within the university’s archives.
Notes

1. Letter from Horkheimer to Nicholas Murray Butler, 14 March 1936, Max Horkheimer Gesammelte Schriften (referred to hereafter as MHGS), Band 15, letter 180, 483-85.

2. Ibid.

3. Paul Lazarsfeld had arrived in America in 1933 as part of a Rockefeller Fellowship. He decided to stay as a result of Austria’s changes in political climate, and he initially worked as a freelance researcher in the United States until he eventually assembled a small research group at the University of Newark.


5. Erich Fromm, “Fromm—S.L. Experimental Program,” Erich Fromm Papers (referred to hereafter as EFP), microfilm reel 17 [box 17, files 1-4], New York Public Library.


10. Munroe (see note 8), 20.


14. Heavily redacted evidence of these investigations is contained in the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington DC. See FBI subject files on Theodore Adorno (file numbers 100-106126-12; 100-106126-24; and 100-106126-30), Erich Fromm (file number 105-112622), Max Horkheimer (file number 61-7421), and Herbert Marcuse (file number 121-24128).

15. Letter from Lynd to Horkheimer, 19 July 1934, Max Horkheimer Archiv (referred to hereafter as MHA), box I, file 5, document 269.


17. Lazarsfeld and the Institut für Sozialforschung had been aware of one another while back in Europe prior to 1933. They shared similar interests and contacts. Collaboration in the United States, however, was nudged along by Lynd’s mediation.


19. See Samuel Lindsay Papers, boxes 59-64, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library. These boxes contain all of the case reports

82
that comprised the raw data from the Newark unemployment project. Many of the case studies are covered with handwritten comments by Lindsay.


22. Horkheimer saved the talking points from one of these gatherings led by Robert Lynd on the topic of “The Role of Sociology among the Social Sciences,” *MHA*, box 1, folder 5, document 261.

23. Abel reports a discussion of National Socialism that was led by Pollock in his unpublished diary “Journal of Thoughts and Events,” 15 March 1936, *Theodore Abel Papers*, box 1, journal volume 3, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library; and he reports a discussion of sociology and psychoanalysis that was led by Erich Fromm, found in box 2, journal volume 4.

24. An excellent example of this was the arrival of Franz Neumann. Although Horkheimer was visiting the Paris bureau of the Institute for Social Research, he insisted that Pollock not “forget to introduce Neumann punctually in MacIver’s seminar.” See letter from Horkheimer to Pollock, 20 September 1937, *MHGS*, Band 16, letter 342, 236.


26. This was extremely ironic and unlikely, when one considers how frequently Fromm traveled away from New York to combat his constant bouts of tuberculosis.

27. His visibility was not just limited to Morningside Heights. Fromm developed many important contacts with US sociologists during the 1930s. Among the most significant of these were productive relationships with John Burgess and Harold Lasswell of the University of Chicago, and Ross Stagner of the American Psychoanalytic Society. See letter from John Burgess to Fromm, 18 October 1934, *EFP*, microfilm reel 1; letters from Fromm to Harold Lasswell, 6 February 1936 and 21 November 1936, *EFP*, microfilm reel 1; and letters from Ross Stagner to Fromm, 22 May 1938 and 2 June 1938, *EFP*, microfilm reel 2.

28. Lynd and his wife, Helen, became so fond of and impressed with Fromm that they hired him to be Helen’s therapist. The psychoanalysis lasted four years, and it did result to the curing of Helen Lynd’s writer’s block. See Helen Lynd, “Oral History,” interview by Mrs. Walter Gellhorn, Columbia Oral History Project, 1973, 27-28.

29. An excellent example was Lee Deets, who struggled with a project on Hutterite communities. Lynd, who feared that Deets was failing to appreciate the psychodynamics within the communities, sent him to Fromm. The subsequent meeting between the two led to invitations for Fromm to be a featured speaker before Columbia’s Sociology Club. See letter from Robert Lynd to Fromm, 26 October 1936, and letter from Lee Deets to Fromm, 30 November 1936, *EFP*, microfilm reel 1.

30. The 1940-1941 Course Catalogue for Columbia’s Faculty of Political Science listed Erich Fromm as a lecturer on the Social Science Department Roster.


32. Ibid.

33. Robert MacIver, of course, came from Scotland and was educated both there and in England. Alexander von Schelting, who was a visiting instructor during the 1930s, was another major European figure in the department. Von Schelting
was one of Max Weber’s prized pupils and helped introduce the work of his mentor to eager graduate students at Columbia.

34. Letter from Philip Hayden from the registrar’s office of Columbia University to Horkheimer, notifying him of his appointment as an extension instructor, 1 July 1936, MHA, box I, folder 5, document 237.

35. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr suggests that the courses were not taught due to limited enrollment during the academic years 1943/44 and 1947/48. He also cites archival evidence suggesting that the subject matter and title may have occasionally varied during the 1940s, reflecting the institute’s growing interest in the fight against fascism and antisemitism. There are, for example, outlines for reconfigured courses entitled “The Social Psychology of Mass Movements” (offered during 1941/42 and found in the MHA, box IX, folder 35) and “Totalitarianism and the Crisis of European Culture” (offered during the fall of 1945 found in the MHA, box IX, folder 36a). MHGS, Band 19, 220-22. Columbia’s Extension Catalogues, however, do not reflect these changes in title or subject matter. Extension Course Catalogues were consulted from 1936/37 to 1947/48, Columbia University Archives (formerly known as the Columbiana Collection), and the courses were offered every year with the same title and virtually the same description.


37. Ibid.; and interview with Daniel Bell (see note 31).

38. Horkheimer (see note 36).


40. Max Horkheimer, lecture entitled “II” from the MHA, box IX, folder 33, document 2a.


42. Interview with Daniel Bell (see note 31).

43. See Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, ed., MHGS, Band 19, 220-22, for a list of the specific seminar topics that were collectively carried out by the Institute for Social Research. The archives indicate that seminars were conducted on the following topics: 1936/37, “Selected problems in the history of Logic, with reference to the basic concepts of the social sciences,” and “On Hegel’s Logic,” 1937/38, a continuation of “Selected problems in the history of Logic, with reference to the basic concepts of the social sciences,” and “On Hegel’s Phenomenology,” fall 1939, “Spinoza’s De Emendatione Intellectus,” 1941/42, “On Dialectics,” fall 1942, “On the concept of culture;” and 1945/46, “National Socialism and Philosophy.”

44. Interview with Daniel Bell (see note 31).

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.
47. Pollock estimated that the institute donated nearly $200,000 to other scholars between 1933 and 1942. See Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School* (Cambridge, 1994), 249.

48. Ibid., 249-50.

49. Ibid., 261-64.

50. Some commentators have defended Fromm’s theoretical consistency, suggesting that the other members of the institute were the ones that had changed. The Horkheimer Circle adopted an increasingly pessimistic and nihilistic attitude toward social change that was at odds with Fromm’s optimism (see Burston, *The Legacy of Erich Fromm, 210-14*); however, other historians of the Horkheimer Group point to Fromm’s increasing fascination with Freud’s renegade pupil, Sandor Ferenczi, as a likely source of the conflict. By modeling a form of Freudian revisionism on the methods and ideas of Ferenczi, Fromm deemphasized sexuality and constructed a naïve social utopianism based on the notion of matriarchal authority. According to Horkheimer and the other institute members, analysis could not abandon its commitments to either the materialism of the human sexual drives or the essential function of the reality principle (see Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Berkeley, 1996), 88-106; and Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*, 265-271).

51. Undoubtedly, the fact that Fromm spent so little time in New York also contributed to Horkheimer’s unease and suspicions.


54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.


58. Lynd remained a strong ally, offering assistance and advice regarding Fromm’s masterpiece *Escape from Freedom*. Fromm met with Lynd throughout the writing of this book, and even came up with the title as a result of one important communication between the two. See letter from Fromm to Lynd, 1 March 1939, *EFP*, microfilm reel 1.


61. Lynd (see note 28), 252.


63. Ibid.


65. Ibid., 329.
Thomas Wheatland

68. Letter from Robert Lynd to Horkheimer, 8 May 1939, MHA, box I, folder 17, document 232.
71. The evolution and history of this project, as well as a more general consideration of the Horkheimer Circle’s contribution to American interpretations of Nazism, are examined in detail in chapter 4.
72. Letter from Eugene Anderson to Neumann, 5 May 1941, MHA, box I, folder 1, document 137.
74. Letter from Lowenthal to Horkheimer, 1 May 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 553, 30.
75. Letter from Horkheimer to Pollock, 30 May 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 558, 45-46.
79. Maclver (see note 21), 137-38.
80. Maclver (see note 77), 496.
81. Ibid., 497.
82. Ibid.
84. The bitterness of this feud is tangible in Abel’s diaries from the period. Although Maclver was a staunchly moral man, the diaries suggest that he sought to undermine Lynd and Lazarsfeld. See Theodore Abel, “Diary of Thoughts and Events,” Theodore Abel Papers, box 1, journal volumes 3 & 4.
85. Letter from Marcuse to Horkheimer, 17 October 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 594, 201-4.
86. Ibid.
87. Letter from Horkheimer to Adorno, 14 September 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 588, 168-74.
88. Ibid.
89. Letter from Pollock to Horkheimer, 18 September 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 589, 177-80.
Critical Theory on Morningside Heights

90. Letter from Horkheimer to Pollock, 13 October 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 592, 191-98.
91. Ibid.
93. This step had been considered throughout the fall in the event of Columbia’s rejection of the lectureship (see letter from Horkheimer to Adorno, 14 September 1941, MHGS, Band 17, letter 588, 168-74); it was instituted after Neumann’s appointment. As soon as the decision arrived from the university, the institute notified Neumann that he would lose his institute salary if he took the job (see letter from Horkheimer to Lowenthal, 25 January 1942, MHGS, Band 17, letter 610, 247-48). Neumann attempted shift the blame to Robert Lynd. He insisted that Lynd was trying to strike at the institute by creating discord within its ranks (see letter from Neumann to Horkheimer, 28 January 1942, MHA, box VI, folder 30, documents 439-42).
94. The project was accepted by the AJC during the summer of 1942 (see letter from Neumann to Horkheimer, 21 August 1942, MHA, box VI, folder 30, documents 325-26).
96. This topic is examined in detail in chapter 6 and its discussion of the Frankfurt School’s reception among US sociologists.
97. Letter from Robert Maclver to Frank Fackenthal, 10 June 1944, Columbia University Archives, file 549/7.
98. Letter from Frederick Pollock to Frank Fackenthal, 10 December 1943, Columbia University Archives, file 549/7.
99. Letter from Lazarsfeld to Theodore Abel, 5 February 1946, MHA, box II, folder 5, document 149.
100. Memorandum from Paul Lazarsfeld to Robert Merton, 4 February 1946, MHA, box II, folder 5, document 149.
101. Minutes of the Faculty of Political Science, 1940-1949, meeting of the Committee on Instruction, 22 April 1946, Columbia University Archives.
103. Letter from Lazarsfeld to Horkheimer, 21 May 1946, MHA, box II, folder 5, document 149.
104. Letter from Horkheimer to Lazarsfeld, 10 June 1946, MHA, box II, folder 5, document 149.