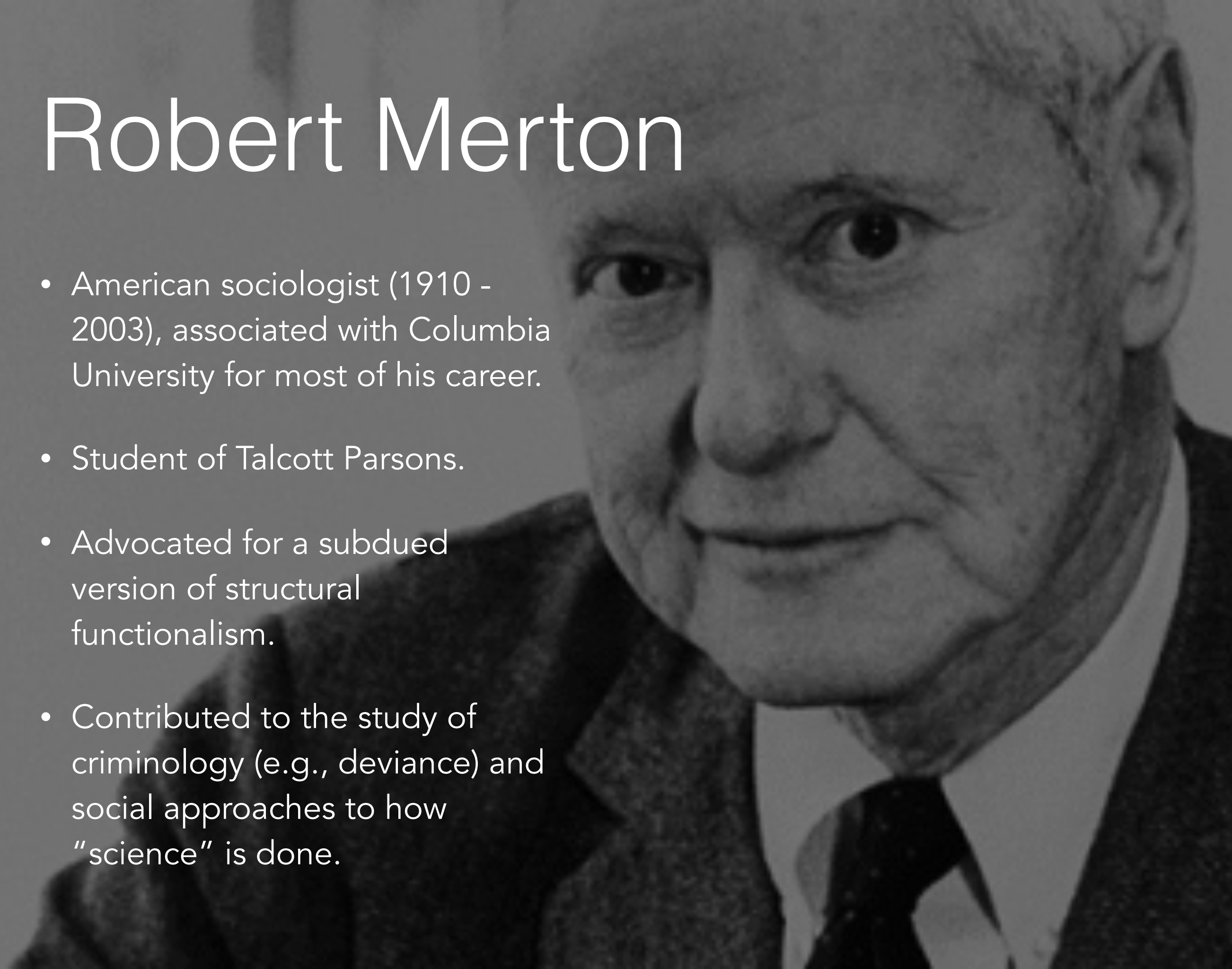




Robert Merton

- American sociologist (1910 - 2003), associated with Columbia University for most of his career.
- Student of Talcott Parsons.
- Advocated for a subdued version of structural functionalism.
- Contributed to the study of criminology (e.g., deviance) and social approaches to how "science" is done.



MANIFEST AND LATENT FUNCTIONS

- Robert Merton distinguishes between conscious motivations and unintended consequences.
- Manifest functions are intended; latent ones are not.
- Consider Hopi rain dances: they may not actually produce rain, but they clearly reinforcing social hierarchies and bring the community together to reinforce shared values.
- Identifying latent functions brings to light behavior that might otherwise go unnoticed and unresearched.

