

Soc Sciences Questioned

By LEN KRAUSS
 (This is the first of a series of articles on the status of the social sciences.)
 The labyrinthine jargon of the social scientist has found its way into and characterized nearly every conversation concerned with individual or

group behavior.
 Courses in social problems, social studies, introductory sociology, and related topics are offered or required in almost every phase of American education.

BUT A QUESTION that has been under intense scrutiny lately is: Is Social Science a Science?

According to a research professor of physics on campus, "experiments involving the human being are greatly subjected to many human variables, some of these may have no bearing upon what is actually trying to be determined."

Dr. Raymond Pepinsky explained that the influences of these unpredictable variables would tend to negate the experimental results.

IN PHYSICS OR CHEMISTRY, he said, we can control, to a large degree the environment in which an experiment takes place, and with the data from such an experiment we can predict very accurately what the results of the same experiment, run at another time, would be.

"Studies in social sciences are so hampered by 'human pressures' that much of the data gleaned could not be used with reasonable accuracy to predict future outcomes."

Pepinsky said that the methods used in gathering data for sociological studies are scientific, but for a field of study to be a true science it must be able to predict future events to such an extent that the probability of error is negligible.

SOCIAL SCIENCE HAS NOT, as yet, been able to determine

what to do in a situation such as the present one involving Castro, he said.

Or, how should a man like Khrushchev be handled? "Certainly he's not predictable but if social science were a true science it would be able to determine the methods to handle 'K' and men like him."

It is often dangerous to use social science data to make future decisions involving such individuals, he said. Whereas in a physical science, "we know whether an explosion or so will occur if certain chemicals are mixed."

Pepinsky said he feels that while much is being done by social scientists to bring their field up to the position of being a science, they have not yet accomplished their goal.

IT IS NOT beyond reason to think that it might some day become a true science, he said. But, as for the present, it is probably best defined as a philosophy involving social behavior rather than a science.

Pepinsky said that social science is a very difficult area of study, and stressed that effects of the many hard-to-control variables are the prime detriment to valid experimental data.

Chapel Service Speaker

Dean of the Graduate School Harold K. Schilling will be the chapel speaker for the Chapel service at 9 a.m. Sunday in the Helen Eakin Eisenhower Chapel.

The topic for his sermon will be "Biblical Ways of Thinking." The summer term choir under the direction of Mrs. Willa Taylor will sing "Unto Thee, O God" by Allan Horhaness.

Jeffries Exits As Emeritus In Agronomy

Dr. Charles D. Jeffries, professor of soil technology in the Department of Agronomy, retired with emeritus rank at the end of last month after completing 42 years of teaching and research.

Following his graduation from the University in 1919, Jeffries joined the faculty and served as an associate in the Institute of Animal Nutrition until 1927 when he was transferred to the Department of Agronomy.

IN 1945 HE WAS named professor of soil technology. He received his master of science degree from the University in 1922 and his doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1936.

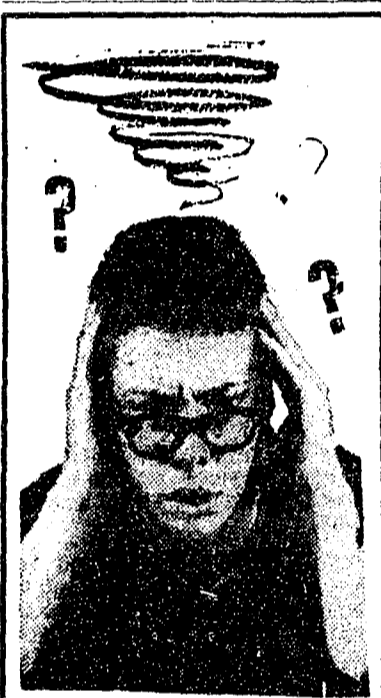
Jeffries initiated the first research in the United States in the field of soil mineralogy in the early 1930's. He has been concerned with both theoretical and applied aspects of soil mineralogy and has developed methods and procedures to identify and classify soil minerals.

HE SERVED AS visiting soil technologist at the University of Puerto Rico in 1943 and Soil Scientists in 1950. In 1946 he was a visiting professor of soils at the University of Wisconsin for six months and this past January was a consultant on soil problems for the Council of Scientific Research in Jamaica.


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