

TEMPORARY! IN PROCESS

Bureau of Applied Social Research Archives

Papers,

220 linear ft. (ca.82,500 items in 165 bankers boxes)

Restrictions on Use: The published Reports of the Bureau are cataloged and available at Lehman Library on microfiche, call number FX3 1133.

Provenance: In 1977, when the BASR ceased, its library and archives were given to the Columbia University Libraries.

Processing History: Processed by Martin Rivlin and Patrick Lawlor, 1999-2001

Microfilm Information: Most of the Reports are on microfiche.

Physical Location: Boxes 1-22 on 14/18w

Boxes 23-58 on 14/19e

Boxes 59-94 on 14/62

Boxes 95-128 on 14/61e

Boxes 129-165 on 14/24w

Biography/History: The Bureau of Applied Social Research originated in 1937 as the Office of Radio Research at Princeton University. It had been created to carry out a three-year study of the impact of radio on American society. The proposal for the study was written by Professor Hadley Cantril for the Rockefeller Foundation. Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, who had conducted radio research and created a Research Center for Applied Psychology at the University of Vienna was asked to be director of the project with Professor Cantril and Dr. Frank Stanton as co-investigators., Lazarsfeld believed that a social research laboratory within the university was essential to the development of social science. In his "Memoir" (1968) he explained that he always intended to build the Radio Project into an ongoing research center. The Office of Radio Research, therefore took on other projects for the communications industry. A pattern of foundation commercial and government support was established to permit the organization to pursue Lazarsfeld's interest in developing research methods for the study of individual and mass behavior in real-world situations Barton 1980, , The results of these early communications studies appear in Office of Radio Research reports of 1939 and the early 1940s, in two collections of articles in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* February 1939 and December 1940 which Lazarsfeld edited and in three collections edited by Lazarsfeld and Stanton., , In 1939 Lazarsfeld received an appointment to Columbia University and by 1940 the Office of Radio Research had become part of Columbia. The research program was broadened to include a pioneering study of voter decision-making in the 1940 presidential elections, using the panel method to trace changes in attitudes over the course of the election year Lazarsfeld Berelson and Gaudet *The People's Choice 1944*, , During the war years the Office was active in governmental research, especially on communications. In 1943 Professor Robert K. Merton joined the staff as Associate Director. The wartime reports are a mixture of wartime topics A Study of Three Radio Broadcasts Intended to Refute Rumors B-0 1 5 6 1942 and market research Study on Stomach Distress B-0131-3 1942 They also include work by Merton and his research team on the Kate Smith War Bond Radiothon and on the influence-structure of a small community and Bernard Berelson's preliminary reports on opinion-leadership which led to the Decatur study in 1945 fully reported by Katz and Lazarsfeld *Personal Influence* 1955 In 1944 the Office's name was changed to the Bureau of Applied Social Research reflecting the idea of a general-

purpose center for applied research still keeping Lazarsfeld's not very hidden agenda of
Summary: The archives are comprised of files of over 1100 research projects conducted under
the aegis of the Bureau during its 40 year history. In addition, there is a collection of over
750 articles written by Bureau staff, and files detailing the work of the BASR founder, Dr.
Paul Lazarsfeld.