
Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison On the Death of Professor Emeritus Halliman H. Winsborough

Halliman H. Winsborough played a pivotal role in the emergence of the Department of Sociology at UW-Madison as one of the leading centers for research and graduate training in the United States. Winsborough's contributions to the academic mission of the University in the areas of research, teaching, and service can be organized into six major areas: 1) creation of a population studies center for research and training; 2) promotion of a philosophy of research involving the pooling and sharing of resources as a collective good; 3) key promoter and organizer of "big" scientific research projects in demography and other areas; 4) establishment of a research apprenticeship model for graduate student education; 5) the creation of a research infrastructure involving an administrative structure, data acquisition and archiving, a highly sophisticated computer environment permitting data processing, statistical analysis, and innovations in estimation and modeling; and 6) contributions in theory and methodology in several substantive areas in the social sciences.

That the Department of Sociology is recognized as one of the premier centers of research and teaching internationally is due in no small measure to the organizational and intellectual skills and efforts of Halliman H. Winsborough. Hal was appointed to the faculty in 1967 as an Associate Professor of Sociology, after having previously served on the faculty at Duke University, where he established a research center. Hal was recruited to Wisconsin to develop a center for demographic research. At that time, the Demography Center was little more than a sign on a door. During his tenure as director, Hal secured both an NIH Training Grant and a Center Grant (providing core support for the Center). Extensions of both of these grants continues to the present.

In addition to establishment of the Center, Hal played a leadership role in creating and nurturing research facilities that enabled Madison to attract and retain a very distinguished faculty in demography, urban sociology, social stratification and related areas.

Winsborough vigorously pursued and actively promoted among the faculty a philosophy of research involving the pooling and sharing of resources as a collective good. He believed that research was a collective enterprise which maximizes productivity among individual faculty and students. In his words, funds were to be "from each according to today's luck and to each according to today's need." Organizationally, members were expected to share in the governance of the Center as part of the governing body, and, when called upon, as Director and/or chair one of the Center's subunits.

Winsborough was also a key promoter and organizer of "big" scientific research projects in demography and other areas. In his view, large projects that received funding promoted collaborative research activities, and provided opportunities for students to participate in the apprentice research program. A good example of this approach was reflected in the project to create sample microdata files from the 1940 and 1950 censuses. Winsborough, in collaboration with Karl E. Taeuber, another CD&E affiliate, designed and executed a seven million dollar project to create public use samples from the 1940 and 1950 censuses. This five-year project involved the negotiation of delicate relationships with the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the orchestration of a complex array of data management tasks, and an array of difficult scientific decisions ranging from sampling through coding. The legacy of this project continues to be felt as researchers nationwide are able to anchor understanding of many major social trends in an

historical perspective that would not otherwise be available. But, we would be remiss if other “big” science projects CD&E played a role in creating and housing were not mentioned such as, among others, the National Survey of Families and Households, the 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Study, and the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.

Winsborough was the chief architect of the research infrastructure which subsequently evolved into the Social Science Research Cooperative (SSCC). This facility incorporated a number of activities, including an administrative structure, data acquisition and archiving, a highly sophisticated computer environment permitting data processing, statistical analysis, and innovations in estimation and modeling. This research complex initially served the Center for Demography (CD&E) and Sociology, but subsequently also served the Center for Demography of Health and Aging, the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, Economics, the Institute on Aging, the Institute for research on Poverty, the School of Human Ecology, the School of Medicine and Public Health, and the University of Wisconsin Survey Center. Winsborough envisioned this facility as one in which participating faculty pooled resources to benefit from returns to scale with regard to computing services, data acquisition and use, and administrative support.

As a result of his own training at the University of Chicago, and his experience at Duke, Winsborough introduced the "research apprentice" concept to graduate training of demography students in the Department of Sociology. Under this model, students learn to do research and become scholars in various substantive areas by working for and with professors in collaborative arrangements, often resulting in joint publications. Because of its great success, this model diffused to other specialty areas within the department. This is one of the reasons that the Department is consistently rated as one of the nation's top Sociology Departments in its effectiveness in graduate training.

Winsborough was exceptionally brilliant in identifying promising faculty and graduate students. He was responsible for the recruitment of outstanding faculty, such as James Sweet, Larry Bumpass, David Featherman, and Robert Hauser. He was also responsible for recruiting a young Chinese student, Yu Xie, to enter the graduate program in Sociology. Xie received his degree in Sociology, and is arguably the most distinguished alumnus of CDE and the graduate program. He is currently University Professor at Princeton and a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Hal Winsborough's prodigious intellectual contributions are outstanding in his roles as researcher, teacher, and colleague. Hal devoted a great deal of his energy to facilitating the scientific productivity of the research community, but his organizational contributions have been possible only because he was, first of all, a scientist and scholar in his own right. His publications included major works that continue to serve as reference points in the evolution of major lines of social research--from the theoretical structure of systems of cities to the disaggregation of age, period and cohort effects on social change. His methodological contributions range from envisioning new uses for repeated cross-section surveys in the measurement of social change, to seminal work in the decomposition of differences in demographic rates, to the development (and legal defense) of new methods for intercensal population estimation for small areas, to the development of methods for continuous sampling of the U.S. population by telephone. His broad grasp of scientific literature ranges from the philosophy of science, through related biological literature and information processing systems, to state-of-the-art technical literature in sociology and demography. This breadth of scholarship makes the impact of his work disproportionate to its quantity. Finally, we note that Winsborough

made major intellectual contributions through his generous sharing of time with colleagues in the discussion of their research. He was always genuinely interested in a colleague's research question, surprisingly knowledgeable about it, and quick to bring his broad grasp of related scientific and technical issues to bear in constructive criticism. Both the spirit and content of these interactions contributed substantially to one of Sociology's truly great attributes: a warm and productive collegiality spanning subareas of the discipline that are often at war in other departments. There is no better indication of Winsborough's contribution to the Academy than his election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Memorial Resolution Committee:

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