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Joy Rohde. *Armed with Expertise: The Militarization of American Social Research during the Cold War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013. 224 pp. ISBN 978-0-8014-4967-3.

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The question of whether and, if yes, to what extent the Cold War influenced the social sciences has recently attracted increasing attention from American scholars. The book under review fits into this burgeoning literature. It traces the “optimistic rise, anguished fall, and unexpected rebirth of Pentagon-sponsored social research” (6) since the end of World War II and investigates how social scientists thought of themselves and their work for the government and military.

The book’s chapters follow a historical chronology. Using the metaphor of a gray area to denote the interstitial networks uniting the armed forces, government agencies, and social science research, chapter 1 investigates how this area was created. The most important institutional form in the gray area, Joy Rohde argues, was the Federal Contract Research Center (FCRC); the US government entertained a total of 66 FCRCs in 1962, most of them funded by the Pentagon (23). Describing selected FCRCs, Rohde leads the reader to the core themes of her book: the militarization of social research, the freedom of science, the responsibilities of scholars, and the relation between expertise and democracy.

Chapter 2 explores the stances three researchers—Earl H. DeLong, Jeanne S. Mintz, and Robert Boguslaw—took towards these core themes. All of them were working at the Special Operations Research Office (SORO), an FCRC founded by the US army in 1956. Nonetheless, their positions differed. While DeLong stressed a strong separation between the scholar and the policymaker, between knowledge and its use, Mintz argued that it was the responsibility of the researcher to consider what their results may be used for. Advocating an expert-guided elite democracy, she emphasized that social researchers served human freedom best by serving the government. Boguslaw, in contrast, insisted that social science was inherently political: its ultimate objective should be to fight elite democracy and to promote participatory democracy by providing social knowledge to the citizens, not the government. These conflicting positions coexisted and defined the base lines of the controversies about fate and role of social research in the gray area.

Chapter 3 turns to what is probably the most well-known project ever planned at SORO, Project Camelot. Concerned with counterinsurgency measures, it became a matter of public interest after information on the project was disseminated by a consultant to Project Camelot, University of Pittsburgh anthropologist Hugo Nuttini, while he was traveling to Chile in summer 1965. Media and politicians both in Chile and the United States were on alert—was Camelot intelligence activity on foreign

grounds poorly disguised as scientific research? The ensuing heated debates led not only to strained relations between the US and several other American countries and to the premature termination of the project; they also initiated a long debate on research ethics that led several scholarly associations in the United States, among them the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and the American Sociological Association (ASA), to adopt ethical codes or install respective committees.

But the situation didn't cool down. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the slow transformation of the gray area into a black area: far from ending army-funded social research, the student movement and the protests against the war in Vietnam unintendedly resulted in the withdrawal of such research from academic visibility and control. This is epitomized in the transformation of SORO. Renamed into Center for Research on Social Systems (CRESS) in the wake of the Camelot affair, its cooperation with American University was officially terminated in 1969 after continuous student protests, only to have virtually all of its personnel being transferred to a new parent organization, the American Institutes for Research. Here and in similar organizations, social scientific work was—and still is—carried out in isolation from the control of fellow academics, making social research a part of the “enormous contracting system that provides the research, intelligence, services, and equipment that help the government wage the War on Terror” (153).

The general argument in *Armed with Expertise* is thus one of differentiation. After World War II, it is argued, the social sciences were confronted with a new kind of client—the political and military elites—and adapted to meet their demands. This is where the central concept of Rohde's analysis—militarization—enters the scene. Referring to historian Laura McEnaney, Rohde defines militarization as “the gradual encroachment of military ideas, values, and structures into the civilian domain” (3). The adaptation to the ideas, values, and structures of the new customers, however, led to considerable conflicts. As these came to a head, social science cleaved in two parts, with one part serving the civilian and the other, the “black area,” the military segments of the clientele.

While I agree with the differentiation argument for the most parts, I think the concept of militarization implies an inadequately narrow perspective, while at the same time, somewhat paradoxically, it is used in an overly broad manner. The perspective is narrow because it suggests that an already extant social system was adapting to new demands. What is hidden from view here is that large segments of the “gray area” were creations of the new clients, thus incorporating their creators' demands by design. What happened was not so much that extant places of social science were encroached upon by new values, but that new places appeared where people did social science in a way that appeared incompatible with traditional academic perspectives.

Simultaneously, the concept of militarization is used too broadly. Almost every consideration of the usefulness of social science to society is interpreted as indicating militarization, with empirical corroboration often lacking. What are the criteria that allow for interpreting a given statement as indicating militarization? In some cases, this is obvious: the Camelot's project outline, for instance, states that the

project results would be used “to assist friendly governments in dealing with active insurgency programs” (84). But what about Camelot’s overall objective, “to predict and influence politically significant aspects of social change” (84)? This is in line with many other coeval research projects in the United States that had no relation whatsoever to foreign policy, the government, or the military. As Rohde acknowledges, the agenda of American social science has always been one of social and societal betterment (Ross 1991; for sociology, see Smith 2014; Vidich and Lyman 1985)—consequently, the use of social science has long been an issue of concern and debate. A more sophisticated operationalization of militarization and a comparative research design would have been required to separate the influence of the military patrons from the concerns of nonmilitary use, which are documented in a series of contributions on the use (and abuse) of social science not covered by Rohde (Horowitz 1971; Horowitz and Katz 1975; Lazarsfeld and Reitz 1975; Lazarsfeld, Sewell, and Wilensky 1967; Scott and Shore 1979).

Despite these concerns, *Armed with Expertise* is a thoughtful and well-written book. It offers a theoretically sophisticated and challenging discussion of basic philosophical questions in twentieth-century social science and beyond. Also, in contrast to several other contributions to this literature, Rohde must be lauded for seriously listening to what the researchers themselves have to say about their intentions and their hopes and for thoughtfully discussing their unintended consequences.

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